

**TRAFFIC CONTROL BOARD  
MINUTES  
JUNE 28TH, 2011**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sondra Baker, Capt John Bedford, Steve Zeier, Walt Willett, Brent Krueger, James, Todd Cormier

MEMBERS ABSENT: James Knox

STAFF SUPPORT: Terry Smith, Erin Claunch, Lora Mattox, John Gibson

GUESTS: None

BUSINESS MEETING

Call to order: Chair Steve Zeier called the meeting to order at 12:14 pm in the conference room of the Public Works Building, 2224 Montana Avenue.

Minutes: Terry noted there was some question on who made and seconded the motions regarding complete streets at the May meeting. It was determined that James Knox seconded the motion recommending Council approval of the Complete Street resolution, and that Todd Cormier made the motion, with 2<sup>nd</sup> by James Knox authorizing Board Chair Steve Zeier to edit and send a letter of support. A motion for approval of the May minutes with these additions was made by Sondra Baker, seconded by Todd Cormier. Motion carried on a voice vote.

Open Public Comment: None

STAFF REPORTS

Terry Smith reported on the following projects:

1. The Rimrock Road project is on schedule and is expected to be completed by mid October. Paving from Rehberg Lane to Forsythia Blvd and milling east to Beth is completed. Minor work is remaining in this section which includes street lights and striping. The subcontractor is working on the water main between Jenny Lane & Lyndale Lane.
2. 2011 Water/Sewer Rehab started last Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Schedule #1 includes the area north of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North and east of North 33<sup>rd</sup> to North 35<sup>th</sup> Streets; contractor is COP Construction. Schedule II is 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North from N. 18<sup>th</sup> to N. 28<sup>th</sup> Streets. Western Municipal is the contractor. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue North will remain open for traffic, but will be restricted to two driving lanes.
3. The pavement overlay and striping work on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North from North 18<sup>th</sup> to North 28<sup>th</sup> has been completed. Workers are raising water valves and man hole covers to street level. Overlay and striping for 24<sup>th</sup> Street West from Central to Grand and Grand west to the BBWA is also completed. Dig out and re-compaction of some "soft spots" where old utility trenches settled

on 24<sup>th</sup> will be completed soon. MDT will be overlaying Grand Avenue from Division Street to 8<sup>th</sup> Street West this summer.

4. On June 27<sup>th</sup>, City Council awarded a construction contract to Ostermiller Construction in the amount of \$833,000 for reconstruction of Moore Lane. Construction will begin in mid July and is expected to be completed the end of October.
5. On June 27<sup>th</sup>, City Council preliminarily approved an increase to the Street Maintenance Fee. This will result in a \$29.10 annual increase for typical homeowners; with a total of \$1.3 Million per year in new funding to the Paver Program. This represents \$18.50 of the \$29.10 annual increase for a typical homeowner. The city currently has 168 miles of deferred maintenance streets. Without the increase in preventative maintenance funds this would have grown by about 3 miles per year. "Deferred Maintenance" is defined as streets where it has been over 20 yrs since the last overlay for arterial streets or more than 10 yrs since the last chip seal for local streets. With the increase PAVER funding the City expects to clear the backlog of deferred maintenance streets in approximately 10 years. The plowing of residential streets was not approved in the increase street maintenance budget.
6. Erin reported that the new pedestrian tunnel at METRA is in place on the Bench Connection project, and that work has started on the bridge over Alkali Creek.

#### Board Reports:

Lora reported on Planning Board and Planning Division activities. She stated that the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) approved the Asset Management Plan (maintenance plan for trails) at their last meeting, however, approval of the overall trail plan was delayed until August. The delay was due to the PCC requesting additional review of the Complete Streets language in the plan. The County Commissioners stated that they would approve the Trail Plan only if all language concerning Complete Streets was removed as well as any other language that could be perceived as regulatory. MDT agreed with the county concerning the complete streets language. Lora noted the document is a guiding document with information regarding non-motorized travel improvements and how to accomplish their development. Staff hopes to work with all the entities to re-word the section on Complete Streets to a more comfortable level. Planning staff will return to the Planning Board and City Council for their comments and the item will come before PCC in August.

Lora mentioned the proposed changes that could possibly affect the Billings Metropolitan Planning Organization under the proposals in the new Federal Transportation Bill. The Billings MPO could face significant reductions in federal transportation planning dollars.

Lora also noted that project applications for the next round of CTEP funding are due July 31<sup>st</sup>. Five local teams submitted proposals for the CTEP project to place a pedestrian bridge over the railroad connecting North and South 25<sup>th</sup> Streets. The selection committee will be making a recommendation soon on that project soon.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Complete Streets. Terry reported the ad hoc committee preparing the Complete Streets Resolution will appear at the City Council work session on July 18<sup>th</sup>.
2. 19<sup>th</sup> Street West north of Grand. Terry reported that stop sign control for the east-west approaches has been implemented on 19<sup>th</sup> Street West from Avenue C to Avenue F. A stop sign was also installed on the northbound approach of 18<sup>th</sup> Street West at Parkhill Drive for consistency along the 19<sup>th</sup>-Parkhill corridor.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 32<sup>nd</sup> & Henesta. Erin presented an overview of options for 32<sup>nd</sup> St West at Henesta Drive. The businesses on the west side of 32W and North of King Avenue, have asked the City if something could be done about the congestion occurring between southbound traffic and left turning movements at 32W and Henesta. During peak hours the southbound traffic is backed up through the intersection from King Avenue which causes delays for drivers making left turns onto and off from 32<sup>nd</sup> Street West. Accident records show a higher than expected incidence of left turn related accidents at the intersection as well. Options for improving conditions at 32W and Henesta were discussed, including:
  - a. Post NO LEFT TURN signs for the eastbound approach on Henesta and the northbound approach on 32W
  - b. Erecting a median barrier across the intersection on 32<sup>nd</sup> and posting advisory signing for northbound traffic to use Rosebud Lane to access the businesses west of 32<sup>nd</sup>.
  - c. Provide a right-in right-out (RIRO) access off of King Avenue West to the strip mall area west of 32<sup>nd</sup>. With a median now in place on King, there is effective control to prevent left turns at a new driveway.

Board members believed that the best alternative would be to provide RIRO access off of King Avenue. Drivers exiting the business would be forced to turn right onto King Avenue. A potential side effect would be drivers cutting thru the parking lot to avoid the congestion on 32<sup>nd</sup>.

2. Terry reported that the traffic signal at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North and North 26th is in flashing mode— red for N. 26<sup>th</sup>, and yellow for 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North. Because N. 26<sup>th</sup> between 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues has been vacated and is permanently blocked by the new federal courthouse building, the signal is no longer warranted. The signal will be flashing for a period of approximately 90 days to make sure no unforeseen problems exist before the signal is removed permanently.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 PM