

Western Riverside Council of Governments

4.A

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

Monday, May 4, 2020

2:00 PM

Zoom Platform

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bonnie Wright at 2:02 p.m. on May 4, 2020, virtually on the digital platform, Zoom.

Jurisdiction	Attendee Name	Status	Arrived / Departed
City of Banning	Daniela Andrade	Present	1:55 PM
City of Beaumont	Mike Lara	Present	1:55 PM
City of Calimesa	Jeff Cervantez	Present	1:55 PM
City of Canyon Lake	Jordan Ehrenkranz	Present	1:55 PM
City of Corona	Jason Scott	Present	1:55 PM
City of Eastvale	Joseph Tessari	Present	1:55 PM
City of Hemet	Bonnie Wright	Present	1:55 PM
City of Jurupa Valley	Micheal Goodland	Present	1:55 PM
City of Lake Elsinore	Brian Tisdale	Present	1:55 PM
City of Menifee	Matt Liesemeyer	Present	1:55 PM
City of Moreno Valley	Victoria Baca	Present	1:55 PM
City of Murrieta	Kelly Seyarto	Present	1:55 PM
City of Norco	Kevin Bash	Present	1:55 PM
City of Perris	Rita Rogers	Present	1:55 PM
City of Riverside		Absent	
City of San Jacinto	Crystal Ruiz	Present	1:55 PM
City of Temecula	James Stewart	Present	1:55 PM
City of Wildomar	Ben Benoit	Present	1:55 PM
District 1		Absent	
District 2	Karen Spiegel	Present	1:55 PM
District 3	Chuck Washington	Present	1:55 PM
District 5	Jeff Hewitt	Present	1:55 PM
EMWD	Ronald Sullivan	Present	1:55 PM
WMWD	Brenda Dennstedt	Present	1:55 PM
Morongo Band of Mission Indians		Absent	
Office of Education (ex-officio)	Dr. Judy White	Present	2:23 PM
TAC Chair	Chris Lopez	Present	1:55 PM
Executive Director	Rick Bishop	Present	1:55 PM

Note: Times above reflect when the member logged in; they may have arrived at the meeting earlier.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Perris
SECONDER:	Moreno Valley
AYES:	Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Canyon Lake, Corona, Eastvale, Hemet, Jurupa Valley, Lake Elsinore, Menifee, Moreno Valley, Murrieta, Norco, Perris, San Jacinto, Temecula, Wildomar, District 2, District 3, District 5, EMWD, WMWD
ABSENT:	Riverside, District 1, Morongo Band of Mission Indians

A. Summary Minutes from the March 2, 2020, Executive Committee Meeting are Available for Consideration

Action: 1. *Approved the Summary Minutes from the March 2, 2020, Executive Committee meeting.*

B. TUMF Program Activities Update: Approval of TUMF Reimbursement Agreement Amendments and 2020 TUMF Zone 5-year Transportation Improvement Programs

Actions:

1. *Authorized the Executive Director to execute a TUMF Reimbursement Agreement Amendment with the City of Banning for the Right-of-Way Phase of the Sunset Avenue Grade Separation Project in an amount not to exceed \$360,792.*
2. *Authorized the Executive Director to execute a TUMF Reimbursement Agreement Amendment with the City of Wildomar for a reallocation from PAED and PS&E Phases, to the Right-of-Way Phase of the Bundy Canyon Road (Cherry Street to Sunset Road) Widening Project in an amount not to exceed \$6,882,000.*
3. *Approved the 2020 TUMF Pass Zone 5-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).*
4. *Approved the 2020 TUMF Central Zone 5-Year TIP.*
5. *Approved the 2020 TUMF Hemet / San Jacinto Zone 5-Year TIP.*
6. *Approved the 2020 TUMF Northwest Zone 5-Year TIP.*

C. Ratification of WRCOG's COVID-19 Employee Guide

Action: 1. *Adopted Resolution Number 06-20; A Resolution of the Executive Committee of the Western Riverside Council of Governments ratifying the approval of a Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Guide for all Employees.*

D. Finance Department Activities Update

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

E. Regional Streetlight Program Activities Update

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

F. Environmental Department Program Activities update

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

G. Report out of WRCOG Representatives on Various Committees

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

H. Western Community Energy Activities Update

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

I. Single Signature Authority Report

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

4. REPORTS / DISCUSSION**A. PACE Programs Activities Update**

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, reported that California Senate Bill 465 allows for areas heavily impacted by wildfires to use PACE to finance improvements that defend against wildfires. Properties must be located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

Chair Bonnie Wright opened the Public Hearing; there were no comments and the Public Hearing was closed.

Action: 1. *Conducted a Public Hearing regarding the inclusion of fire hardening improvements as eligible improvements for residential and commercial properties participating in the WRCOG PACE Programs, and adopted WRCOG Resolution Number 05-20; A Resolution of the Executive Committee of the Western Riverside Council of Governments confirming the modification of the WRCOG Program Report and the California HERO Program Report to authorize the financing of fire hardening improvements.*

B. Report from the League of California Cities

Erin Sasse, League of California Cities representative, was unable to attend.

Action: 1. *None.*

C. Preliminary Draft Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Agency Budget

Andrew Ruiz, WRCOG Chief Financial Officer, reported that it is too early to determine the true impacts of COVID-19; therefore, staff have taken a conservative approach to the Budget. Mr. Ruiz shared an overview of the various programs' budgets within each Department.

The Western Riverside Energy Partnership (WREP) is evolving into a Regional Energy Network (REN), a scaled-up version of the WREP. The REN will be able to offer energy efficiency programs. The California Public Utilities Commission recently voted in favor of continuing RENs and allowing for new RENs to be formed.

Western Community Energy (WCE) has launched and will be self-sustaining by the end of the fiscal year. WCE will begin paying back WRCOG for the start-up costs loan of just over \$2M; full payback is anticipated to be recovered in Fiscal Year 2021/2022.

WRCOG's office relocation to the second floor will save WRCOG approximately \$1M over the life of the lease.

WRCOG will reduce its CalPERS Unfunded Accrued Liability by lowering its term to 15 years and establishing a Section 115 Trust investment account to make additional annual payments.

Total Agency Revenue and Transfers in total \$40,442,624. Total Agency Expenditures and Transfers out total \$40,371,508. Overall, this represents an approximate 30% decrease from last year's Budget.

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

D. TUMF Program Activities Update

Chris Gray, WRCOG Director of Transportation & Planning, reported that TUMF operations are continuing as normal. The online portal allows WRCOG to accept fee payments and process fee calculations without in-person visits from developers. Over 130 development applications were received between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020. Staff are prioritizing member agency reimbursement requests, which totaled nine during March and April 2020. The TUMF Program has collected approximately \$3.7M in March 2020, and \$3M in April 2020.

Staff have been comprehensively updating the Transportation Improvement Programs for each TUMF Zone. Approximately \$200M in TUMF projects have been programmed over the next five years.

During the last downturn between 2007 – 2010, the TUMF Program could not fund all the project requests. WRCOG convened Zone meetings to prioritize projects. Due to the economy at that time, WRCOG adopted a policy to provide jurisdictions the option to discount fees by 50%. Research determined that there was no discernable change in permit activity other than increases in permit activity before fee increases.

WRCOG will be discussing the need for a standardized approach with its Public Works Committee as well as convening Zone meetings in the fall to discuss revenue changes and programming requests.

In November 2019, the Executive Committee approved a phased-in approach to a Construction Cost Index adjustment. Five jurisdictions have adopted the latest Construct Cost Index (CCI) adjustment. Eleven jurisdictions have scheduled the latest CCI adjustment. Two jurisdictions have yet to schedule the matter.

Chair Bonnie Wright asked how applications received in March and April 2020 compare to those received under normal circumstances.

Mr. Gray responded that over the last three years an average of \$3M – \$4M was collected each month. There is currently an approximate \$10M backlog of projects in which applications for permits have been submitted, but not yet paid for. Staff is not sure if this is business as usual with the slight downturn or a rush to submit applications.

Committee member Jeff Hewitt indicated that any raise in the form of a CCI adjustment during this time would send the wrong message.

Mr. Gray responded that a majority of member jurisdictions have already adopted a CCI adjustment prior to the current pandemic.

Committee member Ronald Sullivan asked what defines a project.

Mr. Gray responded that a project could be a commercial or industrial building; it is an application of a developer pulling a building permit.

Committee member Kelly Seyarto indicated that it would make matters worse to not collect fees from a sector that is not suffering. There are a lot of projects in the queue.

Mr. Gray indicated that the single-family residential fee increase is currently being phased in. Additionally, the fee is not being increased for any retail spaces.

Committee member Micheal Goodland indicated that his City is already anticipating a shortfall of funding through next year. Perhaps this matter is shelved until the first of next year.

Mr. Gray responded that the current CCI adjustment goes into effect July 1, 2020. If this Committee votes today to delay that, then those jurisdictions which have already adopted a CCI adjustment would have to go back and change it.

Committee member Karen Spiegel asked if the Building Industry Association (BIA) has contacted WRCOG on this matter since being agendaized.

Mr. Gray responded that WRCOG has not heard from the BIA on this matter.

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

E. SCAG Final Connect SoCal Plan

Chris Gray, WRCOG Director of Transportation & Planning, reported that the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Final Connect SoCal Plan is a long-term policy framework. There are five approved transportation projects within the WRCOG region which qualify for funding.

SCAG is required by state law to produce a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets, prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), and prepare a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

Connect SoCal's new initiatives include identifying key connections as new initiatives within the Plan that are intended to bridge the gap between land use decisions and transportation needs and include smart cities and job centers, housing supportive infrastructure, Go Zones, accelerated electrification, and shared mobility services.

WRCOG is asking its member jurisdictions to write a letter of support to SCAG for its Connect SoCal Plan. There is some opposition to this Plan; however, SCAG is required to prepare it. The Plan includes programs and policies which address state regulations and provides growth projections for population, households, and employment.

The State of California and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are involved in an extended dispute regarding the process by which it is determined whether a project conforms to air quality requirements. Because of this, SCAG was able to negotiate a process with the federal government that if a plan is approved by June 1, 2020, SCAG would show compliance for many of its projects. Adopting the Plan also allows for the RHNA process to move forward and allows the state to verify that SCAG is meeting its greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

Connect SoCal is a 25-year, long-range plan that first and foremost focuses on transportation. SCAG has been working to develop this Plan for the last three years with its member jurisdictions, stakeholders, and others.

Some of the comment letters SCAG has received indicates that the Plan negatively impacts job creation and economy; however, there are a number of projects at risk if the Plan does not move forward, and federal funding throughout the region could come to a halt.

Action: 1. *Directed the Executive Director to provide a letter of support to the Southern California Association of Governments Final Connect SoCal Plan.*

RESULT:	APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED
MOVER:	Jurupa Valley
SECONDER:	Moreno Valley
AYES:	Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Canyon Lake, Corona, Eastvale, Hemet, Jurupa Valley, Lake Elsinore, Menifee, Moreno Valley, Murrieta, Norco, Perris, San Jacinto, Temecula, Wildomar, District 2, District 3, District 5, EMWD, WMWD
ABSENT:	Riverside, District 1, Morongo Band of Mission Indians

5. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chris Lopez, Technical Advisory Committee Chair, reported that the Technical Advisory Committee has been meeting via Zoom and thanked WRCOG for its accommodations.

6. REPORT FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Ben Benoit, South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) representative for cities in Riverside County, reported that due to the current pandemic, AQMD has implemented a hiring freeze and prepared a budget \$5M less than last year, taking a proactive measure in a possible downturn of permits receivables and activities.

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rick Bishop reported that WRCOG has introduced a weekly newsletter titled, "The Briefing," which replaces the monthly eCommunicator, that communicates program activities WRCOG is pursuing, as well as share good news and resources taking place within WRCOG's member jurisdictions. WRCOG has also initiated a new webinar series titled, "Future Forward," which is intended to be a series on

helping jurisdictions and agency innovate during times of disruption. The first broadcast was conducted by Teifion Rice-Evans of Economic Planning Systems, Inc., who provided a report on the near-term fiscal impacts from COVID-19. Jurisdictional-specific information is being prepared and will be shared with each member jurisdiction. The Future Forward series is broadcast the last Thursday of each month.

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors has appointed Mr. Bishop to its newly created Riverside County Economic Recovery Task Force, comprised of a number of private and public sector individuals to meet and discuss possible recovery efforts in Riverside County due to issues regarding COVID-19.

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items for future agendas.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee member Brenda Dennstedt announced that last Thursday a Verizon contractor tapped into a major water service line in the Moreno Valley area which shut down water services for a number of customers. Due to the collaboration efforts of multiple agencies, no water services were disrupted.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 1, 2020, at 2:00 p.m., via Zoom platform.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.
