

**MINUTES  
LAWTON ACCESS BOARD  
CITY HALL  
CITY ATTORNEY'S CONFERENCE ROOM  
212 SW 9<sup>th</sup> STREET  
MAY 29, 2018**

Mike Jones called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m. in the City Attorney's Conference Room. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by law.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Kesler, Don; Love, Kay; Jones, Mike; Polk, Ray

**ABSENT:** Harper, Joseph.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Ryan Landers and Sean Spell, Lawton Area Transportation System (LATS); Keith Neitzke, Parks and Recreation; Denise Ezell, City Clerk's Office.

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**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

APPROVE MINUTES from April 3, 2018 meeting

**Motion by Polk, Second by Kesler**, to approve the minutes of April 3, 2018. **Aye:** Kesler; Love; Jones; Polk. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

1. Old Business

- A. Consider a request from Virgil Watson of Lawton Heights Methodist Church to provide funding for the construction of sidewalks that would connect to a proposed LATS stop/shelter to be located at the intersection of NW 16<sup>th</sup> Street and NW Taylor Avenue.

Jones stated I have the drawings from the church if anyone wants to see them. The deciding factor was the LATS route study to determine whether or not it would be feasible to locate a shelter at this corner. Do you have that information?

Landers stated there are no guarantees that we would implement any of the ideas that the consultant puts forth. We finalized the route study a couple of months ago and there are 2 proposed routes. We proposed our own and so did the consultant. One of the reasons for better routes is to try to gain better ridership. To gain more ridership we need to increase frequency. Instead of an hour headway we would like to get to a 30 minute headway. To do that we have to get away from subdivisions and stay with main arterials. That was the way we approached our route design. After the last meeting we went back to the design and 16<sup>th</sup> Street was not there.

Spell stated we used Smith as the arterial. It is a more direct route and avoids the smaller neighborhoods. We don't want to see anyone waste funding when it can be used better

elsewhere. If the shelter is for the bus stop we need to wait until the final decision is made on the routes.

Landers stated understand nothing has been decided on the routes. We are a couple of years away from the final decision. We have some strong thoughts and have consulted with City Planning and the company I work for. To gain frequency we have to get away from the smaller neighborhoods. People want to get from point A to point B safely and quickly. That is our focus. This shelter is a good idea but at this point it is a huge risk not knowing if we will be using that street. We need more sidewalks and I believe the thought process needs to be sticking with your priorities. It was discussed that schools need to be a top priority and we are hoping to extend our agreement with Lawton Public Schools (LPS).

Jones stated there are a couple of council members that want to do a master plan for sidewalks. Another part of my job is the Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GIS is like a Google map. We are using this system to do a master plan on sidewalks and our priorities will be incorporated. We have done a couple projects that were not on our priority list. We supported these projects with funding but it puts us in a position going forward we want to guard what we have left and to make sure we are using the funds in the best interest of our goals. I think we probably all agree it would be hard to vote to extend funds to the church for their project. It is probably not in our best interest to support the project at this time. I will make the church aware of our feelings once the minutes are complete.

Kesler stated from what I remember a bus stop usually cost around \$4,000 and this one is going to cost around \$12,000. I don't know financially we can support it. They want us to do all the sidewalks.

Jones stated correct. They were going to build the part in orange and wanted us to build all the connecting sidewalks. If you remember the sidewalks have to connect to something. These were no short sidewalks.

Love asked "Weren't we going to have to go quite a ways to have ramp accessibility?"

Neitzke asked "Are you proposing the item be tabled until LATS determines their routes?"

Jones stated yes.

Landers stated I believe the church is still trying to raise the funds and there is no guarantee they will. At this point if they want to put a bench out there that would be great. I think we need to start going with our priorities. If you help this group there will always be others and someone won't understand why you did help them. It will take 2 or 3 years to complete your priorities and then you can start composing another set.

Jones stated "If you spin it the other way if we were asked how this fits with our priorities we won't have an answer."

Loves asked “If you move the bus stops away from the subdivisions how far will people have to walk?”

Landers stated we will take everything into account. How far will they have to walk? How accessible are all those places. Do they have sidewalks? These are all questions that will have to be answered. The routes haven’t been changed in 16 years and the city has. This is one of the reasons we want to do a study. A lot of the changes will depend on how the hubs, new transfer center, and is it a good time. We will talk with passengers and citizens to find out what they want. LATS is here for the citizens.

Jones asked “Since we put in the couple of different pads have you had any feedback on those?”

Spell stated they are being somewhat used. It is good when a driver is able to let someone off on a pad rather than in the grass or someone’s driveway. We would like to see sidewalks at the Neighborhood Walmart. There is a gentleman in a mobility devise that drives down Lee Boulevard, in the street, during rush hour. He does this almost every day. It is a matter of time before he gets hit. Your east Gore project was a great project. The veterans are using it.

Landers stated that project saves LATS \$28 a trip if they use the sidewalk. I believe more of our passengers would go to the 38<sup>th</sup> Street Walmart if there were sidewalks. There are no passenger amenities there.

Spell stated there is a bus stop. But they have to walk up a hill through the grass or use the roadway. Someone using a mobility devise has to be dropped off at the entryway. Cars are going by while they are trying to get their mobility devise on and off the bus. We have the same problem with someone going to Southwestern Hospital. There is only a sign going westbound unless you let them off at Taco Mayo. That is as close as we can get unless you take the eastbound bus and this will take longer. You have to ride all around town to get off on the right side.

Landers stated a 10 minute ride could end up being an hour or so.

Polk asked “Have we shared this information with the public in an article or news story?”

Spell stated yes. They did a news story with Mr. Harper using his mobility devise going down Sheridan.

Landers stated we could talk for hours about these kinds of issues. We are not the only city in American with sidewalk issues. A lot of the smaller systems have flag services because we can’t have designated bus stops and all of our stops are not American Disability Act (ADA) accessible. This is something to build to and the city has acknowledged the problem. It takes time and lots of money.

Jones stated the Neighborhood Walmart was required to put in sidewalks. The city offers an exception for some when we know there will be a major project that would cause the city to remove the sidewalk. Instead of building a sidewalk we allow you to place that money into a Sidewalk In Lieu Of account and once the city has completed their project they will build the sidewalks. This is what the Neighborhood Walmart did. The city will build those sidewalks once the project is complete.

**Motion by Kesler, Second by Polk**, to table this item. **Aye:** Love; Jones; Polk; Kesler. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

Love stated I just want to make sure we have sidewalks for your schools. Kids are walking in the street to get to school.

Jones stated the new middle school will help with consideration for sidewalks along Gore. There will be new sidewalks on the south side of Gore and at the fence line it will move to the north side. It will tie in nicely with those we just built.

Neitzke asked “Is the Safe Routes to School still funded?”

Jones stated to some degree. I want to make you aware of a couple different things that are happening. The Comanche County Courthouse is adding more wheelchair accessibility around the building. At the corner of Sheridan and Cache Road the Wing Stop restaurant driveways had slopes in excess for wheelchair accessibility. They are grinding those down to make them accessible. On C Avenue in front of Massad’s, Complete Eye Care and Gill’s there was a double curb step. There was a lady that fell so after contacting these businesses we are installing handrails. This was expensive and we hope it takes care of the problem.

2. Comments/Discussion

3. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned 3:05 p.m.

**Motion by Kesler, Second by Polk**, to adjourn. Jones; Polk; Kesler; Love.