

**MINUTES
LAWTON ACCESS BOARD
NEW CITY HALL
CITY ATTORNEY'S CONFERENCE ROOM
212 SW 9th STREET
DECEMBER 15, 2015**

Mike Jones called the meeting to order at 2:30 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: Joseph Harper; Kay Love; Mike Jones.

ABSENT: Sharon Fanning; Don Kesler, Jr.

OTHER PRESENT: Rusty Whisenhunt, Public Works, Keith Neitzke, Parks and Recreation Department; Denise Ezell, City Clerk's Office.

APPROVE MINUTES from October 27, 2015 meeting

Motion by Harper, Second by Jones, to approve the minutes of October 27, 2015. **Aye:** Harper; Love; Jones. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Jones stated we have LATs with us today so before we get started let's go around the table and introduce ourselves. I'm Mike Jones and I'm the Chair of the Access Board.

Whisenhunt stated I'm Rusty Whisenhunt and I'm an engineer for the City of Lawton.

Neitzke stated I'm Keith Neitzke and I'm superintendent for Parks and Grounds.

Harper stated I'm Joseph Harper one of the ADA members.

Ezell stated I'm Denise Ezell and I'm with the City Clerk's Office.

Love stated I'm Kay Love and I'm retired.

Spells stated I'm Sean Spell and I'm the Director of Operations for LATs.

Landers stated I'm Ryan Landers and I'm the General Manager for LATs.

Jones stated I want to thank everyone for being here today and thanks to you 2 for becoming a part of our meetings moving forward.

1. New Business

A. Transition Plan Update and review milestone chart for completion, take action if necessary.

Jones stated first let's talk about a couple of different projects and where we are. The bus stops at 20th and Smith were approved by Council and once we have a PO we will move forward.

Whisenhunt stated we have a contractor under contract and when he is available he will perform the work. Once he starts it shouldn't take long.

Love stated I use to be involved with another organization and we had priced some covered shelters for the bus stops. At that time they were \$24,000. Do you have any idea of the cost today?

Landers stated we don't manager or operate any of the shelters. There is a company by the name of Pin High that is responsible for the advertising and maintenance of the shelters. We are in the process of trying to do things different so we can manage them a little better.

Harper stated most of them are not ADA compatible.

Landers stated I've been here since March and I have noticed that is something we need to look into. By the next meeting I should be able to have a cost. It isn't just the initial cost it is also the cost of maintaining them. We are looking to see if LATS can take on that responsibility.

Jones stated okay let's move to Priority 1 which is located on Lee Boulevard in front of DHS. We have some significant progress to discuss on this priority.

Whisenhunt stated this is creating a landing for the bus plate to lie on. You can exit to the shelter which will be ADA compliant and will come up the sidewalk. DHS does not want to lose a parking spot so the sidewalk runs all the way to the driveway. You will be able to housed in the shelter or continue up the sidewalk in either direction.

Harper asked is that on Lee.

Whisenhunt stated yes. The construction cost for the sidewalk is \$25,750 and to cross the driveway is another \$1,600 for a total cost of \$27,400. One problem we face is we don't have enough right-of-way. There are 3 property owners and we hope they will donate the right-of-way. If we have to purchase the right-of-way there will be additional cost.

Jones asked "Where will those funds come from?"

Whisenhunt stated the project.

Jones asked "How much is left in the sidewalk in lieu of account after the 2 projects are complete?"

Whisenhunt stated around \$15,000. We are looking at another project that will cost around \$2,000.

Harper asked “What does 33RW mean?”

Whisenhunt stated 33 feet of statutory right-of-way. There is another 17 feet that was acquired when Lee Boulevard was constructed. This gives you 50 foot from the section line but the problem is we need an additional 8 feet to put the sidewalk in.

Jones asked “Since we don’t have the money necessary to start this project does that keep the right-of-way agent from reaching out to the property owners about the right-of-way?”

Whisenhunt stated no. We need a formal request from the Chairman of this board.

Jones stated I’ll get with you so we can put together what we need. I know you haven’t had a lot of time but is there anything from the LATS side we need to consider going forward.

Spells stated the location of this stop is perfect.

Whisenhunt stated this design sets off to the side prior to the stop and creates 1 foot for the ramp to land, a 5 foot landing and the sidewalk or once the bus moves a waiting area.

Spells stated I have 2 units that run down through there. One continues all the way up Lee Boulevard and the other turns down 27th Street. This is a great location. They will want to use the clockwise bus because on the counter side there is nothing but asphalt.

Jones asked “Is there any other discussion or questions on Priority 1?” If not let’s look ahead at Priority 2.

Whisenhunt stated Priority 2 is located on Sheridan from Gore to Ferris. Priority 3 is in front of Walmart.

Jones stated again right-of-way is going to be a huge consideration.

Whisenhunt stated we have right-of-way in some of the areas. A big problem is the elevation change between the property and the street. North of Bell is almost too steep for a car. We would have to get additional easement at the higher level to actually have access across there. There are some areas through the shopping center you have room but with front nose parking against the curb you have to have 2.5 feet from the face of the curb to the sidewalk or cars will overhang into the sidewalk. These are commercial businesses and they are required to have a certain number of parking spaces. We have some challenges through the first shopping center. In front of Walmart is actually the easiest area to address because there is existing sidewalk. It isn’t in compliance but we have sidewalk and enough right-of-way to make a 6 foot sidewalk with curb ramps. We have a design submitted for a covered stop on Ferris by Sam’s. It was not ADA Compatible so we made our remarks and sit it back for their review.

Harper stated by the new CVS there is a pile of dirt that has been sitting there for 3 months.

Whisenhunt stated that is because of the new traffic light that is being installed.

Love asked “Will they talk”.

Whisenhunt stated yes.

Jones asked “Is there any further discussion on Priority 2?” If not I have had a question brought to me regarding the Lawton Food Bank and LATS.

Landers stated we have been approached about this as well.

Spells stated this is located off the bus route. The streets are so narrow and with people parking in them we can’t get a bus out. The only way it could possibly work is to pull into the food bank parking lot and turn around. Then they would have to go across traffic to get back on to Lee Boulevard.

Landers stated it is always a problem when you go into a parking lot. You have to deal with cars and pedestrians. We would have to completely redesign everything. We are looking into what might be able to be done.

Spells stated you also have to remember when we enter the parking lot we are looking at clipping cars and that is one thing we don’t need. It’s not that we don’t want to see something happen but we have to have access getting in and out of the location.

Harper asked “Would it work with one of the smaller buses?”

Spells stated those are specific to paratransit.

Landers stated even with a paratransit going into a parking lot you have pedestrians and parked vehicles. You never want to design a route around those conditions.

Jones stated thank you. I’ll pass along that information. That is the only issues I have to discuss today. Let’s go around the table and see if anyone else has anything to say.

Harper started I don’t have anything new.

Ezell stated neither do I.

Love stated I would like for us to talk to Great Plains Vo-Tech about them assisting with building the shelters.

Jones stated I have a contact that I will reach out and see what they think.

Landers stated I don't know if there is a current contract or not. If we don't have a current contract that might be something we would be able to do. We would love to take that over.

Jones stated great. We will go forward with looking into this.

Spells stated I don't have anything.

Landers stated I appreciate the opportunity to be here today. We should have the evaluation study back in January. We will see where they want to put the new transfer center and all kinds of different things. It is an exciting time.

Harper asked "In the near future would it be possible to have the buses run every 30 minutes on the major routes?"

Landers stated we have talked about that. One of the reasons people prefer not to ride transit is due to the frequency of the routes. It comes down to funding and different things. We want to redesign some of the routes where we could generate more frequency. We put everything on the table with the company that is doing the route study so they can come up with a couple different plans. We would love to get more frequency on the routes. We proposed frequency and more shelters. If you are going to have to wait 55 minutes in the snow and rain you should be able to have shelter. A huge issue is funding.

Spells stated we have also looked at peak hours. On the 1st and 15th you probably will not be able to get on a bus because it is just that crowded. We are not ignoring the problem it just takes time and funds.

Landers stated the route study should be done in June and realistically to implement all these changes it will take 1 ½ to 2 years. There is a lot of public participation that has to be done and it takes 18 to 24 months to get a new vehicle.

Spells stated you can't purchase a bus off a lot. They are built to specific specifications to include ADA compatibility.

Landers stated I would say in 2 to 3 years the system will look and feel a lot different for the better.

Love asked "What about a Sunday service?"

Landers stated this was brought up in the route study. We would have to see how much ridership there would be. Sunday is a little more difficult because a lot of businesses are closed. It is definitely a good idea. We are limited on funds and we just have to use what we have.

Harper asked "What about paratransit buses on Sunday?"

Landers stated those are the most expensive. It cost about \$4 per person on a fixed route and \$18 a person to run paratransit. We encourage people to ride the fixed routes because the cost is lower.

Love stated when we were first talking about transit service we talked about running it on Sunday for Ft. Sill.

Landers stated our Ft. Sill route is our lowest ridership. The Colonel was at the last stakeholders meeting and things have changed in 13 years. They use to ride the bus but now more have their own vehicles and the bus is not needed as much. A lot has changed in 13 years and I believe we need to start from scratch to redo our services. A lot of people want the service and we need to figure out how to fund it and what is best for everyone.

Jones stated it is good to hear there is more of a demand for your services.

Landers stated absolutely. We were surprised by the stakeholders that attended the meeting. We had Goodyear, Ft. Sill, Cameron and all stated they wanted more transit.

Love stated 13 years ago Goodyear didn't want you near their plant.

Spells stated and this time they wanted a parking lot service. It is a great idea if we can figure out where and how. It wasn't just Goodyear. Everyone out there wants a piece of it.

Love stated people didn't believe Lawton was big enough or that people ride a bus.

Landers stated ridership peaked a couple of years ago and is kind of stagnate now. Transit is an economic development. When people look at transferring to a city they look to see how good the transit is. This gives us stability. We want to grow and make this a good system and I believe we have the potential to do so.

Jones stated from what I hear the whole city is pulling for you.

Harper stated the whole town has expanded in population. Look at what we have done in the last 13 years.

Landers stated absolutely. When I got here in March it wasn't like that and I didn't get that idea. The buses were falling apart, we weren't sure we were going to have a system, and there wasn't a plan to purchase new buses. For a couple of months we weren't sure what to do. The City pulled through with the CIP and now things are going in the right direction.

Love stated hearing about LATS and how it has grown is exciting to me.

Jones stated it is encouraging.

Landers stated we want to be more involved because this is where we want to be.

Jones stated Neitzke do you have anything you would like to share today.

Neitzke stated I want to bring some pictures of Sulfur Park. We installed playground equipment and it is all ADA compatible.

Jones stated that is great news.

Harper stated I would like to see some of the parks have ADA capability to grill hotdogs and hamburgers.

Neitzke stated I have in my budget to purchase 10 picnic tables that are ADA complaint and are portable.

2. Comments/Discussion

3. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Motion by Jones, **Second** by Harper, to adjourn. **Aye:** Love; Jones; Harper. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**