

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTIES OF POTTER AND RANDALL

ON this 15th day of December, 2010, the Amarillo Traffic Commission met at 1:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers in the Municipal Building to review agenda items and to welcome Jihad El Eid, P.E., who will replace Taylor Withrow as Traffic Engineer. Mr. Withrow plans to retire on January 28.

Mr. Withrow introduced Mr. El Eid, who has over 20 years of experience with traffic engineering. Most recently, he served as the Director of the Traffic Engineering Division for Broward County Board of County Commissioners in Coral Springs, Florida.

Commissioners discussed the duties of Traffic Commissioners and of members appointed to the sub-committee, a committee who will address bicycle, pedestrian, and motorcycle safety issues. Michael Rice, Director of Public Works, stated that the sub-committee would address a limited number of specific issues, such as cell phone restrictions in school zones and placement of "Share the Road" signs in depth, and make a recommendation to the Traffic Commission. He suggested that the committee consist of an odd number of members to facilitate meeting a quorum. He told Commissioners that Mr. El Eid would be in charge of the sub-committee. Mr. Rice said it was his understanding that the City Commission wants the membership of the sub-committee to be balanced and represent all quadrants of the city.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS	PRESENT TODAY	NO. MEETINGS HELD SINCE APPOINTMENT	NO. MEETINGS ATTENDED SINCE APPOINTMENT
Mr. Rob Ledwig	Yes	25	21
Mr. Rudy Mediavilla	No	25	10
Mr. Kenneth Graham	Yes	13	11
Mr. Bob Balliett	No	10	6
Mr. Wes Reeves	No	10	6
Mr. Leon Church	Yes	4	4
Ms. Ellen Robertson-Green	Yes	4	4
Ms. D. J. Stubben	Yes	4	4

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Taylor Withrow	Traffic Engineer
Jihad El Eid	Traffic Engineer
David Szmagalski	Traffic Operations Technician
Judy Alexander	Recording Secretary
Lt. Michael Miller	Amarillo Police Department

Commissioner Ledwig established a quorum and called the regular meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. The following items of business were conducted:

ITEM 1. Invocation:

Commissioner Stubben gave the invocation.

ITEM 2. Approval of the November 17, 2010, Amarillo Traffic Commission Minutes:

Commissioner Church made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2010, meeting. Commissioner Stubben seconded the motion, and motion carried 5:0.

ITEM 3. Appointments to Sub-Committee:

Taylor Withrow stated that Traffic Commissioners need to appoint members for the sub-committee who will address bicycle, pedestrian, and motorcycle safety issues including cell phone restrictions in school zones and placement of the "Share the Road" signs. The sub-committee will report back to the Traffic Commission. Commissioners elected to appoint nine members to the sub-committee representing all quadrants of the city. The following members were selected pending their acceptance:

Dr. Gary Angell, Amarillo ISD Amarillo High School Cluster Director
Doug Loomis, Amarillo ISD Caprock High School Cluster Director
Kevin Phillips, Amarillo ISD Palo Duro High School Cluster Director
Stan Chatman, Amarillo ISD Tascosa High School Cluster Director
Representative from Canyon ISD
Dean Downey, Motorcyclist Advocate
Ellen Robertson-Green, Amarillo Traffic Commission
Kenneth Graham, Amarillo Traffic Commission
Tomas Bonilla, Southeast Amarillo

Commissioner Stubben made a motion to appoint the persons listed above to the sub-committee. Commissioner Robertson-Green seconded the motion, and motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Rice said that the sub-committee would be contacted and a meeting would be scheduled as soon as possible.

ITEM 4. Traffic Engineering Study: Cell Phone Restrictions in School Zones:

Taylor Withrow, Traffic Engineer, reported that he had contacted nine cities in Texas for input on cell phone restrictions in school zones under HB 55. He inquired if they had implemented the restriction or had plans to in the future, what procedures they used in the implementation, what problems they had encountered, and if the restriction had been beneficial. He received five responses from representatives of the cities, which he distributed to the Commissioners. Commissioner Stubben previously had distributed input from Potter County Sheriff Brian Thomas on the implementation of the cell phone restriction in the River Road ISD for River Road High School, River Road Middle School, and Rolling Hills Elementary School.

Les Hoyt, Assistant Superintendent for the Amarillo ISD, stated that Amarillo ISD is in favor of the restriction or any other means of improving safety in school zones.

Mike Wartes, Superintendent of Canyon ISD, stated that Canyon ISD has seven schools within the Amarillo city limits, and he requested they receive representation in school traffic safety issues. He said they are also in favor of the restriction or any means of improving safety in school zones. His opinion is that elementary school campuses should receive priority since younger children are more at risk.

Commissioner Graham reported three bills have been filed by the State Legislature concerning restriction of wireless communication devices in school zones for the 2011 session. Mr. Withrow stated that any new legislation, which could be more restrictive, would supersede any action by the Traffic Commission or the City Commission.

Commissioners discussed a time line for implementation of the restriction under HB 55. Commissioner Church stated he thought a review of the ordinance would be prudent before considering a recommendation to the City Commission. Mr. Rice said the Legal Department would be contacted and requested to provide a draft of the city ordinance at the next meeting of the Traffic Commission.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.



Taylor N. Withrow
Traffic Engineer