

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTIES OF POTTER AND RANDALL

On the 16th day of July, 2014, the Amarillo Traffic Commission met at 1:30 p.m. in work session in the Council Chamber located on the third floor of City Hall at 509 S.E. 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue for review of agenda items and consideration of future agenda items.

The Amarillo Traffic Commission met at 1:45 p.m. in regular session in the Council Chamber located on the third floor of City Hall at 509 S.E. 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Traffic Commissioners present were D. J. Stubben, Dean Downey, Barbara Richardson, Craig Gualtiere, Walt Kelley, Frank Nelson, and Steve Rogers. Charlie Graham and Mark Nair were absent. Staff members present were Jerry Bird, Traffic Engineer, David Szmagalski, Traffic Operations Technician, Lt. Ken Albright, Amarillo Police Department, and Judy Alexander, Recording Secretary.

The invocation was given by Commissioner Kelley, and Commissioner Gualtiere led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Gualtiere established a quorum and called the meeting to order. The following items of business were conducted:

1. **Approval of the June 18, 2014, Minutes:**

Commissioner Stubben made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2014, meeting. Commissioner Downey seconded the motion, and motion carried unanimously.

2. **Traffic Lane Width:**

Jerry Bird, Traffic Engineer, presented a conceptual plan. The plan proposed that as arterial and collector streets are resurfaced and restriped present an opportunity to narrow the center and through lanes to allow wider curb lanes, where practicable. The wider outside lane would be more bicycle-friendly. He stated that no through or turn lane would be less than ten feet.

Commissioner Kelley questioned if there were any objections to the lane width changes. Mr. Bird said the narrow inside lanes should have a calming effect on traffic, and the wider lane could be used by larger vehicles and bicycles. He said the only downside would be the speed differential between the vehicles and the bicyclists, particularly for inexperienced bicyclists using the roadway. Commissioner Rogers questioned how the roadways would be chosen for restriping. Mr. Bird said that the Engineering Department is responsible for the selection of the roadways to be resurfaced. The lane width change, if approved, would become a city policy and would apply to all arterial and collector roadways that are resurfaced unless there is an overriding reason not to change the lane width. Commissioner Downey inquired about the status of the current bike lanes. Mr. Bird stated that he is in favor of eliminating the current striped bike lanes and moving toward a shared lane for bicycles and vehicles. Commissioner Gualtiere suggested that members move forward on a proposal to the City Council. Commissioner Rogers inquired if a written policy would be available for review before the next meeting. Mr. Bird stated he would prepare a draft proposal and distribute to the members. He said the change, if approved, would not be effective until the 2015 construction schedule. He said that roadway construction requires dry weather and paving operations generally require a temperature of a minimum of 50 degrees.

3. **Texas Department of Transportation Speed Limit Revisions to the Municipal Code:**

David Szmagalski, Traffic Operations Technician, reported that the Texas Department of Transportation has recently increased speed limits to 75 mph on State and Interstate Highways in the Amarillo area. The reason for the increase is to allow higher speeds where it has been shown that a higher limit would be more in line with vehicle speeds on the roadways that do

not have an engineering reason to post a lower limit. Portions of the affected roadways are within the city limits. TXDOT has raised the speed limits on the roads per Texas Transportation Code 545.352 and 545.353 as determined from the results of an engineering investigation conducted according to the procedures required of them. He stated that TXDOT has already made the speed limit changes, and the item is to change the municipal code to reflect the changes by TXDOT.

The speed limit revisions are as follows:

**Delete:**

<u>Location</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>MPH</u>
I-27 (Canyon Dr.) (Main Lanes)	Bell St.	South City Limits	70
I-40 (Main Lanes)	900 ft. west of Soncy	121 ft. west of the west end of the Soncy Bridge	65
I-40 (Main Lanes)	West City Limits	Loop 335 (Lakeside St.)	60
I-40 (Main Lanes)	Loop 335 (Lakeside St.)	East City Limits	70
Lakeside St.	NE 24 <sup>th</sup> Ave.	A point 2028 ft North of SE 3 <sup>rd</sup>	70
U.S. Highway 87-287 (Main Lanes)	I-40	East City Limits	70

**Add:**

<u>Location</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>MPH</u>
I-27 (Canyon Dr.) (Main Lanes)	Bell St.	South City Limit	75
I-40 (Main Lanes)	Loop 335 (Lakeside St.)	East City Limit	75
I-40 (Main Lanes)	Soncy Rd.	West City Limit	75
I-40 (Main Lanes)	Loop 335 (Lakeside St.)	Soncy	60
St. Francis Ave. (Loop 335)	BNSF RR Tracks	4456 ft. west	75
St. Francis (Loop 335)	Broadway	1 mile west of Broadway	75
Lakeside St.	NE 24 <sup>th</sup>	A point 2028 ft. North of SE 23 <sup>rd</sup>	75
U.S. Highway 87-287	I-40	East City Limit	75

Commissioner Rogers made a motion to recommend to the City Commission to approve the speed limit revisions. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion, and motion carried unanimously.

4. **Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility:**

Mr. Bird reported that Bob Cowell, Assistant City Manager, approached the Planning and Zoning Commission and plans to approach the Parks Commission at their August meeting about appointing two members to a subcommittee organized to study pedestrian and bicycle mobility issues. The subcommittee will begin with the Rails to Trails project in an attempt to more fully realize the multi-modal potential of the project.

Commissioner Gualtiere made a motion to nominate Commissioner Nair to serve on the subcommittee. Commissioner Richardson seconded the motion, and motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Nelson made a motion to nominate Commissioner Gualtiere to serve on the subcommittee. Commissioner Kelley seconded the motion, and motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bird stated that Mr. Cowell suggested Traffic Commission members consider setting one or two initiatives or goals to pursue during their term of service on the commission.

Commissioner Gualtiere stated he is of the opinion that the pedestrian and bicycle mobility issue is an important long-term goal.

Commissioner Kelly stated he thinks it is important for the Traffic Commission to develop a bicycle safety educational program for school children to move forward toward the goal of making Amarillo a more bicycle-friendly city. He suggested working with the schools and summer programs to provide safety education would be an effective means of increasing bicycle safety.

5. **Public Forum:**

Commissioner Gualtiere asked if anyone would care to speak on any traffic engineering issue. No one came forward to speak, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

  
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Craig Gualtiere, Vice Chairman