

MINUTES
ITD, STATE HIGHWAY SUB-COMMITTEE
TOWN HALL MEETING
PAYETTE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
June 8, 2021
6:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Craig Jensen, Mike Kee, Mayor Williams, and Lori Steiniker
Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Bobbie Black, Jamie Couch, Kathy Patrick, Ray Wickersham
Also: County Commissioner Hrizuk, County Commissioner Hanigan,
Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), Phoebe Wallace & Jamie
Kunce

Town Hall Meeting

Mayor Williams welcomed everyone in person and on zoom. He thanked Mary Butler for setting up the meeting and allowing us to have at the county. He stated that Craig Jensen will be the moderator for tonight. The Mayor asked five questions of the audience.

1. Does the community see an increase of congestion?
2. What area and time of day?
3. Does increase cause safety concerns or frustration?
4. What can the City or Idaho Transportation Department do to help with the congestion?

Jensen stated we should have more town hall meetings on what affect all of us as a community. He state having town hall meetings is a result of our Strategic Plan. Jensen stated he contacted ITD about making the stop light stay longer for the flow and they added 10 seconds more. He stated the timeframe for the meeting tonight is from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM and we will stay on topic to discuss the congestion along Highway 95 & Highway 52. There will be a 5 minute timeframe to speak.

A citizen asked what ITD can tell us on timing between green and red lights and how it affects both lights. The light timing for longer breaks will enable you to get across the highway. ITD does not know if the two lights are connected, there are things that we can do if they are. They will take back to the traffic engineer, if not, there still might be something they can do. It was stated that a traffic study needs to be done over a three day weekend.

A citizen stated we need more lights by the High School, Maverick and one in Fruitland, this may move traffic better. ITD stated in order to install a new light it has to meet a signal warrant to be installed and that is a national code.

A citizen stated with all the traffic coming north bound, they come from the wye at 55 MPH to 35 MPH and is too fast. There needs to be more enforcement of speeds by the high school. If people would slow down that would help. Jensen asked what it would take to change the speed limit before the wye. ITD stated they do not have the authority

to change, an analysis would have to be done. A speed study might not get you the answer, it has to be enforceable. Jim Ashley stated to ITD that he disagrees with the study.

A citizen stated maybe putting a permanent speed sign might help.

A citizen asked if the scope of the meeting is for 10 years or what, we are looking in the rear view mirror and growth is here now. We need to do limited access off of Highway 95 between Payette and Weiser. Maybe block every other road to access on Highway 52 and bring over to the wye at the stop light and then over to Love's in Ontario. ITD stated limiting access points is something they can look at. With all the building it is going to get worse.

Michele Chadwick asked ITD to share the projects that are slated for Payette County. ITD asked for e-mails to send out the information that is available to all. Mayor stated we could also put it on the City's website page.

A citizen stated right turn lanes turning onto Highway 52 would help. He is really reluctant to use the side lane with no markings. ITD stated there has to be 12' in width to do otherwise have to get right-of-way. ITD gets 80 million a year for safety projects. Developers need to help with cost projects, it gets things done faster.

A citizen stated we should move forward with putting traffic circles or round-a-bouts. Kee stated Malheur County is putting on at Palisade Junction. It was stated that there is one by Sister, Oregon and it works like a champ. Would encourage us to look at them.

Wickersham stated a long term alternative is to have different route or a 4-5 lane highway coming through Payette. If we wait 5-10 years it will be very expensive. We should not let anyone build to close to the edge. ITD stated we need to work with developers especially direct access or close proximity to the highway. They need to pay their share for development. They look at each project from a developer on a case by case.

Mayor asked if we wanted to push forward and advocate for a project what is the process? He asked is semi-trucks can go on round-a-bouts and ITD answered yes. Kee asked if grant funds are more available for planning and ITD stating they are in the process of teaming up with two other cities for grants, but none are available nationally.

Jensen stated when going over the overpass there are three crosswalks in three blocks and he worries about the kids, especially when it is pitch black outside. What would it take to get a school zone? ITD stated improved signage or lights. To get an additional study would need to be completed. It was asked would the students use one crosswalk or still keep using all three. Couch stated speed signs that are lighted work great and flashing signs work also. Maybe the speed limit would be lowered. ITD stated maybe making it only two lanes.

A citizen stated with congestion, the out of town cars go over 80 MPH in a 65 MPH zone. Can we reduce speed limit? He will not drive his tractor on the highway anymore, he is afraid of his life.

Jim Ashley asked about a turn lane on NE 19th, he still has the concept plan from years ago.

A citizen asked ITD what the 10 year plan is to have four lane road on Highway 95. Asked what we need to do to make it happen. ITD stated start talking, get support and letter from City Council. The more letters the better ITD stated. ITD went over the process and the next available budget year is 2029. You need to get all players involved, City, County, Washington County, and citizens and can be done in phases.

Mayor asked ITD to explain why City and County do not have much authority to set speed limits. ITD has to do a speed study to change signs. People that know our area best is us.

A citizen stated a right run on 10th Avenue would be a lot of help. He uses the shoulder as a right turn lane now. Traffic is coming up pretty quick and it would not take much to make a real turn lane. If you do a round-a-bout at the wye it could be put in also at that time.

Michele Chadwick asked ITD to explain the proportional resolution that Star is doing. ITD stated they review all site plans for Star, if a development has anything over 100 trips made to the highway they have to provide the information to them, if want access they work directly with them. Star will write into the development agreement whether it is direct access or 10 miles away and the developer will pay their portion. They have collected over one million and they are starting on their 2nd project. ITD looks at exactly what they are doing for their fee.

Hzruk stated he is in favor of developer proportional fees; it is a great program. ITD stated there is no agreement with counties, it is easier for cities to do.

A citizen asked what the committee will do from here and Jensen stated to have a meeting next week. Make a short term plan and then do a long term plan for ITD.

It was asked what ITD can do for us now and was stated study for proper timing on our lights, must have both lights linked.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 P.M.

Recording Secretary
Bobbie Black