

Traffic and Safety Committee Meeting

February 1, 2011 Minutes

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CITY OF
REXBURG
America's Family Community

Mayor Richard Woodland

Traffic and Safety Committee Members:

Rick Robbins-Chairman
Reed Nielsen-Vice Chair
Roscoe Orton
Stephen Smith
Eric Sundberg
Lyle Wakefield
Jodi Weimer
Trudy Porter
Virginia Pratt
Erick Wills

Adam Stout-City Council Liaison
Stephen Zollinger – Staff Liaison/Attorney
John Millar – Staff Liaison/Public Works
Randy Lewis- Staff Liaison/Police Captain
Doug Barker-University Police Liaison
Natalie Schneider-City Staff/minutes

Review and Approve Minutes:

Corrections: Page 1- Change the name “SLASH” to “Salt Lake Express”. **Roscoe Orton** made the motion to approve the January 4th, 2011 Traffic Safety Committee minutes, as amended. **Stephen Smith** 2nd the motion. All voted Aye. **Motion carried.**

New Business: **Chairman Robbins** made the announcement that the City Council has made the ratification for Virginia Pratt & Erick Wills to serve on the Traffic Safety Committee; replacing Kevin Brady & Graydon Burton. City Council felt both of these individuals would add a lot of practical input and dedication. They are both great choices for this committee. Chairman Robbins also mentioned that Trudy Porter has asked to be released from serving on this Committee. A list of names will be submitted to the Mayor for another appointment to replace Mrs. Porter.

Open discussion of relevant issues: **Jodi Weimer** was unable to attend the meeting however she sent an e-mail concerning the stop light by the middle school which was read and addressed. Jodi stated that “coming from the South turning West towards World’s Gym, the stoplight seems to never turn green. I have been at that intersection for 10 minutes waiting for the light to turn three separate times.” Several members of the committee agreed that this stop light is a real concern. **John Millar** stated new cameras have recently been added at this location and may need to be adjusted. John stated he will look into it this week.

Public Works Director John Millar was asked to report on the intersection of 7th South and Millhollow. The snow banks were piled so high as to cause an obstruction of vision. It was so bad that drivers couldn’t actually see oncoming vehicles until they were out in the middle of the intersection. There was discussion concerning stop signs vs. yield signs. John stated that in lieu of changing the signing the street crew has completely knocked down the snow banks and cleared the visibility. The yield signs are adequate now that the snow has been hauled away. Discussion continued concerning other snow piles that may be causing problems. The snow piles on 7th South near the new apartments have been hauled away as well as the snow pile by the hospital that was used this last weekend as a sledding hill during the “Snow Fest” activities. **Mike Ricks** commented that at 2nd East and Poleline Road the snow pile sometimes can be an obstruction of vision on that corner. This is a very busy intersection due to the fact that both grain trucks as well as potato trucks are rolling off the hill every

day. Poleline is a narrow road and there seems to always be joggers. It is a very dangerous situation. John stated he will keep an eye on this issue and notify the street crew to keep the snow banks knocked back.

Roscoe Orton reported that there is a dangerous pot hole located at the South Rexburg Exit on the North bound on ramp to Highway 20. The pot hole is deep and at least three feet long by about a foot wide. John stated that because it is located on Highway 20 he will notify the State and they will get the pot hole filled this week. (Update: The State was notified and filled this pot hole the very next day.)

Public Works Director John Millar reported that the Idaho Transportation Department reviewed the timing of the yellow caution light on the traffic light located at South Yellowstone and 7th South. The concern has been whether the yellow light is long enough and gives adequate warning to allow trucks to come to a complete stop. It is currently set at 3.2 seconds. ITD has all others set at 3 seconds; therefore they are very reluctant to make it any longer than that standard 3 seconds. The concern is that when the caution lights deviate from the standard time then drivers begin to try and second guess the light and then there is an increase in accidents. ITD's recommendation is to lower the speed limit on South Yellowstone from 45 to 35mph. The police department is in agreement that having the speed limit the same, both going North as it is going South, will help make enforcement much easier. Discussion took place and the committee agreed to go with the expert advice from the professionals with ITD and not extend the caution light but instead lower the speed limit. **Vice Chairman Reed Nielsen** made a motion to lower the South bound traffic speed limit on South Yellowstone Highway to 35mph. **Stephen Smith 2nd** the motion. All voted Aye. **Motion carried.**

Public Works Director John Millar continued to report on the street lights. He stated there has been a lot of discussion in City Council about sequencing the lights. John stated he has also discussed this issue with ITD on numerous occasions. It is quite an involved process, the first issue is to get the lights to talk to each other and the other issue that Rexburg is dealing with is that our lights are so close together, which makes it very hard to gap them to where you have traffic movement. So where we have so many of them so close if you get a time where most traffic is through traffic and you get one car coming in somewhere in the middle it will affect all the intersections because it breaks that cycle. It works great if the lights are at least a half mile apart because then you can start to synchronize them fairly well, however ours are barely 700 feet which is just too short of gap. ITD will continue to look into sequencing Rexburg's lights using some new technology. They will keep us informed.

Chairman Robbins moved to the next item on the agenda, which was the Salt Lake Express drop off and pick up location. **Wayne Clark** representing BYU-I made the suggestion that it go back to where it used to be up at the turn around at the Manwaring, now that the construction is completed. Wayne stated that the curb going west out of the parking lot will need to be fixed weather permitting, to give better clearance as it is quite a drop now. Wayne presented a map of the campus near 1st West and 3rd South and discussion took place concerning the bus drop off near the Hart Building. When there are performing groups or ski groups the big buses park at the Hart so as people don't have to carry their equipment as far. Wayne stated that normally when there are performing groups the buses will drop off at the back dock behind the Hart. However, John Zirker will need to be notified that when there is a ski group that the buses cannot just park in the intersection because that is just too dangerous. Wayne suggested pushing the location back to the south on 1st West so as to line up on the southwest corner of the Hart. The question was asked as to how much distance was needed to the intersection for yellow curb because that would illuminate 8 or 9 parking spaces. There wouldn't be any parking stalls from where you enter the Hart Parking lot on the north to where you go up the sidewalk on the south where the 170 parking lot is located. The committee felt that there is so much pedestrian traffic at this location that taking out a few parking spaces would actually make it a safer situation. John Millar stated the City will paint the curb and as well as sign that area "No Parking" **Roscoe Orton** made the motion to move the Salt Lake Express location to the purposed location at the Manwaring and to move the bus drop off

location near the Hart Building to the south on 1st South as indicated on the campus map. **Lyle Wakefield** seconded the motion. All voted Aye. **Motion carried.**

Chairman Robbins reviewed the list of new purposed street lighting lamp locations provided by Captain Lewis from the Rexburg Police Department.

STREET LIGHTS

1. West 5th South – Rexburg Plaza area
2. South 4th West & West 5th South
3. West 5th South & 6th South
4. 6th South & South 4th West
5. West 6th South & Vallinda Ln
6. South 5th West –North of 7th South
7. 7th South & Casper Ave.
8. Casper & Elizabeth
9. Casper & Andrew Place
10. Pioneer & Anne Street.
11. 12 West & 7th South
12. 12th West & University Drive
13. 7th South & Blue Willow Drive
14. 7th South & Sunflower
15. West 5th South & South 3rd West
16. North 5th West & Chad Drive
17. Pioneer & Park Street
18. Airport Road – North of Golf Course
19. 12th West & Widdison Addition
20. Nature Park Upper Parking lot West of County Race Track
21. Main Street & 3rd West-North side
22. University Drive-from Yellowstone Hwy to 7th South
23. 7th South & Mill hollow
24. 1000 South & 12 West-Burton School area
25. Poor Lighting- 1st West & 1st South, 1st West & 2nd South, 3rd West & 4th South
26. University Blvd and Golden Beauty Drive

There was discussion on putting these locations in some sort of priority. The committee made the adjustments and will present it to City Council for their approval. **Lyle Wakefield** made the motion to accept the amended priority list of street lighting lamp locations and present it to City Council as a recommendation from the Traffic Safety Committee that these street lamps be installed as soon as possible. The committee feels that these purposed locations are critical and need to be put in immediately; especially in the expanded areas of the City that have little or no lighting at this time. The City has taken on the maintenance of these areas and needs to take on the responsibility too. **Reed Nielsen** seconded the motion. All voted Aye. **Motion carried.**

Wayne Clark informed the Committee that concerning street lighting, he has recently talked to Brent Barker with Rocky Mountain Power on the line relocation along 2nd East. He stated all the pole bases are in and the light poles are coming. They will work together with Rocky Mountain Power to get that line

moved to the other side. He mentioned that this area is of great concern with the dark nights and the students crossing the road. The lack of lighting coming down the road from the Temple makes it very dangerous. John stated he believes the City has acquired the needed right of way to complete this project. Wayne & John will make the final arrangements with Rocky Mountain Power this week.

Mike Ricks commented that every year the car manufactures are making vehicle's headlights brighter and brighter, which causes problems for our residents who are getting a little older and have stigmatisms. The concern is that there isn't enough back ground lighting to offset the oncoming car headlights. This makes it very difficult to see the pedestrians. His suggestion is to increase the lighting at the heavier used intersections. John stated the City has been addressing this issue and it seems to be successful in the areas where brighter lights are being installed. John will continue to update the lights.

Chairman Robbins turned the time over to John Millar for an update on the Hawk Traffic Signal located by Taco Time. John Millar stated there is much better compliance with the Hawk Signal. Pedestrians are beginning to be aware that this crosswalk is safe for them to use. The City crews have made an effort to work with Days Inn and Taco Time to make sure the sidewalks remain clear. Chairman Robbins mentioned the problem he has noticed is not so much with the pedestrians but with the drivers. **Doug Barker** with the Campus Police Department reported that a group of students had completed a survey done on the Hawk Traffic Signal. The students were taking an introduction class in criminal justice. As a group project the students decided to work on the Hawk Signal. A copy of the survey was passed out to the members of the Traffic Safety Committee. (See file for a copy) The student's perspective was on the driver's compliance. They found that most people don't understand how the light works. The drivers need to be educated that when they come to a flashing red light, they are to stop, look and then proceed with caution. Stephen Smith wondered if the light is half way through a cycle and then another pedestrian comes up and pushes the button will the cycle start all over again. John Millar informed the committee that yes the cycle will begin again every time the button is pushed. Discussion took place concerning putting a sign on the pole explaining to the pedestrians how the signal works and when it is safe to cross. Doug Barker mentioned he will take this issue to the Housing Office and ask them to put out a flyer to educate the students on how to work the signal light.

Mike Ricks informed the board that a serious look needs to be taken at lowering the speed limit from 35 to 25mph on South 5th West all the way down to University Blvd. There are always joggers and young mothers pushing their babies along that 24 foot road with no sidewalks. Discussion took place concerning an LID to put in sidewalks as well as a possible newspaper article notifying pedestrians to yield to traffic. The speed limit will not be lowered at this time.

Chairman Robbins moved to the last item on the agenda which was the priority list for road repairs this year. John Millar reported that the City Council has agreed to finish reconstruction of Pioneer Road including curb, gutter, bike lanes and some sidewalks. Also, 7th South from 5th West to South Yellowstone will be widened and reconstructed. A new sewer line will be put in from 5th West up to the new Stake Center as part of that project rather than just repair the road; it will be finished and widened to five lanes. Pot hole season is top on the priority list, however when the temperatures are -20 something as they have been it makes it difficult. Crews are out filling the pot holes with a cold mix as weather will allow. It has always been City policy to fill the pot holes as complaints come in. After a couple freeze/thaw cycles this time of year the fill will just come right back out, however filling the pot holes is still top priority for safety reasons.

Meeting adjourned.