

Meyers Advisory Council

Monday, July 29, 2019; 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

California Conservation Corps Building
1949 Apache Ave, Meyers, CA
meyersadvisorycouncil@edcgov.us

Members:

Leon Abravanel
Joseph V. Cardinale
Trevor Coolidge, Secretary
Greg Daum
Carl Fair
Josh Marianelli
James Marino
Amanda Ross, Chair
Judith Wood, Vice Chair

1. Call Meeting to Order and Establish Quorum

Action: Adopted Agenda

Meyers Advisory Council (MAC) Chair Amanda Ross opened the meeting at 3:07 PM with MAC members Cardinale, Coolidge, Fair, Daum, Fair, Ross, and Wood present.

2. Approve Agenda

Action: Adopted Agenda

The agenda was unanimously adopted as prepared by Chair Ross and Mr. Brendan Ferry, Planning Manager with El Dorado County (EDC).

3. Correspondence

No action taken

Chair Ross noted that she had received notice of a public workshop for the US Highway 50 Hot Spot Study put on by Caltrans at the Town Hall in Placerville, CA from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM on July 29, 2019. MAC members in attendance were unable to attend due to the travel time and schedule conflict with the MAC meeting.

4. Minutes: May 1, 2019

Action: Approved Minutes

The prior meeting minutes were unanimously adopted.

5. Public Matters: Informational items and persons wishing to address the Council regarding non-agenda items

No action taken – received statements regarding non-agenda items

A member of the public, Mr. Charles Willett spoke on behalf of Tahoe Honey Company indicating that he would like to establish a local business and indicated that he would be requesting changes to or approval of variances to EDC rules and regulations pertaining to cannabis. He indicated that he saw his business as a potential source of tax revenue and that businesses like his would emerge in the City of South Lake Tahoe instead of Meyers if EDC did not move forward with updates or changes. Mr. Ferry thanked Mr. Willett for his comments and advised that the MAC was not a regulatory body.

A member of the public, Ms. Mo Hieronimus-Dimercurio inquired where the meeting minutes and agendas could be found. Chair Ross advised that they were available on the EDC website's Meyers Community page (<https://www.edcgov.us/meyers>).

6A. County Snow Removal Presentation

No action taken – received presentation

Mr. Kent Taylor, Equipment Superintendent with El Dorado County, provided a presentation that reviewed the EDC's existing snow removal equipment, funding, and laid out a proposal for the lease or procurement of new equipment and required funding. Mr. Taylor detailed the challenges with the current equipment; a collection of eight motor graders from 2005 currently at twice their expected life span, a 1990 grader for which parts are no longer available, and five rotary plows from the 1970s, in addition to two newer plow trucks and sanders. Mr. Taylor shared that during the most recent winter storms, 35-percent of the equipment was offline due to mechanical issues and difficulty sourcing obsolete and discontinued parts at very high costs, such as \$30,000 to replace an axle or transmission. They present high amounts of diesel particulate from the exhaust emissions that are able to continue operating under a CARB exemption for dedicated snow removal equipment, in addition to oil and hydraulic leaks impacting the environment. Mr. Taylor noted the impacts of downtime that included EDC repair crews working in hazardous conditions, impacts on the traveling public, and impacts on emergency response for situations in which EMS units are unable to reach emergencies due to unplowed roads.

After identifying the current challenges for EDC's snow removal operations, Mr. Taylor identified a new approach that the EDCDOT was pursuing that would involve seasonal rentals of loaders and graders to keep the fleet fresh and eliminate having equipment sit idle during the summer due to the equipment being purchased with dedicated snow removal funds that restrict the use of the equipment. Grad ers were identified as costing over \$400,000 to purchase while rotary plows exceed \$500,000 when purchased outright. The main units would be leased while the snow attachments, such as plow blades with end gates and blowers, would be purchased. Mr. Taylor presented that the County had studied the efficiencies gained by loaders and would be seeking to lease four loaders and four graders to optimize removal operations; the loaders are more maneuverable, require less operator skill in comparison to graders, and can accept either plow or blower attachments.

To implement the proposed snow removal equipment plan, Mr. Taylor presented that EDC might seek to increase the current \$20 parcel snow removal fee that has remained unchanged since the 1980s to \$80 annually in an effort to increase revenue dedicated to snow removal from \$136,000 to \$544,000.

Following the presentation, comments and several questions from the public were received. One question asked was if the use of transit occupancy tax (TOT) revenue could be used instead of the parcel tax – it was indicated that TOT was not available. Another member of the public asked if the parcel fee would be restricted to use in the area where the funds were collected (CSA-3) – it was indicated they would be restricted. A question was also asked if the proposed parcel fee would free up road maintenance funds from snow removal to be used on the roads – it was indicated that a majority of the offset funding would come back to the Tahoe Basin, but not necessarily all of it. A member of the audience stated that he felt that EDC should seek funding from other funds and not try to raise funds from taxpayers – a response from EDC representatives was that the parcel fee was an option being presented. Two additional members of the audience stated that they would happily pay an additional \$60 per year for improved snow removal due to winter road conditions that prevented them from being able to go to work.

6B. Lake Valley Fire Presentation on Potential Special Tax Assessment

No action taken – received presentation

Mr. Gary Moore, the Board President for Lake Valley Fire (LVF), provided a presentation and update on a proposed special tax assessment dedicated to aging fire equipment, breathing apparatus and other safety equipment. Mr. Moore indicated that LVF's Board had approved a proposal to pursue a parcel tax of \$75 annually following an updated survey that indicated the amount residents would support for in continued quality service. In reviewing the survey results, LVF reevaluated pursuing a simple majority that would not have restricted the funding and instead is pursuing a special purpose tax that requires over 66% and would result in the funds being restricted to the proposed purpose and could not be used for other uses.

Mr. Moore reviewed the increased cost of fire engines, with old units costing \$300,000 and new units costing \$900,000. He also shared the story of a recently failed breathing apparatus. Mr. Moore was joined by LVF firefighter Mr. Dusty LaChapelle who stressed that the last funding measure was implemented in 1986 and had never been increased for inflation – without new funding, Mr. LaChapelle indicated that quality of services would decline.

LVF received comments and questions from the public following their presentation. One member of the public asked about fundraising options instead of a tax. Mr. LaChapelle noted that LVF holds an annual Firefighter Ball that raises about \$15,000 annually, which is far less than the funding needs they are facing. Another member of the public asked if the new revenue would go into a dedicated fund – Mr. Moore confirmed that it would be restricted and go into a dedicated fund. Another member of the public asked about how the costs of tourism are recovered, LVF Chief Alameda responded that LVF does seek recovery from response costs from insurance companies and that a potential vacation rental inspection program could bring in additional funds to help cover the costs of responding to tourism related incidents.

6C. Discussion on California Tahoe Conservancy Asset Lands

No action taken – received presentation

Mr. Kevin Prior, Chief Administrative Officer with the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC), provided a brief presentation regarding the sale of asset lands. The CTC will be seeking approval from their Board on at 9:00 AM on August 21, 2019 at the CCC's building. The meeting will include a tour of nine parcels in the Meyers area as part of the meeting. Mr. Prior wanted the audience and MAC to be aware of the meeting and provided a brief history of the history of the asset lands and the proposed process in moving forward.

The CTC owns approximately 4,700 parcels that are environmentally sensitive, but the parcels identified as asset lands are not environmentally sensitive and are located in town centers identified in the Regional Plan adopted by TRPA in 2012. In 2014 CTC identified a total of 17 parcels around the basin that could be used to help implement area plans in Kings Beach, South Lake Tahoe, and Meyers.

Mr. Prior asked for all public comments to be provided at the CTC's meeting or by letter. At the closure of Mr. Prior's presentation, one member of the public asked if the nine parcels being considered were in the Meyers Area Plan and Mr. Prior confirmed that they were. Another member of the public asked where the area plan was located and was directed to the Meyers Community page on the EDC website (<https://www.edcgov.us/meyers>).

6D. Discussion of Potential MAC Sub-Committee to Work on Re- Establishing Transit Service in Meyers

Action: Form a subcommittee to promote transit into Meyers

Chair Ross noted that there is no transit service to Meyers from the west and that adding service would help reduce traffic and get tourists out of cars. Vice Chair Wood expressed interest, but noted that funding would likely have to originate from out of the Tahoe Basin. It was further discussed that there is bus service from Placerville to Sacramento, but nothing to Meyers and Tahoe, and that the service would be a great benefit. Chair Ross moved to form a subcommittee to promote transit into Meyers and it was unanimously adopted.

6E. Discussion of Meyers Area Plan Policy 5.1 – Chain Control Action Plan

Action: Draft a letter seeking a Chain Control Action plan from Caltrans and presentation to the MAC regarding chain control and the new roundabout.

Discussion occurred noting the loss of chain-up area following the construction of the new roundabout at the intersection of Highway 89 and US 50 in Meyers. Mr. Donald Palaroan, a member of the audience and engineer with El Dorado County DOT, indicated that Caltrans is pushing for chain up to occur east of the roundabout in advance of motorists arriving in Meyers. A member of the public indicated that they had heard that Caltrans thought motorists would chain up prior to getting to Meyers, while another member of the public indicated they had heard that Caltrans intended for motorists to chain-up on local streets.

Through discussion and additional comments from the audience, there was significant concern regarding the roundabout’s impacts on chain control operations and associated traffic congestion, the location that tourists would chain-up, lack of chain control signage on approaching roads, overall impact on businesses, and impacts on residents in the Meyers area.

Based on the concerns of the MAC and comments received from the audience, Chair Ross moved to draft a letter seeking a Chain Control Action plan from Caltrans and presentation to the MAC regarding chain control and the new roundabout. The motion unanimously passed.

6F. Update from Sub-Committee on Welcome to Meyers Sign

No action taken – update provided

A discussion occurred regarding the Welcome to Meyers signage, contacts made and possible locations. Chair Ross noted that broad roadside shoulder at South Upper Truckee and US 50 that was recently used for staging by SW Gas and Caltrans contractors. Secretary Coolidge noted a positive discussion with a Caltrans staff member regarding the potential for placing signage in the new roundabout and contact with a CTC staff member regarding possible placement on a CTC parcel. Mr. Kenny Curtzwiler, a member of the audience, offered the suggestion of using the old Pinecone Plaza sign and moving it next to the Meyers heritage tree. A member of the public indicated a preference for re-opening the old rest stop in Meyers over a new sign; it was clarified that the MAC plays an advisory role, is not in a position to provide funding, and the sign effort is led by the Meyers Community Foundation. From the audience, Mrs. Rene Brejc, President of the Meyers Community Foundation, outlined the role of her organization in implementing the welcome signage and noted interest in having signs on both ends of Meyers, potentially with a second sign installed in combination with the possible EDC DOT project at Pioneer Trail and US 50.

7. Adjourn

Action: Next MAC meeting set for October 2, 2019 at 3 PM in the CCC building.