

# TRAFFIC CONTROL BOARD MINUTES

January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Cormier, Trina White, Capt. Harper, Jerry Dunning, Pierre Jomini

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sondra Baker, Gene Wade

STAFF SUPPORT: Terry Smith, Erin Claunch, Aaron Lebsack, Lora Mattox

GUESTS: None

## BUSINESS MEETING:

**Call to order:** Todd Cormier called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm in the conference room of the Public Works Building, 2224 Montana Avenue.

**Minutes:** Motion for approval of the December minutes by Pierre Jomini, seconded by Trina White. Motion carried on a voice vote.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT: None

## STAFF REPORTS:

**Special Events Policy:** Terry distributed a copy of the application packet developed for event sponsors. The formal presentation was postponed until the February meeting when Debi Meling could be present.

**Trail Crossing Upgrade:** Erin gave an update on the new RRFB's (rectangular rapid flashing beacons) installed at the major westend trail crossings. RRFB's were previously in place at the crossing on King Avenue West. City crews recently installed them at two crossing points on Monad Road, the crossing on Broadwater Avenue and the crossing on Central Avenue along the trail that parallels the BBWA Canal. MSU Bozeman students did a study several years ago comparing the effectiveness of the different crossing treatments in Billings westend. Their results were somewhat inconclusive, but various studies in other cities nationally have found the RRFB's to be one of the most effective crossing treatments in terms of improving driver compliance. The upgrades at the four locations outlined above were accomplished as maintenance work by Street-Traffic crews.

**Uncontrolled Intersections:** Terry gave a presentation on uncontrolled intersections. Following the accident at 11<sup>th</sup> St W and Terry Ave last fall, the City has received numerous calls with concerns as to why intersections in the city do not have stop or yield signs. Terry noted that Montana law defines driver behavior at uncontrolled intersections. Terry also reviewed some the things that staff looks at when they review an intersection. These include street classifications, vision obstructions, approach volumes, and crash history. From 2011- 2013, 26% of the intersection accidents in the City were at uncontrolled intersections, 20% of accidents in intersections with stop signs and 46% of accidents at intersections controlled by traffic signals.

## BOARD REPORTS:

**Highway 3 Corridor Study:** Lora gave an update on the Highway 3 Corridor Study. This study covers Highway 3 on top of the Rims from North 27<sup>th</sup> Street to Apache Trail and includes recommendations on access, intersection control, trails, landscaping, storm water and parking areas. The plan was presented to the Planning Board on January 13 and the Board's approval is pending. The study should go to the City Council and the County Commissioners in March, and will hopefully be finalized in April.

**Community Transportation Safety Planning:** Lora stated that the State is offering communities grant funding to develop a local transportation safety plan. These safety plans are free to the community and do not require any local match funding. The plans go beyond identifying high accident locations and can include things such as seatbelt use, impaired and distracted driving and improved emergency response.

**Growth Policy.** Lora also reported the Planning Department is in the process of updating the growth policy. The first public meeting will be held Thursday evening (January 29<sup>th</sup>) at the Public Library. The plan update is expected to take around 2 years to complete. This plan will be looking at how and where we, as the public, see Billings growing in the next 20 years.

**Transportation Assistance.** Pierre distributed a handout from MDT listing the types of assistance available from the State to local communities for transportation. The list includes infrastructure funding programs as well as planning & technical assistance.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Pierre asked if his questions concerning widening on Lewis for bike lanes between 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Streets West and speed limit signing on Grand could be reported on at a future meeting.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- **Election of Board Chair & Vice Chair:** Pierre moved that Todd Cormier continue as board chair. Trina seconded the motion. Passed on voice vote. Trina nominated Gene Wade to continue as Vice-chairperson. Motion was seconded and carried on voice vote.
- **2015 Meeting Schedule:** The Board had a general discussion regarding the meeting date. The Board agreed to keep meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month.
- **Intersection of Monad- 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>:** Pierre asked about the possibility of removing the inside southbound lane on 20<sup>th</sup> Street West immediately south of Monad so that a merge was not required. He noted that drivers familiar with the intersection turn into the curb lane and the second lane does not appear to be required for traffic flow. Terry responded by stating the idea has merit, but the question becomes whether this is something to be implemented immediately or whether we should wait for a chip seal or overlay to change the striping. Todd stated he thought that the intersections of 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> could be a good opportunity for a “Dog Bone” Roundabout. Erin stated eliminating the second SB lane would be a good idea but should involve extending the two way left turn lane farther north to serve George Street and Northwestern Energy’s parking lot. Pierre asked if queue detection was in place on Monad between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Staff was unsure, but will check into it.

#### ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

- Pierre requested that a discussion of 62<sup>nd</sup> Street West & Rimrock Road intersection be added to the March agenda
- Pierre asked that widening for bike lanes on Lewis be placed on the March agenda.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.