

**ASHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
May 28, 2015**

CALL TO ORDER: Chair David Young called the meeting to order at 6:03p.m. in the Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

Commissioners Present: David Young, Joe Graf, Corinne Viéville, Danielle Amarotico, Dominic Barth

Commissioners Absent: Alan Bender

Staff Present: Mike Faught, Scott Fleury, Tami De Mille-Campos, Whitney Dennis, and Officer Steve MacLennan

Council Liaison Present: Michael Morris

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair David Young welcomed new commissioner, Dominic Barth. All Commissioners introduced themselves around the table. Barth explained his background as recently from New York where he studied Historic Preservation, Urban Design and Architecture.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes – April 23, 2015

The minutes were discussed and approved as amended.

PUBLIC FORUM

Huelz Gutcheon, 2253 Hwy 99, addressed the Commission discussing the future of solar energy and electric transportation. Gutcheon stressed that the solution to climate change is technological. Gutcheon gave examples of current technology including electric buses. Gutcheon explained that the future of transportation is going to be quick.

Lee Nowman, 320 ½ Bridge Street, addressed the Commission as a volunteer representing the Southern Oregon University (SOU) Bike Program. Nowman explained that he helped set-up and implement the SOU Bike Program as part of his capstone project while he was in attendance there. Nowman described the success of his program including receiving \$33,000 from student funds to assist with purchasing bikes and the installation of two bike fix-it stations; 35 bikes are available for rent. Nowman added that his group is generating biker culture on campus and is interested in continued dialogue with the Transportation Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

A. CIP & Biennium Budget Update

Fleury presented an overview of the budget process describing the Public Works and Transportation Commission budgets and what to expect in the next biennium. Fleury discussed the budget timeline explaining that the original Budget Presentation took place on May 14th with the final budget to be adopted on June 16th by City Council. Discussion continued about the process noting that the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) budget was previously reviewed and approved by Council. The approved CIP included some of the Transportation Commission recommendations of priority Public Works projects.

Fleury explained that the Transportation Commission budget would have the same allotment as previous years with \$3,000 for traffic safety and \$2000 for the bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Fleury stated

that Rachel Dials and Egon Dubois will be on the schedule for next month to discuss the bicycle education program and supplemental funding.

Fleury highlighted the following Capital Improvement Projects:

1. Oak Street / Railroad Pedestrian Crossing – The railroad will be doing their portion of safety improvements through the summer. City staff and the Railroad Project Manager are coordinating efforts based on the rail order which outlines responsibility of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Rail, Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad (CORP), and the City of Ashland. The City's portion consists of a sidewalk connection between Ashland Lumber Company and the Plexus Building to create a pedestrian connection. Once the railroad and crossing arm improvements are complete, the pedestrian improvements will follow.
2. Walker Avenue Sidewalk / Safe Route to School Project – The project went out to bid with Knife River being awarded the contract. Sidewalk connection to be fully completed before the beginning of the new school year.
3. Hersey Avenue Sidewalk Connection – OBEC Engineering has been awarded the engineering portion of the project. Staff expects construction of the sidewalk infill project to start within the next two years.
4. Nevada Street Bridge – Looking to seek additional grant funding to supplement original grant and begin engineering, carry over project from last year.
5. Washington Street Connection – A roadway connection between Tolman Creek Rd. and Washington St. over Hamilton Creek.

Fleury briefly outlined the Transportation System Plan (TSP) priority study at Tolman Creek / Siskiyou Blvd/ Hwy 99 Intersection. The Northbound Speed Reduction Treatment Study will be performed by Kim Parducci of Southern Oregon Transportation Engineering to check for signal warrants and analyze the ability of speed reduction treatments as outlined in the TSP.

Fleury stated that if the budget is approved, there will be thirty eight (38) million dollars in infrastructure improvements over the next two years.

B. Street User Fee Study Update and Roadway Testing

Fleury informed the Commission that Hansford Economic Consulting (HEC) is continuing the Street User Fee Study. HEC is evaluating the current street user fee methodology and will be recommending changes. In addition, HEC will use street system evaluation report to determine the appropriate user fee in order to meet pavement maintenance strategy goals. It was explained that the current street user fee will be updated based on trip generation which determines who generates the most trips and the most impact to the network. Fleury stated previous assessments include deflection and core testing on the collector and arterial roadways to determine the level of improvement needed to maintain the roadway. Core pavement services were outlined as a priority this budget cycle. Four temporary employees and a new paver were requested during the budget process in order to increase preventative maintenance core services. Fleury stated that additional funds for slurry sealing were also requested to meet the maintenance strategy. The Street User Fee Study is to be finalized by October and presented to City Council.

Young spoke of the benefits of doing preventative maintenance as opposed to full reconstruction road repairs. The costs of both methods were outlined with preventative maintenance costing \$285,000 compared to 1.4 million for full road reconstruction, per mile. Young questioned the condition of Hersey Street. Faught explained that Hersey Street is a good example of the level of deterioration that can occur during the last five years of a road lifecycle. Barth questioned if the maintenance plan was currently in place. Faught explained that the first step would be to identify the street user fee charges in relation to the costs of improvement. Graf questioned if the Transportation Commission would review the findings of this study before it is presented to Council in October. Faught explained, the Transportation Commission will have the opportunity to review if the plan is finished prior to the October Council date, if not, then a review would be provided after. Graf stated it is important for Council to understand how the Street User Fee is calculated.

C. Election of Officers

Faught briefly outlined that a commission Chair can hold their position for three consecutive years explaining that Young had just finished his third year in the position.

Viéville motioned to nominate Joe Graf as Chair of the Transportation Commission; Amarotico seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Young opened up the discussion for the Co-Chair position asking for any volunteers.

Viéville motioned to nominate Dave Young as Co-Chair; Amarotico seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

FOLLOW UP ITEMS

A. Geneva Park Site Distance

Fleury outlined the previous discussion regarding the site distance issue for the Geneva Park driveway on B St. The Transportation Commission was interested in relative street widths and crash data on similar roadways in Ashland. The Commission also asked for an assessment of street widening and taking full advantage of the current right of way. Fleury is checking in with the Planning Department to see if there is any potential development of the lot across the street from Geneva Park. Fleury will collect additional data and bring back to the Commission for review at the next meeting.

B. United Way Bike Rack

Fleury updated the Commissioners explaining that Connie Wilkerson, of United Way, was unsuccessful at obtaining grant funding for the bike lockers she previously presented to the Transportation Commission. She was, however, successful at receiving funding for the Zagster bike racks. Amarotico asked for a history of how the discussion came about. Fleury explained that United Way was seeking to find more bike lock-up locations to assist individuals who travel with public transportation and are unable to bring their bikes with them on the bus.

Amarotico questioned what the City standard is for bike rack installation. Fleury explained that there is a standard for location of installation and specifications, however there is flexibility. Morris questioned who sets the standard. Faught explained that the City Council sets the standards. Young was concerned that the current design would not be identified as a bike rack and reminded the Transportation Commission that

the program is well-intentioned but there have been no commitments to this program. Graf wondered if this should also go to the Downtown Parking Management and Circulation Ad Hoc Advisory Committee. Young agreed that it would fall into the downtown area. Viéville questioned if the proposed placement of the bike racks on Water Street were a little far from the bus stop area. Barth wondered if there is anything that specifically encourages commuters to park their bikes, explaining that some larger cities have a program similar to a valet system, and wonders if this program included anything more than bike racks. Fleury explained that it is a grant funded option for additional bike parking and different options for bike rack locations and can be explored and reviewed as part of the Downtown Parking and Multi-Modal Circulation Plan.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Action Summary

No Updates

B. Traffic Crash Summary

Officer MacLennan was present and provided an update of crash summaries highlighting the more involved accidents.

C. Oregon Impact May Newsletter

No Updates

COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION

Fleury highlighted future agenda topics: Shared Road Status, specifically regarding Grandview and a loading zone request in front of Liquid Assets. Graf questioned the loading zone request. Faught gave a brief history and spoke about meeting with local business owners regarding the loading zone. It was further explained that during the meeting, the owners had requested a loading zone be designated in front of Liquid Assets. Faught discussed the history of using that area for a loading zone, though it is not currently designated as one. Faught is having Parducci look at the potential loading zone and make a recommendation. Young acknowledged that the City is in a position where businesses and trucking companies are coming together to make decisions.

Viéville asked for an update on the Walker Street crossing and wondered if a countdown timer is planned to be installed with the APS buttons. Fleury explained that he is still waiting on ODOT for an update and confirmed that a countdown timer is planned for the crossing. Viéville also questioned if there was a conversation with ODOT about installation of APS buttons at the Valley View crossing. Fleury explained that he was going to reach out to ODOT again for a response.

Young spoke about a local activist who addressed the intersection of Iowa Street and Walker Street on social media described an instance of children running across the street on the sidewalk shared path on the north side of Iowa and the site line dangers of the area. Young explained there were many comments regarding this incident. Young had also commented on the social forum encouraging individuals use the City process. An email was sent to Fleury describing this incident. Fleury forwarded information to Parducci for analysis of potential intersection improvements.

Morris referenced a prior question he was asked regarding the installation of street lights by the City on Crowson Rd. Fleury stated that Crowson Rd. is under County jurisdiction and knows of no plans for street light installation.

Viéville asked for clarification on the length of time before and changes recommended by the Downtown Parking Management and Circulation Ad Hoc Advisory Committee would be constructed, questioning if it was to be three years. Faught explained that the earliest would be three years dependent on the outcome of the grant application

process. Young wondered if we are not successful on the grant application what would happen. Faught explained that the Department would need to seek alternate funding for the projects.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

Viéville spoke about Public Service Announcements for completed projects. Young would like to have an agenda item to discuss the education outreach options. Amarotico asked about advertising in the City Source. The process for advertising in the City Source was explained by Fleury. Discussion to see more frequent contribution to the City Source publication continued. Young explained that a future agenda item could allow for discussion of material.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Whitney Dennis, Administrative Assistant