

ASTORIA TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Astoria City Hall
July 23, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

President Innes called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: President McLaren Innes, Vice-President Mark Cary, Kera Huber, Al Tollefson, David Pearson, and Thor Norgaard.

Commissioners Excused: Zetty Nemowill

Staff Present: Planner Rosemary Johnson, Police Sergeant Brian Aydt and Engineer Technician Steve Ruggles. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ITEM 3(a):

President Innes called for corrections or changes to the minutes of the June 25, 2013 meeting. Hearing none, she called for a motion to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Norgaard moved to approve the June 25, 2013 meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Vice-President Cary. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS – ITEM 4(a): Pedestrian Safety Update

Engineer Ruggles stated that after City Council voted to end the Pedestrian Safety Flag Program, all of the flags and signs were removed. The second set of pedestrian safety flyers will be sent out with the next utility bills. These flyers discuss nighttime pedestrian safety. City Engineer Jeff Harrington is working with Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) in Salem, Oregon regarding crosswalk locations for the new crosswalk striping.

- He distributed photos of a possible sign that could be installed at the City limits declaring that Astoria is a pedestrian friendly city. Engineering Staff is discussing where to install these signs. Some locations being considered are under the jurisdiction of ODOT and Clatsop County. Where and how to install them is still to be determined. The signs have not yet been made nor approved yet.
- Parking standards are being developed and Staff is considering moving all parking spaces at intersections back 20 feet to comply with State law. In most places, this will result in a loss of parking spaces.
- The Department is still waiting on feedback from ODOT on sign color standards, possible rapid flashing beacon (RFB) funding, and crosswalk signal modifications.

Sergeant Aydt advised that the Police Department received a grant for crosswalk enforcement and an event will be held next week. At future events, the Department may give Committee members the opportunity to participate or observe. An announcement will be sent to the newspaper, though it may or may not be published as it would not be a paid advertisement.

Drew Herzig, 628 Klaskanine Avenue, Astoria, appreciated the update. Several people have asked if it were possible to obtain the electronic signs that show how fast a driver is going. The signs are a good educational tool and are mobile. The amount of road construction currently going on makes permanent traffic safety devices difficult to implement. He encouraged the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee to investigate getting these signs.

- He suggested the Police Department advertise the crosswalk enforcement event on their Facebook page as Facebook is another educational tool. He believes people become more aware if they think decoy pedestrians will be out.

- He noted City Council received a letter from a visitor from Ontario, Canada, who received a speeding ticket in June 2013 after turning from 8th St. on to Commercial St. The visitor believed the speed limit was 30 miles per hour; however, the speed limit is 20 miles per hour. The visitor stated they left Astoria sooner than originally planned because of the ticket. The letter stated that ticketing people in this manner is a problem for tourism. Mr. Herzig understood the police receive grief for not ticketing. The visitor claimed there was no visible speed limit sign, which is the responsibility of ODOT. Mr. Herzig said he walked Commercial St. from 8th St. to 12th St. and there is no speed limit sign. The intersection at 8th St. and Commercial St. is confusing. When the visitor turned onto Commercial, there were construction signs and he was unaware he was exceeding the speed limit. The woman working at the hotel told him that intersection is a speed trap. Creating a speed trap on a difficult intersection gives the City a bad image. Mr. Herzig understood the speed limit sign is ODOT's responsibility and the police do receive grief for failing to issue tickets; however, visitors from outside of the United States and first time offenders should be asked if they knew the speed limit and issued a warning.

Sergeant Aydt said he was unaware of this particular situation. There is a speed limit sign where the speed limit changes from 25 miles per hour to 20 miles per hour at 7th Street. The speed limit is 20 miles per hour through downtown. The Police Department does receive grief for failing to stop speeding drivers. Statistically, the Department issues about one citation for every five to six stops they make. The majority of people stopped in Astoria do receive warnings. Mr. Herzig added that the visitor is appealing the citation, which Sergeant Aydt said was the correct process.

President Innes asked if Sergeant Aydt had any information on the electronic traffic monitoring devices. Sergeant Aydt replied he was unaware if ODOT had any that Astoria could use. The Police Department owns one that is 10 to 12 years old, but no longer working. Weather has taken its toll on the trailer as well as the equipment inside. It may be something the City would want to consider funding again. President Innes suggested getting an estimate on renting a device. Sergeant Aydt stated he would find out if ODOT had any available. Typically, the devices cost between \$3,000 and \$15,000 to purchase, depending on what additional features are added.

President Innes said she has seen an increasing number of smaller, more humble devices that mount on utility poles. The technology is changing and possibly making these devices more affordable. Sergeant Aydt said he saw a pole-mounted device the other day that cost \$6,000. The device could display a speed reading or conduct a traffic count. A speed survey would not include a corresponding sign as the sign would entice drivers to slow down. The pole mounted devices can be installed without a sign so that true speeds can be surveyed. The trailer is generally not expensive, it is the equipment that is costly. The radar units installed in police cars cost between \$1,500 and \$1,700.

Sergeant Aydt confirmed he would make sure the crosswalk enforcement event is announced on the Police Department's Facebook page.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS: No reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments.

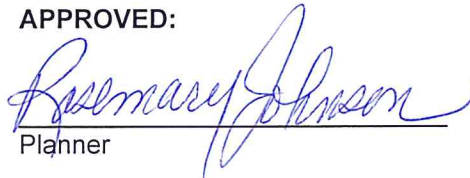
ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned to convene the Planning Commission Meeting at 7:15 p.m.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:


Planner