

**VILLAGE BOARD MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2014
5:00 PM
BOARD ROOM, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 210 COTTONWOOD AVENUE**

Present: Trustees Stevens, Meyers, Compton, Landwehr, Swenson, Wallschlager, and President Lamerand

Others: Administrator Cox, DPW Director Einweck, Finance Director Bailey, Clerk Igl, Fire Chief Wilde, Police Chief Rosch, Recreation Director Yogerst, Library Director Massnick, Reporter Steve Martinez, interested citizens

A Capital Improvement Plan for 2015 – 2019 was provided for discussion with the primary focus on the next two years. The Village Board will review the proposal to consider whether to pursue projects included.

Administrator Cox stated that funds for improvements related to the quiet zones at Cottonwood and Maple are included in 2015 in the amount of \$215,000. The crossings in place consist of a standard two gate system with gates dropping in either direction with pedestrian crossings that are inside of the crossing gates. It was stated that upon evaluation of the number of trains, the speed at which trains cross the intersections and the number of vehicles crossing the tracks along with accident history, the intersections would not qualify for quiet zones without modifications based on guidelines set by the Federal Railway Administration.

The proposed change in the crossings would include the installation of a raised curb meant to channel traffic so that it cannot circumvent the crossing protections in place. The evaluation for a Quiet Zone includes a calculation of the risk of the intersection compared to the average risk of intersections at which train horns are sounded nationwide. The installation of a raised curb would likely bring the rating of the crossing down to a level where it would meet the criteria for designation as a Quiet Zone.

However, it was pointed out that this action will cause drivers to gravitate to the outside of road closer to pedestrian traffic and this was seen as a concern by staff. It was stated that moving pedestrian traffic to an area outside of the auto crossing area adds to the cost of modifications. It was stated that the FRA had recommended adding bells to the automatic lights and gates to act as a warning to pedestrians. Concerns were raised about pedestrians that may not be paying attention. It was stated that adding supplemental pedestrian gates would add approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000 to the cost of the project.

During review by staff it was noted that installation of a raised curb 100 feet in length (as typically recommended by the FRA) on the south side of the crossing on Cottonwood would block the driveway to the house on the southeast corner so they would not be able to make a left hand turn from the driveway. The raised curb with object marker signs would only extend north about 60 feet toward Pawling allowing it to remain a full access roadway.

Concerns were raised about the safety of pedestrians along Cottonwood if pedestrian gates are not installed. It was stated that additional warning signs could be installed along the pedestrian path.

VILLAGE BOARD MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2014
5:00 PM
PAGE 2

It was discussed that the concrete raised curb would extend 6 inches above pavement and could include object markers on top.

An alternative was suggested of installing a horn that would project the sound of the warning directly down the street toward traffic approaching the intersection. It was stated that staff felt this alternative would not provide enough protection.

It was stated that the railroad is only required to provide measures as dictated by FRA for minimum protection which is in place. Other options such as four quad gates were considered by staff but this option was found to be very expensive.

It was questioned whether changes would need to be made if train traffic increases after improvements are in place. It was stated that the Quiet Zone would be reevaluated every 5 years and if circumstances have changed significantly in areas such as the volume of traffic or the speed of the trains, the FRA could either mandate additional improvements or determine that the crossings no longer meet the standards.

It was stated that train horns are to be sounded at a range of 96 to 110 decibels and have to sound 15 to 20 seconds prior to arrival at the crossing. Train engineers are also allowed discretion with sounding of the horn.

It was discussed that the Board could consider a phased approach for the project by starting the engineering in 2015 and making modifications to the 2016 Capital Improvement Plan after going through the lengthy approval process with railroad authorities to establish the actual project and develop the plan specifics including costs.

It was stated that the Board will need to consider whether it is financially feasible to consider moving forward with establishing a Quiet Zone. The potential financial impact if the project moves forward was discussed. It was stated that an expenditure of \$100,000 adds approximately \$.10 per thousand of assessed value to the tax bill. Board members stated that they are open to establishing a Quiet Zone if it is financially feasible.

There was further discussion related to the safety of pedestrians. If the Board opts to install pedestrian gates it was stated that staff would need to evaluate whether four pedestrian gates would need to be installed versus one on each side.

Citizen comments were received regarding additional options for modifications to the crossings, concerns that the train noise affects the quality of life and property values, concerns regarding the train noise at Nixon Park and whether it could cause hearing damage.

It was stated that staff is taking a different approach to implementing the 24 year paving schedule. The focus has changed to consider age and condition of the pavement. In some cases roads will be done sooner based on PASER rating indicates need. This may lead to fluctuations in the amounts borrowed. Regular maintenance such as crack sealing and extensive patching will continue.

**VILLAGE BOARD MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2014
5:00 PM
PAGE 3**

It was discussed that the policy had been to make repairs to sewer and water mains as needed and then to repave those roads the following year. Work on Nixon, Renson and Church planned for 2016 is scheduled well in advance of their expected need due to condition. These roads were reconstructed in 2000 but work on the water mains and storm sewer were necessary sooner than originally anticipated. At that time it was intended that the roads be patched and scheduled for reconstruction in six to eight years. Staff has learned that WE Energies intends to perform gas line work in these areas. Staff estimates that the PASER rating will be a 5 upon completion of that work.

Concerns regarding the condition of North Avenue were raised particularly the area near Lawn Street. North Avenue was last paved in 1998 and is currently rated at 6 and 7. Repaving of North Avenue would normally be scheduled for 2022 or when its rating drops to a 5. It was stated that the area of concern will be patched within the next 3 weeks.

The Capital Improvement Plan includes a GIS conversion project in the amount of \$70,000 to convert to a different version of GIS software that is more user-friendly and will work on more devices. The current software is no longer supported and was last updated four years ago.

There was discussion regarding conducting a study in the amount of \$10,000 to identify a way to prevent sediment from going into the pond at Nixon Park. It was suggested that staff continue to work with DNR to find a solution and to consider implementation in 2018 along with a dredging project adding new feature to avoid sediment from going into pond.

Concerns were raised about water that is forming ponds near the Splash Pad. It was stated that this is due to the activation controller at the Splash Pad not functioning. The water is running from 10:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. cycling through the program. Once a working controller switch is available, this issue will be resolved.

It was stated that a study to address storm water quality requirements including the implementation of new phosphorus standards is proposed in the amount of \$110,000. A storm water management plan grant has been applied for with a 70/30 cost split.

Sidewalk, curb and gutter improvements in the amount of \$60,000 are included in Capital Improvement Plan for 2017.

Park improvements including extensive pathway repaving and replacement/installation of pedestrian bridges are budgeted for the next three years. A project for the construction of bathroom facilities and a drinking fountain at Penbrook Park is listed for 2020. It was explained that the cost is much higher than the cost for the construction of the Centennial facilities due to the location of the utilities.

The installation of new evidence lockers for the Police Department estimated at \$12,000 is included in the budget. Also included is the replacement of the stone retaining wall on the west end of the municipal parking lot on Cottonwood which is estimated at \$35,000. In addition, staff has been reviewing preliminary information regarding proposed walkways and decks along the Ice Age Trail in the

**VILLAGE BOARD MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2014
5:00 PM
PAGE 4**

downtown. Another item which appears under 2017 is the concept that has been discussed for a larger parking area on the south side of Capital.

Potential expenses related to taking over the Lutheran Cemetery including paving and getting the cemetery into the GIS system are included in the CIP budget. Funds for developing an additional section of the existing Village cemetery are included in the 2017 budget.

Funds for improvements to the Community Center are included under the Recreation Department. If the Village Board is not opposed, staff will further develop these ideas. It was stated that the room should be maintained so that the space may continue to be utilized for elections. Some of the difficulties related to the current space were explained and expanded uses for the space were outlined. The possibility of removing the posts would be investigated to create a more open space. Improvements to gutters at Village Hall are included in the 2015 budget.

Water utility improvements were outlined including work on wells 3 and 5, a driveway replacement at well 4, GIS conversion and continuing hydrant replacement Village wide. Painting of water towers in Bristlecone and Coventry Hill is scheduled for 2018 and 2019. Sewer utility improvements were also outlined including GIS conversion, miscellaneous repairs and flow monitoring.

The Fire Department requested funds for improvements to the bathrooms at the fire station to bring them into compliance with ADA requirements at a cost of approximately \$24,000. In addition, funds for the painting of the Survive Alive house estimated at \$3,000 were requested for 2015.

Staff will continue to develop additional details and bring the Capital Improvement Plan back to Village Board at the August 11 meeting. Once approved, the financing plan would be prepared for the borrowing and it is anticipated that the sale would take place prior to the levy being set.

Motion (Meyers/Stevens) to adjourn at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Igl
Village Clerk