

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
January 26, 2005
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order on January 26th at 10:10 a.m. at the State Capitol, Senate Hearing Room 112, Sacramento, CA.

Members Present: Joseph E. Petrillo, Chair
Marc Adelman, Vice Chair
Donna Lee Andrews, Vice Chair
Fran Florez, Vice Chair
Rod Diridon, Sr.
Bob Giroux
Lynn Schenk
T.J. Stapleton

Opening Comments

Senator George Runner welcomed the Authority to the capitol and expressed his appreciation for all the hard work the Authority is doing and the support of the Antelope Valley.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for the following Authority Meetings:

Vice-Chair Adelman presented the minutes from the December 15, 2004, November 10, 2004, September 11, 2004, June 23, 2004, and May 26, 2004 Authority meetings for approval. Member Stapleton moved to approve the minutes, Member Diridon seconded, which carried 7-0 (Chair Petrillo was not present for the vote).

Authority Members' Meetings for Compensation

Vice-Chair Adelman presented the list of meetings for compensation for approval. Member Schenk requested the removal of her name from the list. Vice-Chair Florez moved to approve the amended list of meetings for compensation, Member Diridon seconded the, which carried 7-0 (Chair Petrillo was not present for the vote).

Members Reports

Member Diridon reported on HSGTA's move to becoming a major department of APTA. APTA will be providing administrative support for HSGTA as well as implementing a high-speed ground transportation advocacy program.

Vice Chair Adelman reported on the reopening of a freight rail line between San Diego and the Imperial Valley. Vice Chair Adelman reported that due to heavy rains in San Diego there have been two Amtrak closures along the coastal route.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Morshed gave a report on the Governor's Budget stating that the budget released on January 10th included \$2.7 million in special funds for the program

EIR/EIS for the Northern Mountain crossing, the defense of the environmental document, and for the preparation of a financial plan.

Executive Director Morshed reported on the Governor's proposal on the elimination of a number of boards and commissions, included in this proposal is the elimination of the Authority, with the project oversight responsibilities being transferred over to CTC and the staff work for the program to be done by Caltrans. Executive Director Morshed reported that the Little Hoover Commission is currently conducting a public hearing on the Governor's proposal, however the Authority has not been asked to testify.

Executive Director Morshed discussed the state law requiring all members of state boards and commissions to take ethics training every two years, stating that all the members of the board as well as Executive staff needed to fulfill this requirement this year. Members can contact the Authority office to obtain the materials for the completion of the training.

Executive Director Morshed reported on the status of MTC's statewide ridership study, stating that MTC and Authority staff conducted interviews and selected a team lead by Cambridge Systematics. MTC staff will be bringing the selection to the MTC board for approval.

Presentation to the Board

Senator Roy Ashburn welcomed the Authority to the Capitol. Senator Ashburn requested that additional time be taken in the consideration of the alignment and station location between Fresno and Bakersfield.

Assemblymember Bill Maze supports investigating alignment and station alternatives that serve the Tulare and Kings Counties.

Assemblymember Nicole Parra stated that the majority of the future growth is projected to occur in the Central Valley, and more needs to be done to plan for this growth. She requested the Authority reconsider the alignments and stations for the Fresno to Bakersfield segment.

Member Giroux stated that he agrees with the Senator Ashburn and Assemblymembers Maze and Parra that a study needs to be conducted to look at alternatives that would serve Tulare and Kings Counties. Member Giroux stated that the Authority would need the Legislators assistance in securing financing to conduct the study. Senator Ashburn stated that he would work with the Authority in getting the necessary funds to conduct the study. Assemblymember Parra stated that the Authority would have her support in getting the funds needed.

Senator Jeff Denham welcomed the Authority to the capitol and stated his support for a maintenance hub located in Merced at the Castle Air force Base.

High-Speed Rail Study Mission to Japan

Executive Director Morshed discussed the invitation by the Japanese-California High Speed Rail Study Group and the Japanese Overseas Rolling Stock Association (JORSA) to visit Japan to conduct a site visit of the Japanese high-speed rail system. Executive Director Morshed stated that the invitation was made to the board and the board will make the determination of who should attend. Executive Director Morshed recommended that the board accept the invitation and authorize the Chair to select a group which consists of board members, Authority staff, and members of the legislature and the Administration. Member Diridon made the motion to approve the Executive Directors recommendation, Member Stapleton seconded. Member Schenk expressed concern over the agenda, and wanted to make sure that the briefings are informative and substantive. Vice-Chair Adelman amended the motion to state that the Authority accepts the invitation, that the Authority identifies the dates being March 19th – March 26th, and the board authorizes the Chair and the Executive Director to take the trip and to select the participant, within the Brown Act and the Japanese invitation. Member Diridon motioned to accept the amendment to the original motion, Member Stapleton seconded the amended motion, which carried 8-0.

Identification of Preferred Alignment and Station Locations for the Final Program EIR/EIS

Executive Director Morshed discussed the revisions made to the staff recommendations. Christine Sproul from the Attorney General's Office presented a brief overview of the steps required for the completion of the environmental document. Ms Sproul will be providing a written summary of these steps to the Authority.

Public Comment

James Janz, Town of Atherton

Mr. Janz representing the Town of Atherton supports high-speed rail, however they are concerned about the impacts to the San Francisco Peninsula and the Town of Atherton.

Barbara Payne, City Councilmember City of Galt

Ms. Payne representing the City of Galt expressed concern over the high-speed train alignment bisecting the City of Galt and requested the Authority investigate an alternative that would bypass the city.

Bob Link, Mayor of City of Visalia

Mayor Link reported on the City's efforts to build consensus among the Central Valley communities in support of high-speed rail and best alignment through the Central Valley.

Phil Cox, Tulare County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Cox representing the County of Tulare supports the high-speed train system and the efforts of the City of Visalia.

Leland Bergstrom, Mayor City of Kingsburg

Mayor Bergstrom stated that the cities of Kingsburg, Selma and Fowler supports high-speed rail service in the Central Valley and is working with the City of Visalia in the development of an alignment alternative with a station option between Fresno and Bakersfield.

Richard Ortega, Mayor City of Tulare

Mayor Ortega supports the UP alignment alternative between Fresno and Bakersfield.

Paul Saldana, CEO Tulare Co. Economic Development Corp.

Mr. Saldana reported on the statistical and demographic information for Tulare and Kings Counties and requests the further study of alignment alternatives between Fresno and Bakersfield.

Dan Dooley, Dooley & Herr, LLP (City of Visalia Attorney)

Mr. Dooley expressed the City's concern over the exclusion of the UPRR alignment with a station in Visalia in the programmatic process.

Lynn Gorman, Fresno County Department of Public Works

Ms. Gorman representing Fresno County Board of Supervisors presented a letter from the Fresno County Board of Supervisors supporting the BNSF alignment in south Fresno County.

Clark Thompson, Fresno Council of Governments

Mr. Thompson representing Fresno COG stated that Fresno County would like to be considered for a maintenance facility.

Jack LaRochelle, City of Bakersfield

Mr. LaRochelle representing the City of Bakersfield supports the staff recommendations for Bakersfield, stating that the BNSF alignment works best for the connection to the Truxtun station site.

Larry Miller, San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee

Mr. Miller commented on the implications the high-speed train will have on Amtrak service and the potential for Amtrak to be a feeder and distribution service.

Alan Miller, TRAC

Mr. Miller representing TRAC commented on the need for the high-speed train system to serve the masses.

Eddy Moore, Planning and Conservation League

Mr. Moore representing PCL commented on the statewide ridership study, and suggested that the study contain an analysis that maximizes the air quality benefits of the system. Mr. Moore encourages the Authority to conduct a statewide growth study.

Jane Luckhardt

Ms. Luckhardt supports the Authority's decision to conduct a further study of the Northern Mountain Crossing.

Board Discussion and Action

Member Giroux recommended that an additional study be done to investigate the feasibility of an alternative route and station in the Fresno to Bakersfield segment.

Chair Petrillo recommended the Authority accept staff recommendations on identifying general alignment and station locations as preferred alternatives in the Final Program EIR/EIS with the following exception. The Board directs that an additional study of an alignment option between Fresno and Bakersfield to serve a potential Visalia station, or variations thereof, located in an existing and/or planned urbanized area, is to be conducted prior to the commencement of project-level environmental documents for this segment and submitted to the Authority for any appropriate action, provided, however, that such additional study is to be undertaken only if sufficient funds to complete it are provided in the 2005/06 FY state budget. Member Stapleton moved to approve the recommendation, Vice-Chair Adelman seconded the motion, which carried 8-0.

A copy of this report is available on the Authority website www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov or upon request.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.