

**MINUTES OF THE
PUBLIC WORKS/SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020 - 5:30 PM
DESTIN CITY HALL BOARDROOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Ramswell called the Public Works/Safety Committee to order on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.; which was followed by Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Anthony Ramswell
Kevin Schmidt
Jim Wood, Jr.
Mike Parker
Richard Hickey

Members Absent

Sam Perman
Tom Weidenhamer

Staff

Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk
Michael Burgess, PW Director

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 12, 2019

Motion by Committee member Wood seconded by Committee member Parker; the members voted 4-0 to approve the November 12, 2019 minutes as written. Committee member Schmidt was not present for the vote.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

A) Annual Report & Work Plan

The need to get the 2019 Annual Report and 2020 Work Plans finalized in order to schedule it for presentation to City Council was briefly discussed. The Chairman agreed to meet with Mr. Burgess to work on it prior to their next meeting.

B) Guardrail Installation on Airport Road

According to Mr. Burgess, he, the City Manager and the City Engineer met with Volkert Engineering and developed a task order for the guardrail design which, when finalized, will be presented to City Council for their approval at the next meeting. He described the plan for the guardrails to be located between the ribbon curve and the sidewalk and a second one on the interior of the curve on the northern side of the roadway.

Committee member Hickey asked what the projected cost of the project is. According to Mr. Burgess, the initial cost for Engineer to do the design work is \$30k and the estimate for construction from Continuing Services Contractor is mid \$60k range. However, Okaloosa county recently removed their guardrails they had at the James Lee Park and donated them to the city, so they can be used for this project if they pass inspection. Committee member Hickey asked if there are any plans for that area of the roadway so if anything that is put in, won't be torn out in the future. According to Mr. Burgess, the area is currently being surveyed in advance of the placement for the high friction road treatment on the area of the curve.

Committee member Wood asked if there is any liability to the city with the guardrail system after its installed. According to Mr. Burgess this type of system was recommended by the city's insurance carrier.

Chairman Ramswell asked how long he anticipates the design to take. According to Mr. Burgess, the last estimate would be about 6-weeks.

C) LSV Policy, Review of Council Proposal & Revised Map

OCSO Capt. Nix explained that there were 45 traffic crashes on Airport Road in 2019 and this roadway is the second leading road in the city for traffic crashes. He spoke of how the Sheriff is concerned with allowing LSV's on Airport Road because of that very problem. He spoke of the amount of anger that could potentially be caused by someone driving an LSV and backing up traffic during high peak season.

According to Mr. Burgess there are four roadways that this committee recommended to Council to allow LSV's on:

- Airport Road
- Commons Drive between Indian Bayou Trail and Airport Road
- Indian Bayou Trail from the roundabout to Hwy 98
- Main Street South to 98 Palms

Adding that travelling on US 98 is strictly prohibited and can only be crossed at major intersections with traffic lights.

Committee member Wood pointed out that the words "Golf Cart" and "Low Speed Vehicle (LSV)" are not interchangeable because they are two different things with different meanings. He then questioned staff if it is the goal of the city for people to be able to transit east and west through the city on an LSV. Adding that if that is not the goal, then Airport Road is not needed.

According to Capt. Nix, if the ultimate goal is to designate Airport Road as an LSV allowed road then there needs to be signage that they can only be operated in the right lane only.

Committee member Schmidt spoke of not being in favor of allowing LSV's on Airport Road and proposed leaning in the side of the Sheriff's recommendation and removing it from the policy.

Motion by Committee member Schmidt to take the recommendation of the Sheriff's Department and remove Airport Road from the proposed list of allowable streets for LSV's with Committee member Hickey providing the second. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

Motion for staff to submit the proposed map as is with the exception of removing Airport Road, as recommended by the Sheriff's Department, with Committee member Wood providing the second. In discussion, Committee member Wood asked for clarification on the map for Indian Bayou Trail, once the traffic light is in operation, would people driving an LSV be able to cross the intersection? According to Mr. Burgess, that is correct, they would be able to cross over to Restaurant Row. The motion passed unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

D) 1/2 Cent Sales Tax Workshop

Mr. Burgess informed the members that there will be a surtax workshop coming up this month for Council to determine how to spend the funds.

The Chairman spoke of how some of funds should still be allocated to the much needed repairs to the sidewalks in the city.

E) Reorganization of Public Services & Community Development

Mr. Burgess explained that the Engineering Department positions has been moved to the Community Development Department and housed at the City Hall Annex. Those positions include the City Engineer, the Engineering Assistant and the Stormwater Flood Plain Manager.

F) Resignation of Tim Pietenpol, Deputy Public Services Director

Mr. Burgess explained to the members that Mr. Pietenpol resigned in November, the position has been advertised and interviews would start soon. He also spoke of how Travis Bailey, who was a Maintenance Technician, has transferred to the Parks & Recreation Department and will be the Program Coordinator, which is an excellent move since his career prior to working for the City was in Recreation. Also, Terry Greenwell, who worked in Public Services, resigned as well; to focus on his personal business.

G) Sidewalk Repairs

Mr. Burgess spoke how the shop mechanic got one of the inoperable concrete grinders repaired and staff has been out in the field inspecting and grinding sidewalks that needed to be ground down to prevent trips and falls. He also informed them of some sidewalk replacements on Azealia next to Whataburger.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

➤ Annual Report & Work Plans

6. BICYCLE SUB COMMITTEE REPORT: Nothing

7. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

- **Committee member Wood** – Spoke of how he's been tracking speed on Airport Road for 12-years and how the Sheriff's reports he receives is concerning on how many warnings v. tickets are written. The average is about 75% more warnings than tickets written on Airport Road; and how that is concerning, especially on a road where speeding is a problem. He also spoke of the constant problem of people parking in the right-of-way and on sidewalks. He briefly mentioned he parked his wife's car on the side road and the very same day got a warning from Code Enforcement but a neighbor up the street, that has several cars parked in the road at all times of the day never seems to get a warning or fine. Not to mention the various work trucks he sees

parked on or across sidewalks throughout the city. And mentioned that to him, there is not enough consistency for parking issues.

- **Committee member Schmidt** – Spoke of the flashing speed signs the City of Fort Walton Beach have put up in Hollywood Blvd. that flash the speed people are travelling when entering its range. He explained that he contacted the city and found out that they cost about \$6k for each. Which is significantly less than the total cost for the guardrails with the design and installation being close to \$100k, not including the cost when they will have to be replaced from getting hit. He spoke of how he feels the signs would be more beneficial than the guardrail system and would like to present the alternative to Council at their upcoming meeting for their consideration. He also questioned if the guardrails are permanent or a temporary solution. And he just cannot see spending that amount of money for something that may not even be permanent.

Motion by Committee member Schmidt to recommend to the City Council to install two flashing speed limit signs on Airport Road immediately instead of the guardrail system with Committee member Wood providing the second. In discussion, Committee member Hickey suggested providing both options to Council.

Motion by Committee member Hickey to amend Committee member Schmidt's motion to recommend to the City Council consider installing the flashing lights in lieu of or in addition to the guardrail barriers with Committee member Parker providing the second. The amended motion passed 5-1 with Committee member Wood dissenting.

- **Committee member Hickey** – Questioned why the surf conditions flag warning system are not flying. It was explained that when there are not lifeguards are not on the beach the flags are not flown. Mr. Burgess added that staff is in the process of obtaining quotes to replace the flagpole that was taken out from a previous storm. Committee member Hickey also asked about e-Scooters rentals. Mr. Burgess informed him that Council addressed those a few months ago and was not in favor of those in the city. Adding that he will put together an information packet to present to them at their next meeting as well as one for bicycles.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

➤ **Public Services Status Report – Mr. Burgess provided an update on the following items:**

- 1) **Stahlman/US98 Interchange Assessment** – Council will address a task order from Volkert Engineering to perform an assessment of the Stahlman Ave./U.S. 98 interchange at their upcoming meeting.
- 2) **Harbor Pump Camera** – Staff recently installed a camera to be able to monitor the pump better to ensure that it's running properly.
- 3) **Security Upgrades at City Hall** – All doors to the internal offices now require a security badge to enter for staff, Mayor & City Council members.
- 4) **Pre-Cut Thermoplastic** – These are to replace worn stop-bars and crosswalks in the city.
- 5) **RPMs, Chevrons on Airport Road** – A past road safety audit concluded that the Reflective Panel Markers (RPM) were in need of being replaced, and currently all have been replaced. As

well as the new chevron signage for Airport Road and the "SLOW DOWN" Thermoplastic letters on the roadway are on schedule to be put down as well.

- 6) **Street Stripping Priorities/Policy** – Unearmarked road stripping for roads that are not on the Capital Improvements list for resurfacing needs to be addressed. He informed the members that he would be providing them with a list of roads in need as well as creating and addressing a policy to recommend to City Council to govern the stripping and budgeting for them.
- 7) **Annual Tree Trimming** – Staff is trimming back and up bushes and tree limbs from sidewalks and street corners starting in Crystal Beach and heading west. He also provided information on how billboards have a State Statute to ensure they are visible from the roadways from trees and how that is handled.
- 8) **City Hall Generator** – Brand new Generac 130kw generator has been installed at City Hall and all that is left is to have Okaloosa Gas, whose quote was the lowest, come out to connect the natural gas to it. Their quote was \$975.00.
- 9) **Equipment Purchases** – John Deere Gator, 6-new trucks for various department replacements. As well as a new GPS unit for surveys and inventory signs and sidewalks and any other items that may need surveyed in the city limits.
- 10) **Process Maps and SOPs, APWA Accreditation** – Mr. Burgess explained that he is in the process of identifying key functions for the City Manager and so far has identified 31 processes from his department. He added that he then will create a flow chart for each process and develop a standard operation process for each. This will help with training of new employees and staying consistent with the handling of various equipment. Also, the APWA Accreditation Process he is working towards will help him to create a Public Works Operation Manual.
- 11) **Energy Audit** – Staff is working towards identify cost savings to the city in regard to the power bills and the Finance Director identified 100 meters that the city is being billed for monthly. Public Services staff went out in the field and identified meters and took pictures of each. He further explained that some were not located, and some are suspect and he will provide an update once the determination is made.

Committee member Wood asked if that includes the power outlets on the Harbor Boardwalk. According that is something that will be investigated later once staff compiles the information on the billing process and is able to vet all the invoices that the city is being billed for.

➤ **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

Committee member Hickey asked if staff had a means of tracking the motions and actions from the meetings. Committee member Schmidt spoke of the Tracking Chart Matrix that Council member Menchel used to keep track of and discuss the status at each subsequent meeting when he was the Chairman. And how after he was elected Councilmember, it somehow got dropped by the wayside. However, he feels they could definitely resurrect it to keep track of items of concern and issues.

Councilmember Menchel spoke of the how he tried to press upon his fellow Council members the importance of the actions that come as a result of committee meetings at Council Visioning Sessions and ultimately; the minutes are now placed on the Consent Agenda instead of Council's individual inboxes and are getting seen. He also suggested to the members that when they make a motion for anything they want immediate attention is to contact the City Clerk the following day after their meeting and get scheduled to come before Council at their next meeting.

In regards to their 2019 Annual Report, it was created prior to him being elected to Council and turned it into staff. He also mentioned that he is going to discuss with Council traffic enforcement for Airport Road to actually write more speeding tickets; noting how social media will get the word out that tickets are being written. He spoke of the reasoning behind creating the tracking sheet and how it helps to keep staff accountable for different projects and issues but also helps at the end of the year when they need to create their Annual Report.

And finally, he stated that he is the one that suggested this committee to be in charge of the Surtax Task Force instead of creating a separate committee for Council to appoint citizens to meet on how to spend the funds. He mentioned how he feels they are the best group of members the city has to review and suggest how to best spend the funds.

Committee Wood spoke of creating a basic priority list, similar to what the TPO uses to set aside funds for projects that Council wants to focus on to get funded and accomplished.

Councilmember Menchel also spoke of Major Brown's speeding problems on Dolphin Street and how the speed study so far has never been performed during peak season and still needs to be addressed this coming season.

➤ **Directors Report** – Mr. Burgess informed the members that there will be a Sunshine Law Workshop on Friday, January 30th. He also asked the members email him for items or issues and no longer send them to him as a text message.

Having no further business at this time, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Adopted and approved this

10th

day of

March

2020

Anthony Ramswell, Chairman

Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk