

**TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2019, 8:00AM
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM, MUNICIPAL CENTER
MINUTES**

Members present: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Planning Director Sue Fillion, School Representative Alice Charkes, Chamber of Commerce Representative Deb Bunker, Citizen Representative Louise Zak, and Public Works Director's Representatives Bruce Lawrence and Josh Carnes,

Selectboard Representative: None.

Others present: Prudence MacKinney, Kathleen White, Carolyn Pieciak, Patricia O'Connor, David Cohen, Marisa Keller, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Town Manager Elwell called the meeting to order at 8:01am.

Approve Minutes – December 20, 2018

Elwell asked the committee to approve the minutes from the December 20 meeting. There was no discussion.

MOTION BY LOUISE ZAK, AND SECONDED BY ALICE CHARKES, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 20. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Public Participation

Prudence MacKinney stated that small progress for pedestrian and bicycle safety on Putney Road had been made and the improvements were encouraging, and that she looked forward to updates about other improvements. Elwell acknowledged that Putney Road contained several safety concerns and the Town continued to receive input from the public. He said that he continued to communicate with VTrans; however, the significant long-term solutions would be contained in the larger Putney Road Improvement Project.

Monthly Report on Pedestrian and Bicycle Incidents – Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald said that the data contained information since December, 2018, and included 130 motor vehicle accidents, 19 of which contained injuries, 2 involved pedestrians, 2 involved bicyclists, and none contained fatalities. The first incident involving a bicyclist took place on Main Street on February 5 when a motor vehicle operator opened a car door and the cyclist hit the car door. The cyclist received medical treatment and was then released. No citations were issued. The second bicycle accident took place on March 13 on Flat Street where a vehicle was pulling out of a parking spot in front of the bicyclist and the bicyclist hit the driver's mirror. Minor injuries were reported. The first incident involving a pedestrian took place on February 4 at the intersection of Canal and Maple Streets where, according to witnesses, the pedestrian jumped from the side of the road and made contact with the side of the vehicle and smacked the windshield with his hand. The pedestrian refused to speak with officers at the scene or sign a medical waiver and was transported to Brattleboro Memorial Hospital with minor injuries. The State's Attorney reported that no charges would be brought against the driver or pedestrian. The final accident involving a pedestrian took place on February 16 on Putney Road where a pedestrian stated she was in the crosswalk at North Street when she felt something strike the back of her leg. The driver reportedly stopped and spoke with the pedestrian who advised that she was fine and continued to walk home. After proceeding a couple of blocks south on Main Street, the pedestrian decided to report the incident to the Police Department and requested medical assistance. Chief Fitzgerald reported that the incident was still under investigation because the pedestrian did not obtain information on the driver or vehicle. There was no discussion by the committee

Monthly Report on Traffic Data Collection – Elwell said that Public Works Director Steve Barrett was unable to attend the meeting. He then introduced Bruce Lawrence and Josh Carnes from DPW. Carnes, DPW's Civil Engineer Technician, reported on the traffic data collected from February 14 to March 11, 2019, as set forth in his memo dated March 15, 2019. He noted that the data collection on Sunset Lake Road was during an unusually cold spell and the overall traffic speed was slower than normal. He also reported that data would be re-collected at the Meadowbrook Road location because of the higher traffic speed and, if accurate, may be a location for further review by the committee. Elwell noted that with the upcoming good weather,

the portable speed table would be installed on Guilford Street and he asked Carnes for stealth data prior to the installation of the speed tables. Carnes also noted that two permanent speed devices with solar panels would be installed soon, with one location being near Green Street School. There was some discussion by the committee.

Update re: Installation of Pedestrian Flags at Intersection of Canal and Washington Streets and Review of Signage near that Intersection. Charkes noted that the flags had been placed (and replaced) at that location. She suggested that another flag holder be installed in front of the laundromat at the intersection of Canal and Washington Streets. A suggested was made to consider installing a street light for illumination at that intersection. There was a brief discussion.

Street and Sidewalk Safety Policy Safety Action Requests

- (a) *Warning Sign Approaching Blind Curve Near 797 Sunset Lake Road – Requested by a Resident of that Area.*
- (b) *Remove Parking Spaces on Western Avenue and Convert to Bike Lanes – Requested by Brattleboro Coalition for Active Transportation (BCAT) (Preliminary Discussion).*
- (c) *Add Restrictions to Use of Two Parking Spaces at 38 Walnut Street -- Requested by St. Brigid's Kitchen and Pantry (Preliminary Discussion).*

(a) Bruce Lawrence, from Public Works, reported that after reviewing the request, DPW planned to install warning signs at the blind curve near 797 Sunset lake Road once the ground thawed. There was discussion about the type of sign to be installed.

(b) Kathleen White, from Brattleboro Coalition for Active Transportation (BCAT), spoke about the request to remove parking spaces on the north side of Western Avenue between Speno Court and Exit 2 at I-91, and then create two bike lanes on both sides of Western Avenue in that stretch of road. Elwell said that staff reviewed the request and generally was in support. He noted that such a change would require engineering analysis and input from VTrans, There was much discussion by the committee, including the impact on Sunday parking and funeral traffic by the Lutheran Church, impact on other businesses and residences in the area, different possible configurations and line striping, the importance of obtaining input from the community, and launching a public safety education campaign for bicyclists, drivers, and pedestrians. The committee agreed to hold further discussions.

(c) Carolyn Pieciak and Pat O'Connor, volunteers from Brigid's Kitchen and Pantry, spoke about the request to dedicate the two parking spaces on Walnut Street in front of Brigid's Kitchen for one handicap space and one dedicated space to be used by Brigid's Kitchen volunteers and, at times, for food delivery. They spoke about the need for parking for the volunteers and the current parking arrangements, as well as the desire to keep the playground area separated from parking. Elwell said that staff reviewed the request and had concerns about dedicating the two spaces. He spoke about the difficulty in managing and enforcing a multiple-use delivery space. He suggested that for the short span of time necessary for deliveries that the space outside of the playground be utilized. He also noted that any volunteer with a handicap placard could use public parking spaces at any time for any length of time. He said if one space was designated as a handicap parking space then only vehicles with a handicap placard or license plate could use that space and that would reduce parking for other volunteers. He also spoke about concerns around limiting parking necessary for the neighboring Youth Services agency. He said that it was likely that staff would recommend that the spaces remain functioning as currently configured. There was some discussion by the committee. Pat O'Connor asked if the parking meters could be removed from the two spaces. Elwell said that placement of meters was utilized as to tool to turn over parking spaces throughout the day. Prudence MacKinney cautioned about providing free parking spaces located so close to downtown and other businesses in the area. Elwell said that a change in circumstances had taken place with the Music Center's move to a different location, so staff would review the request and bring it to a future meeting.

Other Business – Informational Items

None.

There was no further business.

ELWELL ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 8:55AM.