

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTIES OF POTTER AND RANDALL

ON the 18th day of September, 2013, the Amarillo Traffic Commission met at 1:30 p.m. in regular session in the City Commission Chambers on the third floor of City Hall at 509 S.E. 7th Avenue.

Traffic Commissioners present were D. J. Stubben, Frank Nelson, Dean Downey, Charlie Graham, Craig Gualtiere, Mark Nair, Walt Kelley, and Steve Rogers. Staff members present were Jerry Bird, Traffic Engineer, David Szmagalski, Traffic Operations Technician, Lt. Ken Albright, Amarillo Police Department, and Judy Alexander, Recording Secretary.

Commissioner Downey led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Commissioner Nelson gave the invocation.

Commissioner Stubben established a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The following items of business were conducted:

1. **Approval of the March 20, 2013, Minutes:**
Commissioner Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2013, meeting. Commissioner Downey seconded the motion, and motion carried unanimously.
2. **Consider Creating a Dual Left Turn Westbound on Amarillo Blvd. West North Frontage Road at S. Coulter St.:**
Mr. Bird stated that the Traffic Engineering Department received a request from Marvin Franz, President and Executive Director of the Harrington Regional Medical Center, to consider to making Amarillo Boulevard North Frontage Road a southbound dual left turn at S. Coulter. Mr. Franz said that during certain times of the day drivers must wait through several cycles to be able to make the left turn on Coulter, which causes vehicle delay and backs up traffic.

Mr. Bird advised the Traffic Engineering Department conducted a lane utilization study, and the results indicated that 75 percent of the frontage road approach traffic is turning left during the peak traffic times. Based on these findings, a dual left turn at the intersection would help move vehicles more efficiently during the peak traffic times.

Since Amarillo Boulevard is a State Highway (Business Loop IH40), the study results were forwarded to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for review. TxDOT concurred with the findings and approved the dual left turn designation.

He stated that the Traffic Engineering Department recommends the Traffic Commission forward to the City Commission a recommendation to amend Section 16-3-1004 Schedule D, Dual Turns as shown below:

ADD:

From

Turning Left Into

Amarillo Boulevard West
North Frontage Road

S. Coulter

Commissioner Nelson made such a motion. Commissioner Nair seconded the motion, and motion carried unanimously.

3. **Consider Creating a Dual Left Turn Southbound on I-27 South West Frontage Road at Bell St.:**

Mr. Bird stated the Traffic Engineering Department had received requests from several citizens to make Interstate 27 West Frontal Road a dual left turn at Bell. During certain times of the day, drivers must wait through several cycles to make the left turn onto Bell, which causes vehicle delay and backs up traffic. The problem is compounded by the lack of a southbound to northbound turnaround, which is typical at many of the major intersections along both I-27 and I-40 in the Amarillo area.

The Traffic Engineering Department conducted a lane utilization study for Interstate 27 West Frontage Road at Bell. The results indicate that approximately 72 to 80 percent of the southbound approach traffic is turning left during the peak traffic times. Based upon the findings, a dual left turn would help move vehicles more efficiently.

Since I-27 is an Interstate Highway, the study results were forwarded to TxDOT for review. They concurred with the findings and approved the dual left turn.

The Traffic Engineering Department recommends that the Traffic Commission forward to the City Commission a recommendation to amend Section 16-3-1004 Schedule D, Dual Turns as shown below:

ADD:

From

Turning Left Into

I-27 West Frontage Road

Bell

Commissioner Kelley made such a motion. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion, and motion carried unanimously.

4. **Public Forum:**

Commissioner Stubben asked there were any traffic related matters that anyone would care to discuss.

Commissioner Nair asked there was any long range plans to relieve traffic congestion on Coulter St. Mr. Bird stated that TxDOT presently is undertaking traffic studies on Soney and portions of Coulter. He suggested the traffic peaks could be improved if employers in the Medical Center staggered their employee's work schedules.

Commissioner Gualtiere inquired if there were any long range plans to use concrete barriers on high traffic streets to prevent drivers from turning across lanes, thus improving traffic safety. Mr. Bird stated that traffic studies at specific locations would need to show the barriers are needed and would improve safety.

Commissioner Gualtiere inquired about the installation of a signal near the new United Supermarket on Soncy. Mr. Bird said that no warrants were met in the planning stages of the project, but the location will be monitored when the store opens for business. Commissioner Gualtiere asked if a deceleration lane or right-turn lane along the curb could be installed near the store. Mr. Bird stated that TxDOT does not have a policy for that type of lane. He said he had lengthened the radii of the driveway on the plans, which will permit vehicles to carry more speed when turning into the parking lot.

Commissioner Gualtiere asked if funds were available in the city budget to replace the "Share the Road" signs. Mr. Bird said that funds were not budgeted in the present fiscal year.

Commissioner Nelson inquired about the status on relocating the loop on the west side of town. Mr. Bird stated that TxDOT has an ongoing study, but he has no knowledge of when the study would be concluded.

Commissioner Graham said the intersection of N. Western and Fairway Dr. is experiencing heavy traffic with the nearby commercial development and the beginning of the school year. He inquired if it would be possible to reduce the speed limit on Western. Before any change could be made, Mr. Bird said that speed studies would need to be taken. He said the only legal way to change a speed limit is to perform speed studies and use the 85th percentile speed.

Commissioner Nair inquired about the status of the dedicated left turn lane on Fillmore and S.E. 6th Ave. Mr. Bird said that "No Parking" signs were installed on the west side of the block on Fillmore south of S.E. 6th, but he not had received any feedback from property owners. He said the matter is tabled indefinitely, but could be revisited at any time.

Commissioner Stubben announced that Tiller Watson III had moved out of the city and had resigned from the Traffic Commission. She introduced Lt Ken Albright with the Amarillo Police Department, who will be the Amarillo Police Department representative to the Traffic Commission since Lt. Michael Miller retirement earlier this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.



D.J. Stubben, Chairman