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**MEETING MINUTES**

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2018**

**7:00 P.M.**

**SECOND FLOOR TRAINING ROOM OF VILLAGE HALL**

- Members Present: Chairman Pat Lilly  
 Commissioner Peter Barrow  
 Commissioner Susan Barton  
 Commissioner Isaac Gaetz  
 Commissioner Jill Hayes  
 Commissioner Benjamin Schmitt
- Members Absent: Commissioner Libby Braband
- Staff Present: Brigitte Berger-Raish, P.E., Public Works Director  
 Dan Manis, P.E., Village Engineer  
 Kyle Murphy, Police Chief  
 Ron Andrews, CSO / Traffic Coordinator (Police)
- Guests Present: Anne Nagle, 1139 Manor Drive  
 Lauren Litchfield, 2340 Meadow Drive North  
 Tania Bouwman, 2436 Cardinal Lane  
 Shannon Zock, 2401 Pomona Lane  
 Julie Hanahan, 641 Indian Road (Glenview)  
 Ellen Shernweiler, 2719 Alison Lane  
 Sam Grossner, 708 Laporte Ave  
 Lourdes Cornelius, 601 Lacrosse Ave  
 Colleen Rosenthal, 10 Longmeadow Road (Winnetka)

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

Chairman Lilly called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and took role of the Commissioners.

## II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES; TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING OF JUNE 28, 2017.**

Chairman Lilly directed the Commission's attention to the draft minutes of the Transportation Commission meeting of June 28, 2017.

Commissioner Barrow commented that the minutes reflect that Village staff would provide additional input regarding diagonal pavement marking at crossing near Highcrest.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that Village staff is prepared to talk about this topic today.

Commissioner Barrow moved approval of the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gaetz. **The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.**

## III. **APPROVAL OF THE 2018/2019 SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD REPORT PRESENTED BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Community Service Officer, Ron Andrews, presented the annual school crossing guard report. He stated that the past school year went very well and that no significant changes were made at any school. Many changes have been made over the years and that pick-up and drop-off operations have been going very well unless weather presents difficulties. No major infractions, problems or injuries were noted. He noted that usual complaints result from reports of distracted drivers. With cooperation of school principals, the Police are often able to contact individuals to address these concerns. Mr. Andrews stated that no changes are recommended for pick-up and drop-off operations and that school staff and officers have been very helpful. He noted a minor change to parking signage that was made in the 800 block of Central Avenue and that the core group of crossing guards have been doing a good job.

Commissioner Lilly asked about nature of complaints received by the Police Department.

Chief Murphy responded that reports of cell phone use in the school zones, disregarding traffic or parking signs or established pick-up and drop-off line procedures can result in enforcement activities. Focus should be on education, especially if changes are made to signage or pick-up and drop-off procedures.

Commissioner Lilly clarified that the primary feedback received by the Police Department is related to traffic operations in the drop-off zones right around schools rather than crossings a little further away.

Mr. Andrews stated that complaints farther away from schools are primarily related to speeding.

Commissioner Barton summarized activities of the School District (SD) 39 Civics and Safety Committee including regular meetings with the Police and Fire Departments that often involve discussion of safety related topics. She noted a recent committee initiative that involved a parent orientation video promoting school zone safety.

Commissioner Lilly stated the most recent modifications to the crossing guard program involved extending the hours of the Highcrest crossing guard. He noted there have not been modifications to the total number of crossing guards for a number of years.

Commissioner Barton asked for more information on the budget of a crossing guard.

Chief Murphy stated that the crossing guards are paid out of the Village Budget for the Police Department.

Commissioner Barrow asked for information on the process to seek additional funding.

Chief Murphy stated that the Transportation Commission would need to make a recommendation and Village staff would need to seek approval for additional funds from the Village Board for the additional staff positions.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated approval of an additional crossing guard would not be effective until the 2019/2020 school year if approved by the Village Board unless the recommendation included a budget neutral reduction of a crossing guard at another location.

Commissioner Barton noted that a traffic study would need to occur first.

Commissioner Schmitt asked if a traffic study has to happen or can a recommendation be made without one. He questioned which intersections are up for review, noting that there seems to be two distinct requests for the Lake Avenue and Laramie Avenue (Lake/Laramie) and Illinois Road and Hibbard Road (Illinois/Hibbard) intersections.

Commissioner Lilly expressed that these locations were noted in the meeting materials but more are likely to result from public comment.

Commissioner Barrow asked for clarification on the process to request a crossing guard.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that the purpose of this meeting is to review the crossing guard report and make recommendations based on the report. She noted that recommendations for additional crossing guards would be contingent on Village Board budget approval.

Commissioner Barton commented on a request for a temporary crossing guard.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that a temporary guard is not recommended but should be based on an engineering study, data, and judgement.

Commissioner Schmitt asked about the contents of a study.

Ms. Berger-Raish directed the Commissioners to the School Crossing Guard Policy and noted some of the various parameters. She stated that Lake/Laramie intersection would need to be looked at as an entire corridor and that the current condition is not pedestrian friendly. She noted that Lake Avenue is under Cook County jurisdiction.

Chief Murphy stated it is important to adhere to the established standards and that crossing guards at unwarranted intersections could lead to unintended consequences.

Commissioner Gaetz asked if a study could be undertaken with only two weeks of school left.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that Village staff has already been collecting data at Lake/Laramie.

Commissioner Schmitt asked if the numbers were available.

Mr. Manis, stated that several counts were conducted this week and morning arrival included five elementary aged pedestrian crossings on May 30 but there were impending weather conditions. He noted on May 31 with better weather, 10 children were witnessed using the intersection in the morning and that on May 29 in the afternoon, 15 children were using the intersection; nine crossing the west leg and six using the south leg.

Commissioner Schmitt stated that the pedestrian numbers at Lake/Laramie are higher than the number provided in the crossing guard report at another location. He asked if the next step is a study to see if the intersection is safe enough to place a guard there.

Commissioner Hayes reviewed the numbers and mentioned there is a process in place. She recognized that guards do not seem to be removed so asked when a review of existing locations would take place to determine if the criteria is still being met. She stated there should be a basis to place a guard since there will be a budgetary impact for potentially many years to come but asked if there a re-evaluation of the existing guard locations to determine if they are needed somewhere else.

Mr. Andrews stated that he looks at where the kids are coming from but the way the town is set up the crossings are very consistent. There have not been significant changes that would warrant adding or removing guards.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated they should be re-evaluated if there were major changes in the roadway characteristics.

Commissioner Barton stated placement is based on the school walking routes.

Ms. Berger-Raish summarized efforts by the Village to improve the Lake Avenue (west of Skokie) corridor including pedestrian studies and various federal grant opportunities.

Chairman Lilly asked for public comment.

Julie Hanahan, 641 Indian Road (Glenview), Civics and Safety representative for Romona School, stated there is a need for a crossing guard at the mid-block crossing on Locust between Wilmette and Lake Avenues in front of Wilmette Junior High School (Locust mid-block crossing) where Romona and Highcrest students cross. She proposed moving the existing crossing guard from the Lake Avenue and Locust Road intersection to this location since this would be a budget neutral solution.

Lauren Litchfield, 2340 Meadow Drive North, discussed safety concerns with the Locust mid-block crossing and the anticipated increase in usage if a crossing guard were approved for this location. She expressed the perception of inequity between schools due to the presence of two crossing guards in close proximity along Wilmette Avenue at 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Prairie Avenue

Lourdes Cornelius, 601 Lacrosse Avenue, stated she is a part of the Avoca school district and summarized a previous petition submitted to improve pedestrian safety for the Avoca area, concerns with roadway characteristics, and highlighted that the Avoca area does not have any crossing guards. She questioned why SD 37 was not studied as part of the crossing guard report.

Commissioner Barrow expressed interest on the reasons for no crossing guards for SD 37.

Ms. Berger-Raish summarized Village initiatives and policies to promote pedestrian mobility and acknowledged the lack of pedestrian infrastructure in the SD 37 area.

Commissioner Hayes expressed her understanding that walking routes have not been identified because of the roadway and traffic challenges within the SD 37 service area.

Commissioner Barton stated that SD 37 representatives have recently been included in the SD 39 Civics and Safety meetings for a couple years now and

that these concerns with walking routes have not been expressed in this setting yet. She noted concerns with funding due to the population base of the SD 37 schools.

Ms. Cornelius stated that concerns related to Avoca area schools have been expressed at previous Village Board meetings.

Commissioner Hayes noted her understanding is that the Lake/Laramie intersection would be difficult for a crossing guard to manage and would give parents a false sense of security and has potential to increase risk of injury. She stated that while she has not yet seen the data for Lake/Laramie intersection, she agrees that they are the widest and fastest roads.

Chief Murphy expressed concern with the entire Lake Avenue corridor highlighting the crosswalks over the expressway are particularly problematic.

Commissioner Lilly stated the report under review tonight is of existing crossing guard locations and not a study to determine new locations.

Commissioner Hayes expressed knowledge of previous studies by the State for the Illinois/Hibbard intersection.

Ms. Berger-Raish mentioned the start of a bicycle and pedestrian study to develop a Village-wide master plan and how this plan will position the Village to be more competitive for state and federal grants for pedestrian infrastructure improvements.

Commissioner Lilly stated that another meeting would be necessary if a recommendation were to be made to shift or remove a crossing guard from an existing location.

Commissioner Schmitt asked for background on the Illinois/Hibbard intersection.

Chief Murphy stated that the intersection serves middle school-aged children.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that the intersection is controlled by an all-way stop and lower volume than the Lake and Laramie intersection with shorter crossing distances.

Colleen Rosenthal, 10 Longmeadow Road (Winnetka), expressed concerns with safety and lack of crosswalks in the Avoca and Marie Murphy areas and she is not comfortable with allowing her children walking or biking to school.

Commissioner Lilly stated many of the concerns are historic infrastructure concerns based on how and when these areas were developed. He highlighted several infrastructure projects that are in development.

Commissioner Hayes stated that the bicycle and pedestrian master plan will be looking at these issues and requested information on the timeline and process.

Mr. Manis summarized the master planning process and provided detail on the community engagement plan.

Ms. Berger-Raish provided additional details on the various engagement activities.

Ellen Sternweiler, 2719 Alison Lane, stated she is in the Romona area and summarized observations of meeting discussions and concerns over how the crossing guards are spread throughout the Village due to perceived inequity. She expressed concerns with the intersection of Romona Road and Wilmette Avenue (Romona/Wilmette) even with the presence of a crossing guard.

Commissioner Hayes summarized the Romona/Wilmette intersection characteristics.

Meeting attendee expressed concerns with the Locust mid-block crossing due to the parking lots for the SD 39 administration building, Regina High School, and Wilmette Junior High along with concerns related to the Locust Road and Birchwood Avenue intersection.

Mr. Manis summarized safety enhancements scheduled for Locust Road as part of the roadway reconstruction.

Shannon Zock, 2401 Pomona Lane, expressed concerns with the safety of the Locust mid-block crossing and requests an interim crossing guard. She suggests moving the crossing guard from the Wilmette Avenue and Prairie Avenue intersection to the Locust mid-block crossing.

Anne Nagle, 1139 Manor, summarized high traffic volumes on Lake Avenue and Laramie Avenue and concerns with intersection safety. She requested installation of "no right turn on red when pedestrians are present" signs and installation of pedestrian signals on the south leg at this intersection since all other legs of the intersection have pedestrian signals.

Commissioner Barton expressed support for the requested signage.

Commissioner Lilly asked if the requests are easy to implement.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that the signal is under Cook County jurisdiction. Village staff will reach out to them and request the suggested intersection improvements.

Commissioner Hayes expressed the County may have concerns with intersection backup into the Edens interchange and summarized other challenges with the intersection. She expressed the desire to identify a safe route to Avoca but

would need to identify if a crossing guard is the solution or if there is a bigger issue.

Commissioner Lilly asked if Loyola and Avoca times overlap.

Ms. Nagle discussed dismissal times and the recent change that Loyola students now use the west side of Laramie instead of the east side.

Tania Bouwman, 2436 Cardinal Lane, expressed the need for a crossing guard on Locust and concerns with congestion near the crosswalk and parking lot entrances.

Commissioner Hayes asked if this crossing would qualify to be staffed by school personnel since it is so near the front of the Wilmette Junior HS.

Ms. Hanahan summarized differences in school start and end times.

Ms. Berger-Raish discussed recent observations of the crossing stating that traffic moved very slowly and the crosswalk functioned well. She also summarized the traffic differences between the Locust Road and the Wilmette Avenue corridors.

Meeting attendee questioned if a crossing guard is really needed at the Lake Avenue and Locust Road (Lake/Locust) intersection.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated the lack of left turn lanes and high through and turning volumes make the Lake/Locust intersection difficult to cross.

Commissioner Schmitt questioned the existing crossing guard locations and pedestrian volumes asking if there is an existing location that can be altered to consolidate two crossing locations.

The Commission considered the pedestrian crossing numbers at the Wilmette and Forest Avenue crossing. Chief Murphy discussed concerns with moving the current walking route south to the Wilmette/Lake intersection.

Commissioner Hayes shared similar concerns and expressed support to evaluate proposed locations at another meeting.

Commissioner Barrow also expressed support to evaluate proposed locations.

Commissioner Lilly discussed options and timing for future evaluations and impact of the Locust construction.

Commissioner Hayes asked about the timing of the Locust Road construction.

Mr. Manis stated that construction is scheduled to begin in March 2019 and be completed in November 2019. He summarized impacts of the construction zone on traffic.

Ms. Bouwman questioned the cost of temporary flashers for the crossing during construction and the cost for a crossing guard.

Commissioner Hayes summarized that the following locations appear to have the most support for a crossing guard:

- Illinois/Hibbard
- Lake/Laramie
- Locust mid-block

She expressed it was her understanding that in order to implement a change for the upcoming school year that another location would need to be removed.

Ms. Berger-Raish expressed there is a lack of resources to perform the study in time for the upcoming school year.

Discussion ensued on study timing and commission preferences for study locations.

Commissioner Barton expressed support to make requests for the improvements presented by Ms. Nagle to the Lake/Laramie intersection. She recommended study of the Locust mid-block crossing and expressed the need for sidewalks on Illinois Road east of Hibbard Road.

Chief Murphy stated the cost of a crossing guard is roughly \$15,000 annually.

Ms. Berger-Raish presented an option to study the Locust mid-block crossing after implementation of roadway improvements.

Ms. Barton summarized the infrastructure challenges of the Lake/Laramie intersection and Illinois/Hibbard intersection.

Ms. Hayes expressed that the only existing crossing guard location that may be worth restudying is the Wilmette/Forest crossing due to pedestrian volume.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that the Village could complete a study.

Commissioner Lilly expressed support for further study of the Lake/Laramie intersection.

Ms. Nagle expressed support for tactical urbanism and the Village becoming a Vision Zero community. She asked if temporary bump outs or crosswalk enhancements could be implemented in advance of the Locust construction.

Ms. Berger-Raish discussed the need to implement the entire Locust improvements at once and that the various enhancements complement each other and they should be implemented at the same time.

Commissioner Barton asked that the other Villages feeding into Avoca be approached to share the cost for potential additional crossing guards.

Ms. Berger-Raish clarified that Village of Northfield students do use crossings in Wilmette but Village of Glenview students do not.

Chief Murphy expressed the need to study the entire Lake Avenue corridor and that the focus cannot only be on the intersection.

Commissioner Hayes also expressed concerns with the corridor.

Commissioner Lilly expressed support for the recommended signage and pedestrian signal improvements to the Lake/Laramie intersection.

Commissioner Hayes summarized the recommended improvements that should be requested from Cook County including the “no right turn on red” signs and installation of the missing pedestrian signals on the south leg of the intersection.

Commissioner Barton expressed interest in addressing speed and creating a school speed zone.

Ms. Nagle clarified that a 20 M.P.H. school speed zone presently exists.

Commissioner Lilly summarized current action items under consideration which include:

- Evaluation of the Wilmette/Forest crossing
- Evaluation of the Locust mid-block crossing until after construction
- Recommendations to the County on signal and signage improvements for Lake/Laramie intersection
- Seeking support from Northfield if a crossing guard were to be recommended for Lake/Laramie
- Deferring Illinois/Hibbard due to infrastructure limitations

Commissioner Gaetz sought clarification on Forest/Wilmette consideration.

Commissioner Hayes explained that the results of the study would demonstrate if the existing crossing guard is justified.

Commissioner Schmitt asked if volunteer crossing guards have ever been used.

Chief Murphy expressed there could be a liability concern.

Commissioner Barton provided details on volunteer group to help students navigate in front of McKenzie School.

Commissioner Gaetz expressed support to preemptively seek approval for an additional crossing guard in the Village Budget.

Chief Murphy expressed that a recommendation for an additional crossing guard should be supported by the procedures and standards set forth in the crossing guard policy.

The Commission discussed changing the timing of the crossing guard meeting as well as timing of evaluating the Locust crossing. There was concurrence to evaluate the Locust crossing based on the post-construction conditions. Commissioner Gaetz retracted support for immediate request for an additional crossing guard.

Ms. Berger-Raish summarized the motion to be considered by the Commission:

- Staff writing a letter to Cook County regarding the intersection of Lake and Laramie to include full evaluation of pedestrian safety in general, no turn on red when pedestrians are present at all legs, and new pedestrian signal heads on the south leg of intersection.
- Engage Northfield in a discussion on how their students utilize the intersection and continue discussion with Loyola as well.
- Warrant analysis for the Wilmette and Forest intersection.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated that based on the discussions, the Locust crossing would be evaluated in the spring of 2020.

Discussion ensued on options for the Forest/Wilmette intersection evaluation.

Commissioner Gaetz motioned to approve the action items summarized by Ms. Berger. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Barton. **The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.**

Commissioner Lilly thanked everyone in the audience for the helpful comments.

#### **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

None

#### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

None

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Hayes moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote. **The motion carried.** No further discussion occurred on the motion.

The meeting was thereafter adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Minutes Respectfully Prepared by D. Manis