

Session 11-01, a Special Meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee was called to order by Chair Roberts at 5:30 p.m. on March 1, 2010 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Highland, Roberts, Smith, Velsko

ABSENT: Venuti

STAFF: Public Works Director Meyer
Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consensus of the Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no public comments.

RECONSIDERATION

No items were scheduled for reconsideration.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting Synopsis of November 16, 2010

The Synopsis was approved by consensus of the Committee.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

A. Committee Member Highland - "Taking Turns" a 4 ½ minute video by Gary Lauder

The committee watched and discussed a video by Gary Lauder that provided some driving statistic regarding speed, energy efficiency, and information about current traffic calming methods including stop lights, stop signs and yield signs, and roundabouts. He suggests a new approach of combining the yield and stop signs and for people to take turns at intersections.

There was brief discussion about the legality of the concept, types of traffic calming, costs, and the types of accidents that commonly occur at intersections with different calming methods.

The video can be found by doing an online search of "Taking Turns Lauder" or at:
http://www.ted.com/talks/gary_lauder_s_new_traffic_sign_take_turns.html

Ms. Highland commented that she just got a book called "Traffic, Why We Drive the Way We Do" She said she will share the information at another meeting.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

Public Works Director Meyer provided the following updates:

- The West Elementary Trail connecting the school to Forest Glen will be created this year.
- A plat will be recorded soon that incorporates the property acquired by eminent domain for the new water treatment plant. It will vacate a section line easement and dedicated right-of-way around it. It won't be brought up to city standards but will be providing some access improvements.
- The Beluga Slough Trail funding doesn't look like it will be available this summer.
- We are waiting for DOT to prepare an MOU for the funding to design the spit trail the rest of the way out.
- An ordinance was adopted to fund a bridge across Woodard Creek and deal with the sewer line issue on Soundview.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no public hearings scheduled.

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Update on Homer Coordinated Transportation Plan

Chair Roberts reported on resolution 11-021 supporting the Homer Coordinated Transportation Plan that council adopted at their last meeting. She explained that the group needed a resolution from the city before the TAC meeting would be held. All the public comments at the council meeting were in support of the program and she was under the impression that the cab drivers were satisfied with what has been proposed.

There was brief discussion regarding concerns about federal funding and whether it would be available for the project.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Annual HART Policy Review

The committee agreed that the policy is adequate and they recommend no changes for the year. Mr. Smith said he did some review of amendments that have taken place through the life of the policy and it seems to be laid out well.

Discussion ensued regarding the balance of the HART fund and the policy addresses that new roads may be constructed using the program funds, and also used for leveraging outside funds. It could be an opportunity to get started on a modeled extension. Public Works Director Meyer advised that there are several transportation related bills right now for funding of roads, trails, and harbors.

Chair Robert's requested an action item on the next agenda to consider recommendations to expend program funds for local roads. Interest was expressed about Fairview and the area between Heath and Lake Street believed to be Waddell Way. Public Works Director Meyer said he would bring back some recommendations for consideration.

B. Updates on stoplight/roundabout at Main St. and Pioneer Ave.

Chair Roberts reported that City Manager Wrede wrote a letter to the DOT requesting more rapid action than two years to install a stop light and that he hopes they can find an alternate way to control traffic there so it is safer. Public Works Director Meyer added that council seemed to be accepting of the direction he is headed with the letter. He added that adding a four way stop with a flashing light would buy time to make the best decision for the area.

There was discussion of the challenges of the intersection.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. Memorandum from Deputy City Clerk Jacobsen Re: 2011 Term Expirations
- B. Certificate of Appointment for Caroline Venuti

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Kevin Walker, resident outside the city, commented that he has seen the video that was presented tonight and his first question was who would be liable in the event of an accident. He said he looked at a roundabout at Lake Street and the Sterling Highway a couple years ago and it sure looks like it would fit after looking at the data. He said he is a retired DOT guy and can throw scratches on paper, and he just learned that he went to the same high school as Mayor Hornaday, so he needs to meet the Mayor. He is supportive of the Homer Coordinated Transportation Plan and thinks it will be a good program for the area. Regarding the speed limit on the Sterling Highway, he sees a situation where there are walkways on both sides, nice shoulders, and a turn lane. It encourages people to go fast with those buffers. There are traffic calming things that can slow it down. The thing that goes opposite of that is in Sterling where there are nine different things with two lanes of traffic, a turn lanes, shoulders, and they slow you down to 45 with this 70 mph road, after coming off a two lanes with no shoulders, turn lanes, or walk ways. A lot has to do with DOT, bureaucrats, and what gets pushed through the system.

COMMENTS OF THE STAFF

Public Works Director Meyer commented that he would like the group to visualize which of the extensions is most important. They don't have to make a commitment to have the money to construct it but to do the design. If there is money that becomes available through the state bills that are being contemplated now, a shovel ready project is always prioritized higher. It shows you have already been through the public process for the project. He added that while you can't please everyone, there is a much better chance of explaining what the plan is if you have something to show. This could include a feasibility study, conceptual design and public meetings throughout the process. About 10% of cost would take them through this process to gain support to come up with funds to construct it.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

Chair Roberts had no further comments regarding council subjects.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SYNOPSIS
NOVEMBER 16, 2010

Chair Roberts encouraged Mr. Smith and Mr. Velsko to request reappointment to the Committee. Their experience is needed here.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Smith commented that he is encouraged by the direction that the committee is looking at moving and the potential to influence forward movement on things that have been talked about for so many years. He is happy to have Mrs. Venuti joining the committee. Both she and Chair Roberts are teachers that were two of the most positive influences when his kids were in the school system. They are good examples of public employees.

Mr. Velsko had no comment.

Ms. Highland commented that she is intrigued by Waddell Way and hopes they can get more information about the modeled extension. It is smaller and may be less controversial since it is used now. She thanked everyone on the committee.

ADJOURN

There being no more business to come before the Committee the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: _____