

MINUTES
TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
NEW CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – DECEMBER 19, 2013 – 4:00 P.M.

I. Meeting called to order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers (212 SW 9th St.) by Barry Ezerski, Traffic Commission Chairman. The meeting notice and agenda were posted on the City Hall (212 SW 9th St.) bulletin board as required by State law.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Bartlett, Barry Ezerski, David Means, Johnny Owens and Randy Somerlott

ALSO PRESENT: Sagar Medisetty, Traffic Engineer, LPD Lt. James Cowley, and Jackie Somerlott, Traffic Commission Secretary

MEMBERS ABSENT: SGT Nicolas Jenkins

II. Approval of minutes from previous meeting (October 17, 2013)

MOVED BY: Means; **SECOND BY:** Owens to accept the minutes as written.

AYE: Bartlett, Ezerski, Means, Owens and Somerlott; **NAY:** None

III. Consent Item(s)

None.

IV. Old Business

- 1) Consider a request **(13-22)** from Sally Greenley, Principal, Pioneer Park Elementary School, 2204 SW Bishop Road, to make NE Angus Lane a one-way street between NE Rogers Lane and NE Angus Street.

Medisetty explained that this was a tabled item from the October Traffic Commission Meeting and he wanted to recap. Pioneer Park Elementary School is located on the north side of Rogers Ln, and east of NE Angus Pl. Roger Ln is an arterial street with a speed limit of 35 mph; NE Angus Pl is a local residential street posted at 25 mph. The problem is the parking situation on NE Angus Pl during school drop-off hours in the morning and pick-up hours in the afternoon. The traffic situation becomes quite chaotic because parents park on both sides of the street. It is a narrow street (26' wide from curb to curb). When cars park on both sides of the street, there is only one lane available to go up and down the street to enter and exit. Sometimes cars are approaching each other and one has to back out and sometimes have to back out onto Rogers Ln a 35 mph street. The City has plans to expand Rogers Lane to a 5-ln arterial and because of these traffic conditions, staff (at last meeting) made recommendations to make it a one way street (north bound). There is one resident that would be impacted by this change. It is Mr. Thomas Perry 320 NE Angus Pl. He is here today. This is the only home which has a driveway onto Angus Pl. When he leaves his home he would have to use Angus St, to Pioneer Blvd or Cimarron Tr. Therefore staff would like to say that if you weigh the safety of the kids, versus a little inconvenience of one resident the recommendation is still to make the street a one-way street. Staff has a couple of other recommendations: To restrict parking on the west side of Angus Pl so kids don't cross at different locations (in between cars which

becomes a dangerous situation); and for the school to have a school crossing guard for kids to cross at one location. People are parking on the west side of the street at the empty lot – kids could cross at one location. Also, at the last meeting the commission had asked to contact LPS to see if improvements could be made to the parking lot situation. He spoke with the assistant superintendent who said she spoke with LPS superintendent who agrees that the parking situation is problematic. However there are no funds at this time to make any improvements. Her suggestion was to prohibit parking on the west side of Angus Pl.

Thomas Perry (320 NE Angus Pl) – said he has studied the traffic in front of the school. He said he concludes it doesn't matter if they make it a one-way or leave it as it is, there will still be a traffic problem. In considering this, he said as long as he has lived here, no child has ever gotten hit by traffic. There are No Parking signs in front of the school (no parking, loading-unloading zone) yet parents park for 30 minutes or more. A bus drops off a few kids and half of the time the bus can't get in because people park there. He said he saw a case once where a car came from north side (heading south) and on the east side of Angus Pl in front of school the car parked in the wrong place and the bus couldn't move because a parent got out of their car and went inside of the school. Enforcing the No Parking signs would be better than changing it to one-way street because it's not going to make a difference. It is about people being courteous to others when dropping off kids. Some parents drop kids off in the parking lot on the north side of the school where you go into parking lot, and a few park there and let their kids out then move on. Not only will it [one way] harm me, it will also affect my mail delivery, plus the school's delivery. It would also affect big trucks that have to service the school. The trash truck that picks up the dumpster would be affected if made one-way. A semi-truck brings food to the school and he pulls in now, but if changed, he will have to back out north to get to Rogers Lane because it is hard to back out south and go north into the neighborhood because there is a T intersection and the truck cannot make the turn. He said he has observed and observed and he said at no time has the Principal explained that you cannot park, get out of your vehicle and go into the school for 30 minutes or longer. The morning traffic isn't as bad as evening traffic when most people pick up children. It doesn't matter what you do, people will still park on both sides of the street because they aren't going to yield to those signs in front of the school.

Ezerski asked Officer Cowley what kind of enforcement can be done at the school. Cowley said they try to monitor the best they can, but can't sit at one school at different times daily to make sure people don't park there. He said they encourage the school to try to make ties to parents (by letter) or when they pick up kids but there is no way to monitor things daily.

Ms. Greenley said she understands what Mr. Perry is saying and she says it's been an ongoing problem and it's dangerous for the kids. She said he (Mr. Perry) is right, people don't follow policy. She said she tries as much as she can and she put it in newsletter, but some people don't follow procedures, but that if we do this, it could be monitored for awhile. The truth is that a lot of people do follow procedures (it's just a few that don't). She said she saw two cars butting up against each other and one car had to back up on Rogers Lane. She said it's really dangerous and that she understands Mr. Perry's place that he is the only person on this street.

It's been ongoing for years and was brought up before. She said she doesn't know about the trucks that come from Rogers Lane or if they can or can't get around. She said this is for the safety of the kids. She said she tries to give teachers guidelines for the kids. She said Ms. McConnell brought this up for the safety of the kids and this has been brought up year after year after year.

Ezerski said he lives on the east side of town and has noticed the new construction in East Lake and all the families (children) attend Pioneer Park School and they take cars instead of the bus to school, and the amount of cars/people dropping off kids has doubled in the past ten years. It has gotten tremendously worse. He said he drove by the school last Tuesday and it was chaos -- was like a zoo! He said he appreciates the predicament, and that something needs to be done.

Bartlett said he would like to see the City or LPS or whoever has cognizance buy a portion of land on the west side of the school to make a parking lot that absorbs Angus all the way to the east curb so that not a single child has to cross Angus and everyone will have to park in the parking lot.

Ezerski said the problem is funding. He said he is approached by a half dozen schools to buy books and paper and they don't have money to do a parking lot right now.

Bartlett says then we just have to agree to have a problem on Angus because something has to be done on Angus.

Owens asked if staff's recommendation would solve the problem.

Mrs. Greenley said it would help. *(Citizen was in audience – not at podium and conversation echoed and was inaudible)*

Owens asked Mr. Perry if he thought the change would help and Mr. Perry said no because he watches it every morning and every afternoon and cars park on both sides. He said they should just park on one side of the street. *(inaudible)* They park in front of the school... if everybody would park on west side *(inaudible)* Coming in from the north going south out of the neighborhood *(inaudible)*. This will never resolve the problem. They will still park on both sides of street and will have same problem.

Ezerski said ultimately it is going to be an enforcement issue because he can see that people will go the wrong way on the street *(chuckle)*.

Medisetty said regarding the parking, he wanted to ask the principal about a suggestion about the gravel parking lot on the east side of the school which buses use. At this time few parents park there because it's a one-way street and they would have to wait for buses to leave before they could get out because it's a single lane. Since school is out at 3:30 what if you don't let kids who go by car until 3:35 or 3:40 (staggered) so that once buses leave, the cars could use the parking area?

Ms. Greenley said it affects not just her but the parents who bring children, south bound. She doesn't have a duty monitor. Something has to be done. *(Citizen was in audience – not at podium and conversation echoed and was inaudible)*

Means said the same problem is at Whittier and asked if this was made a one-way and Ezerski said yes and banned parking in front of the school. Means said some tickets were written also and that they may still be having problems to which Owens replied no they don't [have problems]. He said that they had not been able to enforce this until tickets were written and

said they used to come to the commission every year and Officer Martin provided information as to the meaning of the signage and the appropriate signage was posted. He said he doesn't go by Whittier during rush hour. Ezerski asked if the signs say No Parking or No Stopping/Standing. Perry said the signs say No Parking/Loading and Unloading and the problem is they park and get out of vehicle (*inaudible*). Means asked if buses come from daycare. Perry said it's a Lawton Public School bus and they pull up right by the school bus.

Greenlee said they have a bus that pulls up front as well as the daycare bus because of the time they drop off children (*inaudible*).

Means said he can understand Mr. Perry's problem. Ezerski also said another option is to change signs to No Stop/Stand and perhaps step up enforcement. Cowley said enforcement can be done and they do try to do this for every school. He said Whittier is a problem and that they call him. He would like to have some "times" and he will discuss with traffic officers and try to enforce it. He also would like to encourage [Ms. Greenlee] to inform parents that they are coming out. The first problem to run into is the parents need to know where to drop off students. Writing tickets is the only way to get their attention. It's good to have a plan in place, if you want them to load/unload on south side. The officers don't know where you want them to load/unload. This is a problem at every school every year.

Amanda McConnell (3030 NE Lancaster) said this is the second time she has brought this issue to not only Ms. Greenlee and the Mayor. She has two children who attend Pioneer Park. Last year, on very first day of school her kindergarten daughter was almost hit. She is from a school dist where it wasn't one way, but parking prohibited in front of the school. The reason she feels it is warranted is due to the safety issue. She said she had just read a report about a girl who was run over in a school parking lot in Tulsa. She said it hit home with her because she has small children. She said she knows that it upset one person in the driveway. She doesn't see this as being a big problem and is really worried about all children in the school or that you can't put their safety on the line.

Means said that the school crossing guard at Whittier situation was a real mess before all the changes were made. They also had a crossing at one place. He said one morning he was there and they had a central crossing place and he saw a kid get hit because traffic was trying to go through there so fast. The kid darted in front of a car and he wasn't hurt bad bud went to hospital. Once parking was enforced better and parking was eliminated on one side of the road that is when they quit coming in about it.

Ezerski asked if we could look at this at end of school year to see how this is working. He said the Traffic Commission is making this recommendation but it must come before City Council approves it. He said if there are any concerns they can be brought up then.

MOVED BY: Owens **SECOND BY:** Means to make NE Angus Lane a one-way street between NE Rogers Lane and NE Angus Street.

AYE: Bartlett, Ezerski, Means, Owens and Somerlott; **NAY:** None

V. New Business

- 2) Consider a request **(13-23)** from Johnny Owens, 3801 NW Cache Rd, Suite 200 to determine where a traffic light is warranted at the intersection of NW Cache Road and NW Hunter Road.

Medisetty said upon recommendation of Traffic Commission, staff conducted an engineering study of NW Cache Rd and NW Hunter Rd. and collected traffic counts on both Cache Rd and Hunter Rd. Cache Rd. is a 4 lane principal arterial street west of 67th St; Hunter Rd. is a 2 lane residential street with a speed limit of 25 mph. The current traffic counts indicate that the warrants are not met at this time to build a traffic light at the intersection of Cache Rd and Hunter Rd. However on Cache Rd the study has shown the traffic has been growing steadily. In 2011 the ODOT traffic count showed that the daily traffic was about 15,350. The road is designed for 22,000 cars per day. This study has shown that on Cache Rd currently it's 18,000. So it's about 3000 vehicles per day increased over 2 years. Probably due to the new development west of Lawton (Lawton market Place). As more and more development occurs, traffic grows. It could be prudent to consider widening Cache Rd to a 5 lane facility. Accident reports show in 2013 at Cache Rd and Hunter Rd. there were 6 accidents; In 2012 there were 8 accidents; and in 2011 there were 6 accidents and in 2010 there were 10 accidents. There were quite a few accidents. The majority of the accidents were rear-end accidents where the driver hits vehicle who is waiting to turn left onto Hunter Rd. Similar accidents occurred at Carmike Theater and Wayne's Drive In, Dollar General, but as far as a traffic light is concerned, there is not enough traffic on Hunter Rd at this time to warrant a traffic light. But as traffic increases it would be very prudent to consider widening Cache Rd to a 5 lane facility. Therefore staff recommendation is for Traffic Commission makes a recommendation to Council to consider a future CIP project to be voted upon by residents to reconstruct Cache Rd to 5 lane facility with a center turn lane.

Ezerski said it is long overdue. Owens said he feels the accident report can't be accurate because he said there have been two deaths at this intersection. Medisetty said he got the information from LPD ICIS database. He said in 2001 there was a fatality at Cache Rd and Hunter Rd and didn't see any others at the location, perhaps there may have been at another intersection further away from the intersection. Owens said there was one but thought there were two where a mother and her friend were together. He said it was his niece who died. He said he doesn't think someone else needs to be killed there before they do something and that this should be studied hard. It's a bad intersection and anybody in town would agree. Medisetty said he concurred about the heavy traffic and that vacant land is being developed and the more land that is developed west of 82nd St., traffic will increase. Ezerski said this is a minimum to make a recommendation. Bartlett said on his way to look at this he passed by Horton Blvd and it has more traffic than Hunter at that time. Looking at space and distance between Country Mart there isn't another light until you get to 67th St. People travel at a high speed because there is no light. He feels there should be a light at Horton Blvd and Hunter Road to get people to slow down. Means asked if there is a school nearby and Bartlett said yes, and there is more traffic coming out of there, than at Hunter. He felt it would be better to install 2 lights instead of one. Medisetty said it is about \$150,000 per light. Medisetty said he doesn't know about Horton Blvd. but right now at Hunter Rd. there is not enough traffic to warrant a traffic light. Bartlett said it is because they all turn at 67th St.

Means says the staff recommendation is a minimal request. Owens would like to recommend taking this to Council because he thinks there needs to be a stop light at Hunter (although he agrees there should be one at Horton) because of the fatalities. He said he doesn't know if cars blend in with pavement but this car was hit by a trash truck.

Ezerski also requested that a traffic study can be done at Horton Blvd. as well. Medisetty clarified that the action is two parts: 1) Install a traffic light at Hunter Rd and 2) make Cache Rd a 5 lane roadway.

MOVED BY: Owens **SECOND BY:** Means to install a traffic light at the intersection of NW Cache Road and NW Hunter Road, and consider future CIP to reconstruct Cache Rd to 5 lanes from 52nd and 67th St.

AYE: Bartlett, Ezerski, Means, Owens and Somerlott; **NAY:** None

Medisetty also stated that Todd Weatherly will not be serving on the committee anymore and that the city would find a replacement [he presented a letter from the Mayor, to Ezerski].

Audience Participation

VI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, please notify the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48 hour rule if signing interpreters for the deaf are not necessary.