



PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 3:00 p.m. MT

The scheduled meeting of the Public Works was called to order by Chairman Bernie Babcock at approximately 3:07 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Committee members present in person or attended via Teams were Bernie Babcock, Scott Wilson, and Jackson Fox; Pat Woodcock and Jake Galeener were excused.

Others present in person or via Teams were Al Cablay, Paul Woods, Suzanne Mulvany, Adam Brown, Sam Baker, Bruce Hunter, and Andrea Buchholz.

The press was notified. This meeting was recorded and copies are available at the Public Works Headquarters and on the city's website at www.ontariooregon.org.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES – MARCH 9, 2021

RESOLUTION, ACTION &/OR MOTION:

TABLED UNTIL THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING, MAY 11, 2021.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

RESOLUTION, ACTION &/OR MOTION:

- Mr. Wilson nominated **Mr. Babcock for Public Works Committee Chairman**; Mr. Fox seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously** (Woodcock and Galeener -excused).
 - Mr. Babcock nominated **Mr. Wilson for Public Works Committee Vice-Chairman**; Mr. Fox seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously** (Woodcock and Galeener -excused).
 - Mr. Babcock nominated **Mr. Woodcock for Public Works Committee Secretary**; Mr. Fox seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously** (Woodcock and Galeener -excused).
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ALAMEDA ELEMENTARY TRAFFIC ISSUES



Andrea Buchholz, Alameda Elementary Principal – Thank you for allowing me to be here today. We just wanted to bring the matter of our traffic flow issues in the back of our building during our parent drop-off and pick-up times to your attention. We reached out to the City about a year ago to talk about some of the incidents we've had regarding the flow pattern behind our school. We actually had a couple of accidents last year and in response to that the City put up some stop signs, which have been pretty helpful. But we're still having some issues with our parent pick-up congesting the roadway, and if anybody is parked alongside the roadway (parking on either or both sides) it narrows it down to a one lane path. Therefore, during that time where we're having parents' pick-up or drop-off students behind the school, it really does create a nuisance and a hazard for the residents that live right behind Alameda Elementary School.

Bruce Hunter – Parents are actually lined up almost all the way down to 10th Ave. I spoke to Adam about a year and a half ago and led me to believe that they went to the traffic engineer and they put stop signs up that didn't help at all. In fact, sometimes I think it creates more congestion. But because I was working all the time, it didn't bother me but now I'm retired and there during that time. If you look at your picture. Those cars line up and if they were clear against the curb it wouldn't be quite so bad, but some of them get four or five feet away from the curb. And then you get one or two cars parked on the opposite side and it creates a one-way street. I actually got hit during one of those things, I said we're going to change this, and I'm not going to let it die. So that's why I've been a proponent of it. So, Andrea, Al and I met, discussed it, and we came up with a couple of things.

AnB – I did present the plan of switching the busing to back and the parent pick-up to the front. But our transportation manager said it would be very difficult for the buses to navigate to get out of the back of the school. But I didn't know if that would then just be placing another burden on Alameda Dr., which Alameda Dr. is a very well used, highly traveled road, and I didn't want to create an issue on Alameda Dr. before I talk to you guys.

BH – One of the proposals was that we put up "No Parking" signs on the East side of the road between the hours of noon and three/four o'clock. I have talked to one resident on the corner of Southwest 12th St. and 12th Ave. and he has no problem with that. He said he has plenty of parking on 12th Ave. That way if we enforce that at least we have a little bit less traffic congestion. The other one that we alluded to is running the buses instead of in the front of the school run them in the back of the school. However, the bus supervisor sounds like he is not in favor of that. The third one, if you're aware of the Park. The school and the City have a joint park with a rope that goes along the back of our houses. It's gated so that people can't just make that a through Street. So, the third proposal then would be to open those gates and have the parents come in and then leave and that would put him down on Southwest 14th when they come out. That way there wouldn't be a traffic jam right there at the school. The thing that Andrea was concerned about if you had the parents pick the kids up in front they would have to park in the gravel along Alameda to be off the road; you could do something similar to what Aiken has done. There'd be one way in and one way out and the parents would have to come in and somehow get around to the South end of Alameda.

Our Mail lady and I talked the other day extensively and it's a joke to get through there. I'm surprised more kids haven't been hit there and it does create real problems. I'd appreciate it as a citizen from Ontario we do something to get this fixed up. Any questions?

BB – Has there been any prioritization? There has obviously been a considerable amount of discussion, but there hasn't been anything really formalized in terms of what the implemented solution is going to be. Is that correct? – *Yes*

As Public Works Chairman (and parent of kids that went to Alameda) I would certainly be in support of a solution.

JF – Does the City have heartburn with them using that driveway along the park?

AC – Not that I can tell.

JF – I'm no traffic expert but that seems like the safest place for kids. Away from those other traveled streets.

BH – We've toyed with having the bus swing in and go out that way, but that's kind of narrow for them. And I think the school has put a curb up along there and we might have to do some work with that curb and then maybe do a little enlargement of that corner there.

JF – What is the safest solution?

AC – Taking them down that road. That's the safest; it takes the conflicts of the pedestrians (kids) and the vehicles out from the roadway.

BB – Let me ask a point of clarification. So, basically what's kind of emerged is the prominent potential solution is to come off of Southwest 14th, drive along and the parent traffic would use that route and pick up the kids out of the parking lot on the East side of school; then the buses would continue to use the North. Is that correct?

Once again, what I'm hearing is essentially that the top recommended solution is to have parent traffic enter from SW 14th Ave...

BH – No they exit that way.

BB – OK. The parent traffic enters from 12th and exit on 14th; the buses would continue to use Alameda and load in front. Correct?

BH – Yes. And I would suggest that we put the signs up "No parking" anyway.

BB – It looks like it's really narrow. Is that wide enough to support? It's going to be a one way. Correct?

BH – Yes. And they would open it up and close it; it would only be open during the times that they pick the kids up.

JF – What are you calling that option?

AC – Option 3. If we call the 1. No parking only, 2. being rerouting of the buses, and this would be number 3.

BB – We've had enough discussion and I think we will....

SW – I just have a couple comments. This is not a new discussion by any means. When my kids went to school, we picked the kids up in the front of the school and the buses in the back. So, it's not a new problem. We've discussed it before over the years. And I like the idea that if you're going to keep parents in the back that they have that threw away. However, we also have to remember that someone has to be responsible for opening and closing the gates, and it does have to be an all-weather road.

AC – Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, we wanted to get a firm, clear direction with the participation of Mr. Hunter and Ms. Buchholz and with that come back with an option that would have all of these details laid out like the issues of snow plowing, the issues of closing the gates, which primarily those aren't major obstacles. We can get past those but come back to the committee with that recommendation. This is really a lot clearer direction that we thought we could get.

BB – So you're asking us to conceptually approve? – *Yes*.

AnB – I see a couple other potential things that we would need to do if we were going to use that as a Thruway. We would probably need to make sure that there was some sort of speed bumps because it is a pretty straight stretch, and we have parents that are rather quick drivers. And also, I know both Leagues use that parking lot to store the soccer goals during certain times of year. That would probably create a hazard that we wouldn't want to have there. So, I think we need to probably talk to the city about where they would store those soccer goals, and I'm sure they store them on the asphalt because they don't want to kill the grass. Those were just two things that as an observer I see we probably need to address. Besides maybe moving that gate.

BB – Andrea I have a question for you about snow removal. Snow removal might become an issue, and obviously when the City does snow removal, their priorities are different streets than would be a route for the school. So, it might be a situation where the school district might have to accept responsibility for it. I mean if you're having school then obviously that would be something that would need to be addressed.

AnB – Right, I actually took note of that, and I know that we've purchased some additional snow removal equipment at the district level. But I would definitely need to run that by our Superintendent and the maintenance manager before I could say.

BH – One other thing that I'm going to bring up for Andrea's sake is we did have a student get hit on Alameda, and Andrea is very concerned. The City needs to put some lights, warning lights up on that road so that people know to slow down, at least it might help.

AnB – And our response to the student getting hit about a month ago was we actually put a person up there at the crosswalk with a vest and a stop sign, which has helped a little bit. But the lights that you guys put in front of Aiken that flash during dismissal and entrance times for the students would be super helpful. People go by Alameda Drive I

watch him all day long right out my window here and they go by Alameda Dr upwards of 50/60 miles an hour. It's like the school being offset from the road. They forget we're here. It's pretty concerning.

BB – Do you have any other discussion?

JF – I move that the committee recommends to the City Council Option 3 As well as have the City Council workout these other smaller issues.

BB – Do we have any other further discussion? I would recommend in addition to that, and for our motion to include Jacobs and the City come back to us with the plans so we get some feedback on what was formally decided.

SW – I'll second that.

BB – It's been moved and seconded.

RESOLUTION, ACTION &/OR MOTION:

THE MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. FOX SECONDED BY MR. WILSON THAT THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL OPTION #3, AS WELL AS HAVE THE CITY COUNCIL WORKOUT THE OTHER SMALLER ISSUES; THAT JACOBS AND THE CITY COME BACK TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE WITH THE FORMALLY DECIDED PLAN: Motion passed unanimously.

MISSION, PURPOSE, ROLE

AC – Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee I'll have on the board a short slide presentation and it will look really familiar as I used some of the same slides. And then if I could Mr. Chairman, I'll just take a moment to give a little bit of background. The reason for this is and couldn't have been better shown and displayed right in front of us in real time. That Purpose, Mission and Role is precisely what the elementary school and Mr. Hunter as a resident brought up as a sounding board. Respected from the committee. He got us a direction on items such as safety; in this case it was school safety.

In looking at the history of what the Public Works Committee has done in the past and ya know that old, saying "To understand where you're going, you have to understand where you've been", and in this case it hasn't been a clear cut path. At the last meeting we had ordinances that we also passed out to the committee members; on those ordinances it laid out really what the mission, purpose and role is for the committee. So that's why I did this. I ended that presentation as 'where do we go from here'? And in light of that I asked the committee members to send what they feel may be the top three and we could discuss them today.

The committee's mission is to advise the City Council, City Manager, and the Public Works Director in matters regarding public works area. The Committee may advise the City Council, City Manager and/or the Public Works Director on any matter which their guidance is requested.

So basically, it's a pretty broad umbrella of which that's what the committee just provided. This was lifted almost word for word out of the current ordinance. So, I thought I would daylight that with the committee and see if there were any issues? If I may digress a little bit... the prior presentation also showed the cities of Boise, Meridian and Nampa, and of course Nyssa and Vale and all those others as far as what do they do with their communities? And it was pretty similar. Their missions were broad based. I think we have the advantage of having our City Engineer, Paul Woods with his experience with some of the Idaho cities with their committees and commissions too. And he would support the broad umbrella that the Public Works Committees or Advisory Committees have. So, I'll stop there and see if there's any feedback or comments on what I just read to you.

JF – Do you have a copy of that ordinance? I don't recognize all this verbiage.

AC – So it's under purpose under 2-8-5a. Again, my intent is really to just daylight it. And to see if there is something that you don't like or would like more clarity on?

So, the purpose again is lifted out of the actual ordinance, Section B. To review and recommend any all public works related changes to the municipal code prior to approval by the City Council, and this is what it lists. And it uses that term, that catchall "to include, but not limited to", so this is just what they list specifically standard drawings, utility

charges, fees or what they call SDC's (System development charges), changes or additions, master plans or studies and the last major Capital Improvement program or CIP projects.

Lastly, is the Role. This one, to me is up to interpretation. In the prior presentation I gave I talked about was more specific objective of what is that we're doing in our mission and in our purpose. In this case, and the last section listed under the ordinance and specifications adopted. I'm not sure if you're aware; I was sort of enlightened about it that we actually use Idaho specifications for public works construction. I understand that because of where we're at here. What it does is augment that with the City of Ontario supplement. The City Engineer and I have not had a chance to discuss it, but essentially Idaho specifications are 2017 and the City of Ontario are 2007. We need to update those. If nothing else daylight it, let's bring it out, does it apply? I think we have some really good projects and construction that we've been waiting on to say that these are standards that are either applicable or not applicable. I think what I hear is that they are so let's go ahead and bring them up to date.

BB – I just have a couple of questions or points of clarification. So, in reviewing this and looking at the mission and actually the ordinance for the Public Works Committee, have there been any action since you've been involved with us that you feel is outside of the framework or the guidance of the Public Works Ordinance?

AC – No. However, one area in the code and the ordinance does speak to is budgetary. It was very clear that is not the purpose of the committee. So, if I were to answer that with some clarity and that would be getting involved in the budget part is something that I wasn't familiar with and had not had experience doing that with other City boards and commissions. And so, as it turns out that's not what the committee should have been doing. Other than that, no, I don't see anything that the committee has either acted on in the past or in my brief experience is not appropriate, other than the budget.

BB – So, for clarification the ordinance specifically directs the Public Works Committee to review the CIP budget, which is what we've done. And obviously we don't have authority or oversight or an advisory role with the Public Works Departmental Budget, and so, just as a point of clarification, and I'm going to put it in a nutshell and I've been on the Public Works Committee for quite some time and Scott's been on the committee longer than I have. I view a role as advisory, and I view our roll, I mean we are a committee we're not elected we are appointed, and my take is our role is to assist Jacobs and the City in addressing, identifying, and providing advise because we essentially represent the citizens of the City of Ontario. And so that's how I view it. We are truly advisory. There're times where you may not agree, and we may not agree but the point is that we have the discussion.

AC – Yes sir. I was curious to find out because again, in reading the ordinance, in my experience in other cities, you don't find one where it actually says when there is a disagreement, what to do between the Public Works Director and the Committee.

BB – My comment is that the reality is the City of Ontario has hired Jacobs to perform the Public Department Works projects and run the Department, and you're at risk for that. Again, that gets to the fact that we're purely advisory. You guys have to make the final decision and do what you feel is in the best interest and run that through the City Manager and the City Council. But again, you know we would never, or we shouldn't participate in engineering or anything outside of an advisory role.

JF – So what brought this on? Did the City Council send this to you and say change this ordinance or something? Because your verbiage does not line up with the verbiage in this ordinance.

AC – No sir. The City Council did not. That's all on me as your Public Works Director. I felt there needed to be some clarity on our part as we rolled out the CIP, as we do our public works duties. I felt some clarity was needed. If I may remind the committee, we didn't even have a quorum for the first two meetings or the first two months I was here. So, it was a challenge to hear and to implement working through every day without hearing the main advisory if you will. The direction, the vision that I need to see and be part of to try to implement on behalf of the City Manager and City Council. So that's where I thought perhaps, we could have an opportunity to revisit. And again, I didn't mean to take literary license. I did this to just show what is in the ordinance as best as I could and here from the committee what they want to do and help and to daylight these issues so that we can go forward and trying to in our day-to-day tasks and in our master planning and everything else that we do on behalf of the City and Public Works. And to adhere to your ordinances and what the perspectives are that the committee represents.

JF – We work at the pleasure of the Council. I don't have an understanding of what is in front of us. What you're asking us to do?

AC – I hear you. Let me go back, regroup, and come back to you with what I thought I heard. In response to the mission, purpose, and role. Again, I needed clarity. I felt I'm hearing it now. Despite not having two of the members here, I think as a whole. We make better decisions when there's a greater whole. So, let me do that, allow me the time to come back in the next meeting and I'll articulate what I believe I heard.

BB – I'd like to hear from Scott a little bit too on the matter.

SW – The only comments I have are similar to what has already been said. I've been on the committee longer than anybody and we've never looked at the Public Works budget. The only time we ever looked at the Public Works budget was when we were asked to review was when you guys were hired, when you were CH2MHill. That was the contract and the budget was brought to the Public Works Committee for review. The only reason we ever asked for a CIP budget was because we were always given this list of CIP projects that were multiple pages long and our response was if you don't tell us how much money is available, how can we prioritize the list? And that's the only budget that we have ever seen. If you just at least tell us how much money is going to be available for CIP's, so we don't recommend projects that are three times more than the budget. That would be kind of a waste of effort on everyone's part.

And in looking back when this ordinance was written and this committee was formed the number one question that came from the Council when either of you came with a Public Works project, question, or idea was "Have you ran it by the Public Works Committee first?" And most of the time their response was "bring it back after you ran it by them." So, we've been the sounding board, we've been the place to ask questions you might not want to ask in a public council meeting. You can have feedback and most of the time, in my experience, is the Public Works Director and City Manager went to the Council and said "I've already ran this by the Public Works Committee", they're good with it. Or these were their concerns. It strengthens your position. That's what we spent a lot of time doing in the past. Is going through details helping you with ideas and projects you want to do, so that when it gets to the Council you've already had it ran through one punch. It's like this thing with the school when you take something to the Council you can say we've already gone through this with the Public Works Committee, this is the idea they like and this is the idea we like. So, our role and responsibilities have always been a little bit broad. But that's just the way it's always evolved and been. Realistically we are here to help, not to criticize, we're here to help.

(Continued general discussion)

PIW – Mr. Chairman, if I could just on the CIP, what I would like to request is that throughout the year I would like to request an opportunity to come before you let's say 30 minutes, one meeting to just talk about the water fund. How much money we collect, what are our water operating expenses, what is the CIP focused on and give us a chance to throughout the year, go through the Water fund one meeting. Another meeting we have the Wastewater fund for 30 minutes, Street fund, and so on so as we get towards that time next year, it's not just all coming as something that we haven't revisited for 11 months and get the opportunity to look at that. And you included in there not just once, but you know what we need so you guys understand.

If that's okay with you Mr. Chairman, we'll work to schedule those on the agendas throughout the year.

BB – You would work with Al on getting those on the agenda, and I certainly think that's a good approach.

JF – I agree.

RESOLUTION, ACTION &/OR MOTION:

NONE

ODOT NEWS RELEASE

AC – There was an email that was sent out from ODOT and we wanted to share it with the committee and welcome you to make comments as well. Those are included in your packet, and you are able to get online.

***Online open house begins March 29 for U.S.
30 Snake River (Ontario) Bridge***

March 25, 2021

*More information: Tom Strandberg ODOT Public Information Officer, 541-963-1330, thomas.m.strandberg@odot.state.or.us ONTARIO - The Oregon Department of Transportation will be repairing the U.S. 30 Snake River (Ontario) Bridge that connects Oregon and Idaho, between Ontario and Fruitland. The bridge is located less than a mile north of Interstate 84 Exit 376. To collect feedback about the upcoming project we are holding an **ONLINE OPEN HOUSE** from March 29 through April 9. Local residents, businesses, bridge users and other interested parties are encouraged to visit the website and review project plans, pictures and traffic impacts information, and then provide feedback. The online open house will be available for viewing March 29 at the following web address: <https://odotopenhouse.org/u-s-30-snakeriver-ontario-bridge>.*

The Snake River Bridge provides important access between Oregon and Idaho. Built in 1967, the structure is in need of repairs and upgrades. Without them, the bridge will continue to deteriorate. We will design the project this year and construct it in 2022. Your comments will help us build a better, safer project.

*Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capitol Street NE, MS 11
Salem, OR, 97301-3871 USA*

RESOLUTION, ACTION &/OR MOTION:

NONE

OREGON PW EMERGENCY RESPONSE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

AC – Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, this is an item that was last approved in the mid-2000. I spoke to Lucy Moore at length about it. This is one of those projects that in the Covid that now her staff have kind of focused on. And said, “Oh my gosh, we have all these agencies that have not renewed.” Now, that doesn't mean that the agreements are null and void. They are still valid but need to be updated. So, rather than just bring this up before the City Council, the City Manager gave direction to bring it up to the Public Works Committee. Essentially what this agreement does is, and we may, or may not... again we're not forced to do it, but it is a Cooperative Emergency Agreement. It is very common in many DOT's throughout the nation; it just says that we'll cooperate. I can tell you from my own experience. When you have an agreement, it puts you up to the front of the line, bringing in the money faster, and with cooperation with my colleagues, fellow directors, and other Departments across the state it works well. So, I would encourage it obviously, but it is discretionary. Questions?

SW – Does the City Attorney go through this too?

AdB – When any item goes to the City Council and it is a contract item, we have a routing process that goes through the City Attorney. So yes, it will go through the Attorney.

BB – I'm pretty familiar with these kinds of agreements and working with the school. We signed several of these with the County in the event of Emergency X and obviously it's pretty vague in regard to personnel, equipment, and everything else. I think that's pretty standard, but obviously we want to be well prepared in the event of an emergency.

SW – Do we need to make a motion on this or is it going to be just a recommendation?

BB – What are you asking? I think it was listed as just a discussion item.

AC – Yes. How the staff report will be written is that it has gone before the Public Works Committee for review.

RESOLUTION, ACTION &/OR MOTION:

NONE

CORRESPONDENCE, COMMENTS AND EX-OFFICIO REPORTS

SW – I just have one comment. When we were listening to the presentation about the school. I'm a little unclear... Where does the school district responsibility for traffic control end and the City's begin? I'm just unclear because they're kind of asking for like a partnership. Part of what they want to direct traffic on is their property, part is on City property, and I'm just a little unclear on who's responsible for what?

JF – That is why, in my motion, I put in there that the City Council needs to work out those little details as they have an attorney.

ADJOURN

THE MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. FOX SECONDED BY MR. WILSON TO ADJOURN: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVED:



Signature



Date

(Bernie Babcock, Chairman / Scott Wilson, Vice-Chairman)