

Mayor David Anderson called the special council meeting of March 6, 2014 to order at 5:10 p.m. at the Boundary County Middle School. Present for the meeting were Mayor Anderson, Council President Rick Alonzo, Council Members Ron Smith, Connie Wells, and Tom Mayo, Clerk Kris Larson, City Administrator Stephen Boorman, Economic Development Coordinator David Sims. Also present were Don Davis and Damon Allen from ITD, Susan Kiebert, Larry and Judy Swing, Jay Wages, Bob Johnson, Gayle Morman, Sandy Ashworth, Colet Allen, Shirley Hamilton, Sandy Hamilton Beamer, Helmuth Redl, Bert and Sandra Wolf, Brett Payne, Vern Wilson, Larry Hall, Larry and Hazel Eby, Carol Julien, Glenda Poston, Loren and Katie Huggins, Lois Johnson, Will Hedrick, Carolyn Testa, Eileen Marcotte, Jeff and Christine Dunn, Vi Sims, Robert Hanover, Melanie Staples, Tony Villelli, Dick Villelli, Eric Lederhos, Cal Russell, Jerry Lewis, Aaron Clark, Matt Philbrook, Jennifer McLeish, John Taft, Geraldine Howlett, Melinda Brinkman, Dave Schuman, Dave Duarte, Pam Svec, Bill Svec, Becky Pluid, Leonard Schulte, Letha Lockhart, Diane Olsen, Scott Bourassa, Eldon Koon, Bob Mastre, Wally Dinning, Edwin Dyck, Dean Prentice, Barbara Rawlings, Karen Robinson, Kevin Church, Roger and Elizabeth Fraser, Steve Howlett, Dave Jurgenson, Scott Soult, Tom Duarte, Jeff Mellinger, Wes Portrey, Dave Young, Shinji Imoto, Laura Imoto, Jim Dyck, Nikki Taylor, Hank Willis, Terry Frazer, Kristi Kline, Gary Jones, Don Kramer, Deanna Booth, Gene Busch, Larry McNutt, Summer MacDonald, Mario DeLeon, Dan Dinning, Donald Childress, Kathy Joyce-Garrison, Paul Anthony, Rick Ballard, Neal and Rachel Fireman, Kelly Spain, Frank McCormick, and Samuel Acuna.

The purpose of the special council meeting was to have a presentation with Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) for the Highway 95 corridor study.

Mayor Anderson said the Highway 95 corridor is getting wider and wider everywhere else but Boundary County is becoming the bottle neck. He spoke of the drainage issues we face on the south hill. Mayor Anderson introduced Don Davis, Transportation Planner for District 1. Don introduced Damon Allen, District Engineer, and Susan Kiebert, Mobility Manager.

Don Davis told the group about the Hudson Study and said it spoke of a three lane highway by 2015. He said the Alderson Lane project was one of the projects ITD helped with that was spoken of in the Hudson Study. Don said a paving project is scheduled for this summer but with any highway project the ADA requirements must be met and this will be a problem with our sidewalks working as drainage like they are today.

Don also spoke about the Transportation Plan that was prepared for the city. He said from Madison to El Paso Street the three lane is narrow and there is not sufficient drainage. Don said by 2030 a three lane highway will not be sufficient if the volume continues to grow and the Hudson Study suggested that we should work toward a five lane highway. We have a 40 foot right of way now from curb to curb with five feet additional on each side for sidewalks so 50 feet all together. Right now most parcels fit the right of way that we already have. He said with a five lane we will need to purchase right of way. Don said we need good spacing for traffic lights so we have good traffic flow. The traffic coming onto the highway from the side streets are at an angle. It will take right of way to straighten out the approaches to the highway. He said ITD

does not want to develop a plan without input from the citizens. He said the Highway Trust Fund is nearly broke so there is not enough funding at this time to do a project. He said this year Congress is supposed to put a new transportation bill in place. Don said if a project is ready then when the funding is available the project can be done. He explained the display panels with the different scenarios for Highway 95 and the levels of service. Don said in the Hudson Study stated that the citizens replied by survey that they wanted to keep the highway in town and not have a bypass. Don said the blue tooth study showed the amount of time it took for a vehicle to get from one end of town to the other and also how long it took vehicles to get on the highway.

Don asked the group to turn in their comment forms and encouraged them to look at the Hudson Study and the City's Transportation Plan. He is interested in getting comments from the public. Damon Allen told the group that ITD will put the Hudson Study and the Transportation Plan on their website so the group can look at them. Don also told the group about other studies he has available on the ITD website.

Eileen Marcotte, ET Wireless, asked about the through traffic figures and inquired what the through traffic was for Sandpoint. Don responded in the 1990's it was anticipated that 19 percent of traffic would use the bypass in Sandpoint. In Bonners Ferry there are 7,000 through vehicles per day and 11,000 vehicles per day including local traffic. Sandpoint has 52 percent reduction in their traffic since the bypass opened and the downtown businesses think it is good because there is not the terrible high traffic flows.

John Taft said the major problem on the south hill is traffic accessing the highway and if traffic lights are installed, they would have to consider rebuilding some of the intersections. He compared Tamarack Street to Fry Street intersecting with the highway. John said the problems are still the side streets. Don agreed.

Eileen Marcotte asked how the city decided who to invite to the meeting. Mayor Anderson said it is an open public meeting and Don Davis said ITD provided a list of the property owners along the highway who were sent an invitation.

Pam Svec spoke regarding the children crossing the highway and the dangers. Don said this needs to be looked at and a determination of what is best figured out.

Paul Anthony asked what the capacity of the Kootenai River Bridge was. Don said 30,000 to 40,000 cars per day could cross each day and it is a fairly new bridge and is structurally safe.

Dave Duarte asked about a plan for a bypass and if it included a new bridge. Don said there is no plan at this time.

Larry Hall asked how much property would need to come off each side of the highway for an improved three lane. Don explained three lane and the new sidewalk on the east side of the highway that was built near the middle school to Augusta was built in the existing right of way. He said in order to put sidewalks on the west side of the highway it would have required acquisition of additional right of way. The entire drainage scheme needs to be looked at also as

there needs to be a swale for snow and underground drainage. There would need to be 20 additional feet for the drainage and sidewalk on the other side of the highway.

Paul Anthony asked about what version of a bypass has been proposed. Don said there was a version coming off north of the golf course and come across the valley as well as look at coming from Paradise Valley to town. Don would like the community to set the side boards and have ITD develop the plans.

Don Schultz said he is from Sandpoint and spoke about the bypass. He said the businesses are busier in downtown Sandpoint because it is so much more pedestrian friendly.

Dave Young, Liberty Gas Station, asked how the purchase of right of way works. Don said first there is a public process with the plans from ITD and it has right of way purchase plans. When the design is ready a certified appraiser is hired and an appraisal is done. When the appraisal is done offers are made. Dave Young said the property owner can also have their own appraisal done. Don agreed. He said counter offers go back and forth and if a decision cannot be made then it can go to court for condemnation. He said the court decision is final.

Carolyn Testa asked about possible condemnation and if the person does not agree to the project if condemnation can occur. Don said it can but if the person is against the project they tell ITD that they don't agree with the project and it goes from there. She also asked about a property owner that is not willing to sell their property to ITD. Don said the courts will look at the number of people that agree to the project compared to the number that do not and then they make a decision.

Cal Russell asked how many feet a five lane with sidewalks on both sides will take. Don said physically 100 feet of right of way will cover this.

Don thanked all for coming. He asked all to send in their comments and he will send the comments back to those that attended this evening.

Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

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David K. Anderson, Mayor

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Kris Larson, City Clerk