

TRAFFIC CONTROL BOARD MINUTES

July 24, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT: Walt Willett, Todd Cormier, Sondra Baker, Gene Wade, Capt Bedford, Trina White

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brent Krueger

STAFF SUPPORT: Terry Smith, Debi Meling, Lora Mattox, Erin Claunch, Zach Heid

GUESTS: None

BUSINESS MEETING:

Call to order: Todd Cormier called the meeting to order at 12:12 pm in the conference room of the Public Works Building, 2224 Montana Avenue.

Minutes: Motion for approval of the July minutes by Gene Wade, seconded by Walt Willett. Motion approved on a voice vote.

Open Public Comment: None

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works Engineering. Debi Meling informed the board that she had a poll question up on the City of Billings Engineering Facebook page. The poll question pertained to the roundabouts in Billings and whether people 'loved them', 'avoid them at all costs', 'ok with roundabouts or signals' and 'like them but know others who don't'.

Out of the 29 total votes:

- 20 (69%) loved them,
- 4 (14%) Avoid them at all costs
- 4 (14%) ok with roundabouts or signals
- 1 (3%) like them but know others who don't

Billings Police Department. Capt. Bedford gave a presentation on the Traffic Enforcement Unit, which is comprised of a three member team including Sgt. Gartner and two patrol officers. This three person unit is able to focus on speeders, red-light runners and cell-phone users. A graph depicted the number of traffic "contacts", citations as well as warnings, was up 23 percent for the first part of 2012 compared to the first part of 2011.

Capt. Bedford talked about DUI arrests and accidents and how the department has been using the Omega Crime View software to identify incident patterns around Billings. By overlaying maps of DUI arrests and DUI accidents, they are able to speculate most likely areas for drunk drivers and where to place patrol units.

Erin asked how effective is it for civilians to report possible drunk drivers? Capt. Bedford said that once a call comes in like that, it gets broadcast to all units and those close to the area will check it out. Erin

asked about the signing in the construction zone on Montana Ave. Temporary signing for construction is posted 25mph, in the construction zone the permanent 'reduce speed' and '25mph' signs are visible, which might confuse drivers. Capt. Bedford stated that construction zone signing trump normal speed signing.

BOARD REPORTS:

Planning Board. Money is still being sought out for the Billings Bypass project. The Policy Coordination Committee (PCC) should know around September whether the Bypass will be a No Build or a Full Build; estimate for a full build is roughly 80 million dollars.

Capt. Bedford asked if the Flood Plain is going to be moved and Todd said it has not been moved yet; it is still in the process of going through.

Highway 212/310 is in design for a four-lane road and the first phase is grade separating around the rail road tracks. The new road will go over the tracks instead of under. The road will go north of Rockvale and will be a five-lane road with the two way left turn lane in the middle. The old road will remain intact and act as a frontage road to the new road. Initially, the project will build a two-lane road then when more money arrives, approximately 15 years, the road will be built into the four-lane.

OLD BUSINESS:

Erin Claunch shared a presentation of volume trends on 24th St W, 32nd St W, Zimmerman Trail, and Shiloh Rd. these three corridors carry a lot of residential traffic as well as commercial traffic.

Street	Average Weekday Volume	Volume Trend
24 th St W.	19,000	Decrease
32 nd St W/ Zimmerman Tr.	15,000	Increase
Shiloh Rd.	9,000	No Change

It was noted by the volumes and observations while traveling along 32nd St. W. that traffic flows really well even though the road is only a 2 or 3 lane, compared to the 4 or 5 lanes on 24th St. W.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election of vice-chair. Walt Willett made the motion that Gene Wade be nominated as the new Vice Chair and the nomination was seconded by Trina White. Todd asked for any comments or additional nominations and there were none, so nominations were closed. Gene was elected on a voice vote.

Miscellaneous Issues and Questions from Board Members:

Walt Willett mentioned that maybe there needs to be some information circulated again about the roundabouts and how to drive them. Gene asked about crosswalks on Montana Ave. and if they could be made more visible. Terry mentioned that it seems to be the nature of Billings's drivers to ignore the crosswalks. Trina asked how Billings compares to other towns in pedestrian accidents, injuries and deaths.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:16 pm.