



Westport Municipal Advisory Council

P. O. Box 307, Westport, CA 95488

www.westportmac.org

Summary Minutes – April 2, 2015

- 1) **Roll Call** – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. The following were present: Thad Van Bueren, Sally Grigg, Kevin Michel, Bill Knapp
- 2) **Approval of the minutes of the March 3, 2015 meeting** – The minutes were approved as submitted by unanimous vote, having been moved by Sally Grigg and seconded by Kevin Michel.
- 3) **Public Expression—(Discussion Only)** – None at this time. The following community members were in attendance and participated in scheduled agenda items; Lesli Langslet, Ginny Feth-Michel, Gary Quinton, Lee Tepper, Dorine Real, Peter Dumars, Frank Maurice.
- 4) **New Business—Discussion and Possible Action**
 - a) Special Community Forum with Supervisor Dan Gjerde – a lively discussion among Supervisor Dan Gjerde and everyone in the room was held. The main discussion points are listed below:
 - Road maintenance is a significant issue for Mendocino Co. There are about 650 miles of paved road under county jurisdiction. Latest budget got a \$1M increase. Mendocino Co road status grade is 39 (max score is 100). If no improvement it will drop to 27. BoS is looking into instituting a Road Tax, which would come from sales in Ukiah and Fort Bragg. The county gets a very small percentage of the gas tax, included in the price when you fill your tank. Most goes to State and Federal.
 - In general County revenue is stagnate, with no good opportunities for increase. Increasing efficiency, getting more done with equal or fewer County employees, is currently the primary strategy. A big component of holding down spending is trying to contain pension costs.
 - Infrastructure was a big issue for local residents. Roads (covered above), electric power (PG&E), phone (AT&T and several cell service only providers). Residents reported long duration power and phone outages, several days at a time. In general land line phone service is not good, poor connections and temporary loss of service even without major storms. Dan indicated that the PUC was a resource to help ensure infrastructure. Kevin Michel will be the WMAC point person to contact PUC. Also, AT&T has a Government Relations person, and a service contact whose contact info he would provide to the WMAC. Sally Grigg will be the WMAC point person to contact AT&T.
 - Economic opportunity for rural areas and small Villages like Westport was discussed. Zoning, primarily controlled by the Mendocino Coastal Plan, was identified as a barrier to creating work opportunities within the WMAC Sphere of Influence. Live – work cluster zoning has been utilized in a few inland developments, but does not seem possible in our

Coastal Zone. Lack of reliable communications, especially Broadband, was also noted as a barrier to economic opportunities in the Westport area.

- Traffic speed control in the Village limits was brought up. Several years ago WMAC engaged CalTrans to address speed control, discovering that the current posted speed limits were the minimum allowed by CalTrans rules. It was proposed that WMAC revisit the idea of having radar controlled speed limit signs, which show a vehicles actual speed along with the posted limit, installed.
- Supervisor Gjerde mentioned he was on a Water Issues committee and asked about the status of the Water District serving the Village of Westport. He mentioned we are in the fourth year of a drought with no end in sight. There wasn't anyone in attendance that could represent the local Water District. WMAC will facilitate a contact between the Water District Board and Supervisor Gjerde.

b) AT&T Infrastructure – Discussion related to AT&T is recorded in item 4)a) above.

c) Broadband Update – Bill Knapp reported on three changes related to Broadband:

- During the last 9 to 12 months all of the Satellite services have started offering a higher bandwidth service based on new technology. It is capable of supporting streaming movies (like Netflix), video phone calls (like Skype), and VOIP (like Vonage). Hughes and Exede are the two most prominent suppliers in our area. Rates range around \$70 to \$110 per month, with the primary difference in cost being the amount of data you can transfer during the month.
- Willits on Line was the recipient of a Grant from the State of California that has provision for providing Broadband service to the immediate Westport area. The link to the Broadband backbone would be via Microwave transmission “over the hill” and then distribution over existing copper phone lines with DSL technology. The coverage area would be a maximum of 5 miles from the AT&T distribution box located on Pacific Ave. in the Westport Village. No schedule has been made available by Willits on Line at this time.
- A relatively new startup, with roots in the Bay Area the De Novo Group, has started to provide Broadband service on the Mendocino Coast. Its name is Further Reach, www.furtherreach.net, with a stated goal of bringing Connectivity to Rural Northern California. They obtained bandwidth by purchasing a part of the Trans-Pacific Cable that runs from Manchester to Hawaii. They use line of sight high bandwidth radio transmission to relay and distribute the broadband internet connection to each endpoint (customer). There are currently no plans for getting as far north as Westport, they have brought service to Elk and are working in the Albion Ridge area. On an optimistic note, there is line of sight from the hills above Bruhel Point to Manchester. They are soliciting requests for service and possible relay tower locations.

5) Old Business—Discussion and Possible Action

- a) Westport bike lane ATP Grant Reapplication – Investigation and discussion with MCOG representatives revealed that due to the structure of the qualifying criterial, Westport fails to achieve a grade that allows its applications to be reviewed. A significant contributor to Westport's low “score” is the lack of any serious traffic accidents in the area being

considered for improvement. WMAC will not expend any further effort for this category of grants at this time.

- b) Update on CalTrans Seaside Project - CalTrans will soon be starting a major road improvement project along Hwy 1 south of Seaside Beach. The plan is for a widening, providing 4' shoulders, and regrading the hill that goes from Seaside Beach up to the Ocean Meadows subdivision north entrance. The project will include a significant improvement in the parking area at the beach of approximately 25 spaces on both sides of Hwy 1, including ADA Handicapped spots. One lane traffic, regulated by automatic stop and go lights, will be in effect for about a year.

6) Announcements/Correspondence—(Discussion Only)

WMAC alternate Director vacancy – The vacancy for the alternate Director has been open for several months. Discussion indicated that the Board would prefer recruiting a resident of the Village of Westport proper, as all current Directors reside outside the Village boundary. An article in the Westport Wave monthly newsletter and personal contact were discussed as possible means of recruitment.

- 7) **Set preliminary agenda for next meeting** – Meeting date will be the 1st Tuesday, May 5, 2015

- a) Telephone service update

- b) Broadband update

- c) PUC update

- 8) **Adjournment** – Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM