

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
January 25, 2006
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order on January 25th at 1:15 p.m. at San Jose City Hall, City Council Chambers.

Members Present: Fran Florez, Chair
Marc Adelman, Vice Chair
Donna Lee Andrews, Vice Chair
Rod Diridon, Sr.
Joseph Petrillo
Lynn Schenk

Members Absent: T.J. Stapleton

Opening Comments

Chair Florez welcomed the audience for today's meeting.

City of San Jose Vice Mayor Cindy Chavez welcomed the Authority to San Jose and expressed support for the high-speed train project and the Pacheco Pass alignment alternative.

Maya Esparza representing Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren presented a letter from the Congresswoman supporting the California high-speed train project and the Pacheco Pass alignment alternative.

City of Visalia Mayor Jesus Gamboa expressed the cities continued support of the high-speed train project.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for the following Authority Meetings:

Chair Florez presented the minutes from the November 1 & 2, 2005 meeting for approval. Member Adelman moved to approve the minutes, Member Schenk seconded, which carried 6-0.

Authority Members' Meetings for Compensation

Chair Florez presented the list of meetings for compensation for approval. Member Adelman moved to approve the list of meetings for compensation, Member Andrews seconded, which carried 6-0.

Members Reports

Member Diridon reported on the meeting with Secretary Sunne McPeak to discuss the Governors proposal. Member Diridon reported that the merger between the National High-Speed Ground Transportation Association and the American Public Transit Association has been finalized.

Member Petrillo commented that he had a number of conversations with legislators and the general opinion was that there was not enough interest coming forward to them regarding the high-speed train project. Member Petrillo suggested that the public need to contact their legislators to let them know their position on the project.

Vice-Chair Andrews agreed with Member Petrillo, that there needed to be more communication directed to the legislature. Vice-Chair Andrews discussed the meeting she had, with staff, with Mayor Villagarosa's office. Vice-Chair Andrews stated that the Mayor supports this project and is ready to assist.

Member Schenk stated that Member Petrillo's point is very important, there is broad support for the high-speed train project and the legislators and the Administration needs to hear that support.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Morshed reported that the 30-day time period for challenging the EIR/EIS has passed and the Authority was not sued. This is a major milestone for the Authority. The Authority can now start the next phase of the project, provided funding is available.

Executive Director Morshed reported that Member Bob Giroux has taken a new job that conflicted with the Authority's work; therefore Member Giroux resigned his position with the Authority. Executive Director Morshed pointed out that the of seven board members only Chair Florez, and Vice-Chairs Adelman and Andrews terms are current, the Authority has two positions vacant and the remaining four positions are being filled by members whose terms have expired.

Executive Director Morshed reported that the Governor's budget, released January 10th, included \$1.3 million for the Authority's operating expense and no additional project funds were included in the budget. The Authority had requested funds to conduct an alignment study between Fresno and Bakersfield, however that request was rejected.

Executive Director Morshed reported on the various infrastructure packages being proposed by the Legislature and the Governor. Morshed reported that Assembly Speaker Nunez's proposal was still under development; Senate Pro Tempore Perata's bill (SB 1024) currently contains \$1 billion for the high-speed train project; the Governor's plan contains no funding for the high-speed train project over the next 10-years. Morshed questioned that although the Governor's plan does not call for the dissolution of the Authority, if funding for the project is not going to be available for the next decade what is the function of the Authority? Morshed stated he was informed by the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) that they will be recommending to the Legislature, based on the Governor's proposal, the Authority will have no purpose and should be eliminated. Morshed stated that based on the position of the Administration and the LAO regarding the Authority and the project, a question arises regarding the value of continuing with the Bay Area – Central Valley program EIR/EIS work.

Member Petrillo stated that the Administration and the Legislature need to recognize that the air and highway system alone cannot take us into the future and high-speed trains need to be part of the equation.

Member Diridon stated that SB 1024 provides a logical approach to building the system through an incremental development.

Update on the “Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS”

Deputy Director Dan Leavitt and Dave Mansen (Parsons) provided an overview on the initiation of the Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIR/EIS, including, the draft Scoping Report and draft Purpose and Need. More information on the Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIR/EIS is available on the Authority website at www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Public Comment

Charles Luckhardt, Luckhardt Family Ranch

Mr. Luckhardt expressed concern over the environmental impacts the Diablo Range alignment of the high-speed train system.

Bena Chang, SVLG

Ms. Chang expressed support of the Pacheco Pass alignment into San Jose.

Victor Kiernan, North American High Speed Rail Standards Association

Mr. Kiernan submitted a proposal for setting up a non-profit corporation to manage a central information exchange web site to concentrate worldwide support for the California High Speed Rail Bond.

Dan Krause, Californians for High-Speed Rail

Mr. Krause expressed his organizations support for high-speed train project.

Patrick Moore, Sierra Club

Mr. Moore expressed the Sierra Clubs support of the Altamont Pass alignment and the potential HST Bay Crossing via a new tube near the Dumbarton Bridge.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:10 pm.