

The special council meeting of August 22, 2012 convened at 2:00 p.m. at the Bonners Ferry visitor center. Present for the meeting were Mayor David Anderson, Council President Mike Klaus, Council Members Connie Wells and Tom Mayo, City Administrator Stephen Boorman, Assistant City Administrator David Sims, Economic Development Coordinator Mike Sloan, Fire Chief Pat Warkentin, Clerk Kris Larson, LHTAC Representative Jeff Miles, County Road and Bridge Superintendent Jeff Gutshall, Boundary County Commissioners Ron Smith and Walt Kirby, Boundary County School District 101 Superintendent Dick Connelly, George Schutes, Dan Studer, Don Davis and Damon Allen from Idaho Transportation Department, Patty Perry, Dave Walter, Jenay Blackwell, and Jay West from Avista.

Don Davis spoke about the bypass around town and said we need to look into the future. Major hurdles to the bypass would be the Kootenai River and the north hill. David Sims asked how much right of way would be needed for five lanes through Bonners Ferry. We would need 14 feet on each side. This would include sidewalk, curbs and gutters along with the extra traffic lanes. Don said there is 60 foot right of way on most of the highway and we need close to 90 feet. Don spoke about information in the Hudson Study. He said 78 feet of right of way is noted for the five lane highway. Jeff Gutshall said we should utilize the four lane access to the current bridge across the river. Mike Sloan spoke about the businesses that would have to be relocated if the highway was widened. David spoke of the quality of life in the residential areas on the south hill. Don said the schools are also there and they will not be moving. He said there is a fairly static situation on the south hill. Ron Smith said it looks like another bridge across the river would be something that may be needed if there was a catastrophe. Jeff Gutshall said a bypass route may have to go through the Paradise Valley area. Part of the problem is the alignment with the current Kootenai River Bridge. Don said we are in a planning study so we want to explore all options.

Don said planning needs to be done when there are 8,000 in traffic count per day and construction should be done to accommodate at 16,000. He said we are currently at a count of 12,000 per day now.

Dan Studer spoke of a truck bypass from the Forest Service corner along the Mirror Lake Road and said this is the county's industrial area. Stephen Boorman said that the south end of that truck route is easy but the connection to the bridge is the difficult part. Jeff Gutshall said the route could come through the Wood's property near the railroad tracks and tie in their so it could meet up with the bridge. Jay West spoke of the bypass in Sandpoint and the positive responses that have been received. Mike Sloan said we should limit commercial ventures out near the proposed bypass so it would not harm the businesses. Walt Kirby gave an example of a byway that was built in California where he used to live and how successful it was. He was in favor of an alternate route through town rather than widening the highway on the south hill.

David Sims asked if there is a certain percentage of traffic that a bypass entails. Damon Allen said the Sandpoint bypass is routing 50 percent of traffic and it may go down to 30 percent when the newness wears off. Damon said Don was tasked with a corridor study for highway 95 and there is limited funding available so we need planning for future projects. He said Federal Highways will require plans to be in place to acquire funding. He suggested we get two best scenarios for tying into the Kootenai River Bridge. The corridor study is a plan for the future.

Patty Perry said the tribal chair agrees that something will have to happen. Connie wells said the bypass may be an option but she would also like to see improvements on the south hill such as sidewalks. Mike Klaus thinks a bypass is a viable option but he thinks there is an incredible pedestrian safety problem on the south hill. He said he would like to find a solution for pedestrians crossing the highway before there is a fatality. Mayor Anderson spoke of a person in Sandpoint that halted the Sandpoint bypass efforts for years. He said there may be a person such as this in Bonners Ferry. He said total community support is necessary. Damon Allen said court cases were won due to consistency and planning for the Sandpoint bypass. Don thinks it will take about a year to complete the study and another year or so to get it written. He thinks we need to have information for public review that shows need for them to see. Dave Walter said the south hill where Panhandle Bank is located becomes untenable and he gave the example of the funeral procession last week. He said the highway widening through the south hill would be just a band aid and he thinks a bypass would be a long term solution. Mike said the Sandpoint bypass may be a good example for the businesses in town. He asked if the bypass would interfere with funding for pedestrian safety issues on the south hill. Don said in the study he wanted to identify the existing needs on the highway and work it through to see what is most important. Walt Kirby said whatever is done we need to make it big enough to last for future. Tom Mayo said he agrees with Mike Klaus and is concerned about safety of the kids trying to get to the swimming pool. He thinks we need a bypass. Ron Smith agrees with the ideas thrown out but does not see how both a bypass and improvements on the south hill will be funded.

David Sims asked about the funding estimates. Don said there was an original \$5 million estimate but the project needs to be defined better. Jeff Gutshall said he does not see that we are hurting ourselves for looking at a bypass because the operational issues on the south hill will still be taken care of. Damon Allen said we need to have the bypass in the planning document and maybe a public meeting will need to be held. Dave Walter said highway 95 is a preference for truck traffic to access I-90 and the bypass would help this immensely. He said there are speed limit issues that need to be addressed in the Three Mile area and the area south of town. Don said there are some speed studies being done now due to the law that changed. Damon said tubes are put across the road and it is determined to be what 85 percent of the people drive the road but crash data is considered. He said if the speed limit is set at 45 mile per hour (mph) and 85 percent of the people drive faster, accidents occur. The Sagle corridor was the highest accident area in Idaho's northern counties so the speed limit has been lowered. Ron Smith said

the area near the golf course has been a problem but the highway striping has helped. Jeff said there is a sight distance issue near the golf course. Damon said they will keep looking at the issues brought to their attention. The group briefly discussed the 45 mph speed limit east of Three Mile. Damon spoke of design speed for new projects that is watched and changed if needed.

David Sims asked if something formal from the entities is needed. Don and Damon said that would help. Don spoke of segments that will be looked at in the corridor study and said they will be discussed.

Jeff Miles invited everyone to a meeting in Sandpoint at the Bank.

Mike Klaus moved to add late agenda item authorizing the Mayor to sign a pipeline crossing agreement with Union Pacific Railroad Company for the District 2 waterline. Tom Mayo seconded the motion. The motion passed – Mike Klaus “yes”, Tom Mayo “yes”, Connie Wells “yes”.

Mike Klaus moved to authorize the Mayor to sign Pipeline Crossing Agreement with Union Pacific Railroad. Connie Wells seconded the motion. The motion passed – Mike Klaus “yes”, Tom Mayo “yes”, Connie Wells “yes”.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

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David K. Anderson, Mayor

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Kris Larson, City Clerk