

TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes

June 17, 2014

The June meeting of the TSAB was held at 7 pm on Tuesday, June 17, 2014 in the training room of the municipal building (room 104). Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Present were:

Gene Dunaway, William Polfus, Jane L. Shelton, Aditya Savara, Andrew Howe, Bill Davis, Ben Redmond, Jana Humphrey

Absent were:

Steve Byrd (City staff representative), Alexander Crutchfield (ORHS representative)

1) Minutes from the May 20, 2014 meeting were approved unanimously.

2) Jason Elliot from Cannon and Cannon gave a presentation on Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (HAWK) by walking us through a similar system they installed at Wesleyan College over a four lane roadway.

It cost about \$90K to install that system. They previously had "in ground" lights (lights literally embedded into the concrete/asphalt) and found them unsatisfactory.

This system had four hanging lights positioned over the roadway, one per lane. Typically these lights are mounted over the roadway, either on wires or on armed poles.

We were reminded that the PHB lights are actually a trio of lights that cycle through various flashing stages when in use.

Jason stated that maintenance isn't much of an issue. The LED's may have to be changed at some point, but those are long lasting lights.

Presently the PHB do not hook into the city's system, thus they would be separate from any synching done to create smooth flow through town. However, Jason felt it would be a good vendor question. It's possible a WI-FI communication could be added, allowing it to work in conjunction with the normal street lights.

The board was reminded that the crossing at the High School/Turnpike DID indeed meet the warrants that justify installing a PHB.

3) We looked over the data provided to us by Redflex in the agenda packet.

Lee Buckles, one of the Redflex representatives present at the meeting and author of the report, informed us that the data came ONLY from the camera data (speed and counts), nothing from any outside source.

Aditya Savara brought up citizen Dale Gedcke's (not present at meeting) opinion that the accident drops couldn't truly be proved to be due to the cameras and not some other influencing factor. Mark Watson mentioned that he contacted another authority at UT on the statistical analysis who felt that Dale's take on it wasn't 100% on target.

Anne Garcia Garland stated that we should get current traffic data and a full study done prior to considering installing any more red light / speed cameras.

Andrew Howe informed Buckles that in the future we may need to see some of this data broken down by camera location. Buckles said that could easily be done anytime we like.

4) We continued on with our discussion of the High School / Turnpike intersection.

Bill Polfus began by creating a list of possible options:

- Full traffic signal
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
- Flashing Beacon
- Do nothing
- Speed cameras
- Crossing guards
- Eliminate the crosswalk altogether and have people cross at the block ends

Gene Dunaway stated that there's never been a serious injury or accident in the past 70 years at this location.

Anne Garcia Garland feels we may be teaching our children incorrectly by not enforcing the jay-walking laws when they cross the turnpike at the non-intersection locations. She felt the final option above was valid as the Turnpike actually is Highway 95.

Andrew Howe brought up the option of using students as crossing guards, as that seemed effective during the Secret City Festival. Jane Shelton said that Knoxville uses students for such. Ellen Smith believes the current city position of crossing guard requires an adult applicant.

Bill Polfus showed us a picture of 15mph school crossing sign with a "your speed" indicator on it.

We re-discussed the issues related to cars leaving the HS lot at the same time as people wanting to cross the Turnpike.

We all then voted on our top two choices. The top three, all tied with three votes each, were

- 1) Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
- 2) Flashing Beacon
- 3) Re-engage speed enforcement cameras

The PHBs were preferable to those who voted for it because that light TELLS people to stop the car whereas a flashing beacon only WARNS a driver he/she *may* need to stop.

Anne Garcia Garland suggested we find out what the cost would be to man the location with an actual police officer. Mark Watson said it costs roughly \$45/hr to pay an officer.

ORPD Officer Tedford felt the flashing beacon was quite effective on Emory Valley Road.

Collectively we then created a pro/con list of those top three:

1. Hybrid Beacon (HAWK)
 - a. Pluses
 - i. Stops traffic
 - ii. Pedestrian activated
 - iii. Width of roadway
 - iv. Easy to see
 - b. Negatives
 - i. Need for public education
 - ii. Students might not walk that far
 - iii. Expensive \$\$\$
 - iv. Too close to light at Tulane

- v. Relocates crossing
- 2. Flashing Beacon
 - a. Pluses
 - i. Pedestrian activated
 - ii. Could be placed at current crossing
 - iii. Gets attention / easy to see
 - iv. Could be over the road and cover the entire roadway
 - v. Half as expensive \$
 - vi. City can install
 - b. Negatives
 - i. Does not stop cars
- 3. Re-engage speed enforcement cameras
 - a. Pluses
 - i. Deters speeders
 - ii. Slows traffic
 - iii. Citizens like it
 - iv. Least expensive
 - b. Negatives
 - i. Many citizens don't like it
 - ii. Does not stop cars

We also noted that a speed camera isn't directly tied to the intersection. This is both a plus and a minus. On the plus side, it should slow traffic for a longer stretch than just a flashing beacon, but on the minus side it doesn't bring the crosswalk into specific attention.

Lee Buckles informed us of a camera system that is only active when pedestrians are in the crosswalk. This system has a camera also pointing down the crosswalk so it knows when someone is crossing or not. This would not be so much a speed camera installation as it would be a "stop for pedestrians" camera setup.

They also reminded us that mobile van units are still an option for us.

5) Bill Polfus went over the minutes from the TSAB Annual Program work session. The complete minutes are available elsewhere, but the following is the list from said minutes:

1. Communicate with the City Manager to identify major traffic issues that may come up in the next 12 months.
2. Communicate with the City Mayor and City Council to identify major traffic issues that may come up in the next 12 months.
3. Communicate with the Police Chief to identify major traffic issues that may come up in the next 12 months.
4. Communicate with the Regional Planning Commission to identify major traffic issues that may come up in the next 12 months.
5. Examine accident and accident severity in Oak Ridge and make recommendation to City Council for traffic speed and traffic safety design adjustments.
6. Examine TDOT Traffic Volume Data in Oak Ridge and based on changes in traffic volumes make recommendation to City Council for speed and design adjustments.
7. Based on 1-6 above develop an Annual Program for the TSAB to address as time allows after addressing specific requests from the City Council, City Manager, and Regional Planning Commission.
8. Submit the Annual Program to the City Council and City Manager for approval and authorization by November 30 each year.

6) Comments and questions on roadwork in the city:

Gene Dunaway voiced the need to get the tracks/signs off the railroad crossings.

7) A motion to adjourn was made and passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.


Andrew Howe
TSAB Secretary