

TRAFFIC CONTROL BOARD MINUTES

June 25, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Cormier, Walt Willett, Gene Wade, Trina White, Sondra Baker, Capt. R D Harper

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF SUPPORT: Terry Smith, Erin Claunch, Zach Heid, Lora Mattox, Sgt. Gartner

GUESTS: Abigail Feliciano, Anne O'Rourke

BUSINESS MEETING:

Call to order: Todd Cormier called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm in the conference room of the Public Works Building, 2224 Montana Avenue.

Minutes: Motion for approval of the May minutes by Gene Wade, seconded by Capt. R D Harper. Motion carried on a voice vote.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

6th Ave North Pedestrian Crossing: Anne O'Rourke and Abigail Feliciano, AmeriCorps Vista volunteers with The Salvation Army, attended the Traffic Control Board meeting as visitors. Monday thru Thursday they escort kids with the Salvation Army summer program to North Park and back from the Salvation Army building at 21st & 6th. The safest walking route for them to get to North Park is via the signalized intersection at North 18th St and 6th Ave North. The one-way walking distance along this route is approximately one half mile. Also, to cross 6th Ave N it takes 4 trips across 6th Ave N at N. 18th due to the number of students and the minimal walk time on the signal. The speed limit on 6th along the park is 35 MPH and they have noticed that the speed limit is not often followed. They are hoping to see speeds regulated/reduced on 6th Ave N along the park, and possibly a pedestrian crosswalk.

Terry Smith mentioned that this area is being looked at for a potential HAWK signal; however, funding is still being discussed. The pedestrian walk time can be looked into at N 18th St to see if it meets current MUTCD requirements. This topic will be added to next month's Board meeting which will be held on July 23rd.

STAFF REPORTS:

Erin mentioned that road construction is progressing all over town. Major roadways under construction include Rimrock Rd, Broadwater Ave, Bench Blvd, Monad Rd, and 19th St West. Aronson Avenue will be under construction soon.

BOARD REPORTS:

Hospitality Corridor: Lora Mattox distributed handouts of the long term and near term proposals for the Hospitality Corridor. These include a roundabout at the 1st Avenue North/Main St./ Highway 87 intersection and a pedestrian overpass over Main St from the EBURD area to Metra Park. A traffic signal at 1st Ave N and N 10th St was left in the plan to provide a pedestrian route in & out of the EBURD area across 1st Ave North. Todd asked what MDT's position was on the roundabout. Lora said that MDT is in favor of the roundabout which is a long term project. As for short term, a "free right" lane from westbound Highway 87 to northbound Main St is being looked at. The right turn lane is a lot easier to build than a roundabout. Also, Metra is looking into moving their fence back along Main Street to allow room to move the sidewalk back away from the driving lane to make the corridor more appealing to pedestrians.

Transportation Plan: A kickoff meeting with the steering committee for the Plan update is planned for June 27th. Lora is hoping for a draft of the Transportation Plan by December which is a fast turnaround. Dowl HKM is the local consultant working with Kittelson & Associates (from Boise) on the plan.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Resignation: Brent Kruger sent a letter to the Mayor resigning from the Traffic Control Board because he is moving out of state. The resignation is effective July 1, 2013. Terry checked with the City Clerk's office and the opening will be advertised with the next round of Board vacancies near the end of the year. The Mayor will appoint someone to serve the unexpired portion of Brent's term.

STEP: Sgt. Jason Gartner oversees the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP). The program has been around for a while. There are two officers dedicated to working traffic. It is a 3-year assignment similar to other special units such as detectives or SWAT. They have restructured the program from how it operated previously. STEP officers are no longer doing all the accident investigation, but are instead concentrating on enforcement. The program is now more complaint driven and officers will spend some time in an area and then get back with the original complainant and let them know what they found and what action was taken. They do have a state grant that pays overtime for extra patrols during busy times of the year with an emphasis on DUI enforcement. Also, they do two traffic check points a year checking for driver license, insurance, and registration. During the last check point they had 2200 cars go past the check point and stopped 360. The people are given a brochure which explains what they are doing, that the law allows them to do it, and allows people to leave some feedback. Sgt Gartner said he received only one negative response from the feedback forms.

Terry mentioned that he sat through a presentation on the new radar units that the officers are using. Sgt. Gartner said that the unit is laser based and records distance to the vehicle as well as speed. The unit can be targeted to a specific vehicle. When this unit is used in school zones with the distance measuring capability the officer can know for certain that a person was in the school zone when the violation occurred. Sgt Gartner mentioned that Officer Ihde made 4400 traffic contacts in the past year (not necessarily tickets, but where they pulled a vehicle over and at least talked to the driver). Terry also commented about the time it takes to process a DUI. Sgt. Gartner said that they are cracking down on the drivers that are under the influence of illegal substance and prescription medication. Before, there were very few officers that had the training to recognize and process them unless they had a blood sample. Now, the officers have the training to check for drug impairment without a blood test.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:02 pm.