



MINUTES

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG) was called to order by Joe Neves, Chairperson, at 3:00 p.m., on January 24, 2024, in the Hanford City Council Chambers, Civic Auditorium at 400 N. Douty Street, Hanford, CA.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Joe Neves, David Orth, Sid Palmerin, Alvaro Preciado, Doug Verboon

CALTRANS REPRESENTATIVE: Michael Navarro

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Kalish Morrow

STAFF PRESENT: Terri King, Joel Gandarilla, Jennifer Morales, Kayley Clay

KCAG COUNSEL PRESENT: Kris Pedersen

VISITORS PRESENT: Cynthia Baruch, NAS Lemoore, Robert Izquierdo Jr., Claire Fitiausi

A. Remote Participation Due to Emergency Circumstances

None.

B. Roll Call

Joel Gandarilla conducted roll call. A quorum was present.

C. Unscheduled Appearances

Robert Izquierdo Jr., resident of Stratford, CA, presented an issue regarding a turning lane into Stratford on SR 41. Residents are concerned about automobile accidents or fatal accidents. SR 41 is highly traveled from the Central Valley to the coast. The request was to start a conversation regarding the start of a potential project for this purpose.

Commissioner Verboon asked which entrance or entrances into Stratford was of concern. The reply was SR 41 at Laural Avenue.

Claire Fitiausi, appearing on behalf of Valley Voices, a non-profit organization in Kings County, provided a summary of the organization’s work in Kings County. She related a personal experience of anxiety as her vehicle waited on SR 41 for a safe opportunity to turn left into Stratford. One other passenger expressed anxiety from fear that their vehicle would be “rear-ended” as they waited to turn left. She stated that Valley Voices Organization encourages making a turn lane into Stratford.

Michael Navarro, Caltrans Representative, stated that Caltrans is aware of the issue and their design team is reviewing possible future projects to address it.

Commissioner Neves suggested pursuing a turn lane at SR 41 and Railroad Avenue due to available easements and no existing utility lines in the area.

Commissioner Preciado also recommended a right turn lane at Loral Avenue and SR 41 going southbound.

D. Minutes

1. Minutes of December 6, 2023

A motion was made and seconded (Verboon / Preciado) to approve the Minutes of the December 6, 2023, meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Navarro, Neves, Orth, Palmerin, Preciado, Verboon
Absent: Morrow

II. KCAG TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE

A. General Transportation Items

1. Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Appointments

Terri King stated that the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) is an advisory body to the regional transportation planning agency regarding the unmet transit needs within Kings County. There are ten members of the SSTAC whose terms are expiring and KCAG staff was able to confirm each member's desire to continue participation on the SSTAC for a three-year term, except for three current members. KCAG has received three new membership applications from Jennie Porter, Savino Perico, and James Chaney.

A motion was made and seconded (Palmerin / Orth) to approve the reappointment of seven members and the appointment of three new members to serve three-year terms on the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Navarro, Neves, Orth, Palmerin, Preciado, Verboon
Absent: Morrow

B. Caltrans Report

Michael Navarro stated that Caltrans is planning for Clean California Community Days for the week of April 19-22, 2024, however, the Clean California program will be sunsetting in 2024, so free dump days will end in 2024. Caltrans planning grants have been received and will be reviewed and submitted for final approval in June 2024.

Regarding projects, Michael Navarro reported that the Clean California Beautification project in the City of Avenal will be awarded by February 1, 2024; the SR 41 and Kettleman City roundabout project is currently in the design and right-of-way phase; the SR 41 Stratford bridge replacement construction is under construction, with detour route from SR 198 toward I-5; the interim roundabout at Bush St. and SR 41 is in the permitting phase; the SR 41 widening project in Fresno County, up to Excelsior Avenue is in the design phase; the Reef City pavement rehabilitation project along SR

41 from the Kern County line to the I-5 and SR 41 separation is in the design phase, with construction starting next winter; the pavement preservation project on SR 41 from Nevada Avenue to SR 198 is scheduled for construction in the summer of 2024; the SR 41 pavement rehabilitation near Kettleman City from Quale Ave. to Nevada Ave. will be completed in two phases, with construction completed in the summer of 2024; and the ramp from SR 99 to SR 43 coming to Hanford will be closing for a construction project in the future.

Commissioner Preciado inquired about the detour route for the Stratford bridge replacement. The reply was from SR 41 to SR 198 toward I-5, then south to SR 41.

There was some discussion regarding the traffic signal light at SR 198 and NAS Lemoore entrance. The timing between red and green traffic signals could be increased to allow more time to avoid possible collisions as SR 198 through traffic passes at 55 mph.

Commissioner Preciado stated how emergency response time to Kettleman City will be impacted by the SR 41 closures. Caltrans will be reaching out to local law enforcement.

C. Correspondence

None.

D. Staff Comments

None

E. Commissioner Comments

None.

III. KCAG COMMISSION

A. Roll Call

Joel Gandarilla conducted roll call. A quorum was present.

B. General Commissioner Items

1. Reaffirm all Actions Taken by the TPC on January 24, 2024

A motion was made and seconded (Verboon / Orth) to reaffirm all actions taken by the KCAG Transportation Policy Committee on January 24, 2024. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Neves, Orth, Palmerin, Preciado, Verboon
Absent: Morrow

2. Areawide Planning review No. 23-02

Terri King stated that the Lily of The Valley Church is applying for a competitive grant in the amount of \$600,000. The comment period ended January 12, 2024, and staff received written comments from the two agencies that the project does not duplicate or conflict with any of their programs.

A motion was made and seconded (Verboon / Orth) that the KCAG Commission's comments include and ratify those of staff and other reviewers regarding Planning Review No. 23-02. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Neves, Orth, Palmerin, Preciado, Verboon
Absent: Morrow

3. Governor's FY 2024-25 Proposed State Budget

Terri King reported that the Governor has submitted his preliminary budget for FY 2024-25. The proposed changes include transferring, moving, or replacing funds and that the proposed changes may impact Kings County directly. The Transit Intercity Rail Program changes will have an impact on our transit agency, the reduction of funds in the Active Transportation Program may impact future projects, and the available Regional Early Action Planning program funds are being cut in half which will have a major impact.

4. DOD Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation Installation Resilience Grant

Terri King stated that the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation makes available grant funding to undertake a Military Installation Resiliency Study/Risk Assessment that will chart a path for the long-term sustainability and operability of military installations and the surrounding communities. Naval Air Station Lemoore is proposing a project that will enable the Kings and Fresno Counties, surrounding local communities, together with NAS Lemoore, to assess shared vulnerabilities and risks with special attention given to unique resilience requirements for NAS Lemoore beyond their installation boundaries. These recommended resilience actions and prioritized projects may address water, energy, transportation, communications, health/medical, safety/security, food/shelter, and education.

Cynthia Baruch, NAS Lemoore, said that their Commanding Officer is aware of water vulnerabilities, aging infrastructure, transportation, and other future issues. The proposed study will focus on these and other issues. There was further discussion regarding forming partnerships to discuss the issues. There was a consensus of the Commissioners that they are supportive of KCAG pursuing the grant.

5. Nominations for the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

Terri King reported that the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley was established in 2005 as a public-private partnership focused on improving the region's economic vitality and quality of life, while working to address the unique challenges facing the region. The Partnership is guided by a board of directors, consisting of more than 30 members and there is a vacancy for the Kings County Elected position. KCAG staff has submitted requests to our member agencies to seek nominees for the Partnership position. The three nominees are required to submit a letter of interest, a current resume or bio, two-three letters of reference, and complete a detailed online application on the Governor's appointments website. There was some discussion regarding the nominee process. A list of nominees for the Partnership will be presented to the KCAG Commission in February.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Correspondence

None.

B. Staff Comments

Terri King said that there is a San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council meeting this Friday to discuss the Sacramento Valley Voice trip talking points; the Annual San Joaquin Valley Policy Conference will be April 29, 2024, in Visalia; next month's agenda will include the FY 2024-25 Transportation Development Act estimates, the draft FY 2024-25 Overall Work Program, and Second Quarter Financial Report. She noted that KCAG will be releasing the call for projects for the Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) program apportionments and that staff would provide the Cross Valley Corridor notices to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Neves said that the Board Chambers at the County Government Center may not be available until April 2024. This may impact the noticing process for the unmet transit needs.

C. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Preciado stated that the City of Avenal continues to work with the landfill contractor.

Commissioner Orth said that the Panda Express opening is delayed due to availability of an electric transformer.

Commissioner Verboon said they are interviewing for a new Fire Chief.

Commissioner Palmerin stated that Corcoran will have their first female Police Chief; the Man and Woman of the Year awards will be February 7, 2024; and the new gas station at SR 43 and 5½ Ave. is open.

V. ADJOURNMENT: Next meeting scheduled for February 28, 2024

There being no further business before the Kings County Association of Governments Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

KINGS COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Terri King, Executive Director