

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Ficek called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. and at his request, Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer called the roll.

Present: Chair Bryant Ficek; Vice Chair Mike Collins; and Members Jarrod Cicha, Edwin Hodder, Desiree Mueller and Allison Luongo

Absent: Member Joyce (Excused)

Staff Present: Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer; Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer Jennifer Lowry, and Sustainability Intern Noelle Bakken

2. Swearing in of New Commissioner

Chair Ficek performed the swearing in of Commissioner Des Mueller.

The Commission Members introduced themselves and Commissioner Mueller introduced herself to the Commission and public.

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Approval of March 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Comments and corrections to draft minutes had been submitted by PWETC commissioners prior to tonight's meeting and those revisions incorporated into the draft presented in meeting materials.

Motion

Vice Chair Collins moved, Member Cicha seconded, approval of the March 28, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Abstain: 1 (Mueller)
Motion carried.

5. Communication Items

Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer Jennifer Lowry provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated April 25, 2023.

Chair Ficek asked if there have been a lot of requests for yard signs for Less Mow May.

Ms. Bakken explained there have been forty-nine sign ups online since Friday.

Member Hodder asked how the visioning process was going and if the Commission was going to have an update as far as how the consultant is doing.

Mr. Freihammer explained that the consultant did present to Council and then there was a follow-up with department heads two to three weeks ago. The consultants are still compiling data.

6. U of M Climate Policy Student Group – Walk Friendly Community Project

Sustainability Intern Noelle Bakken introduced Simon, Ava, Ben and Patricija from the University of Minnesota Climate Policy Student Group who provided a presentation to the Commission.

Chair Ficek thanked the students for their presentation.

Member Cicha asked about the certification, do you start at bronze or can a city go straight to silver or gold.

Simon indicated a city can start at whatever level it has achieved.

Ava explained there is also an honorable mention category for walk friendly communities. That would be the level below bronze.

Member Luongo asked how the students went about engaging the students at the high school. She noted the Commission has a vacancy on the Commission for a Youth Commissioner and has not had success in the past.

Ava explained she was the one behind communicating with the students and she just had a meeting with them a couple months ago from the RAHS Progressive Student Committee body and she was able to reach out to them through Instagram, where she got the most engagement. When she tried to reach out through email that did not go as well. Instagram was the best method of communication in that sense, and she was able to meet with a few students and talk about this while it was in the preliminary stages.

Vice Chair Collins asked if the students knew what level the City of Roseville will be at without filling out anything. He noticed there were two stars.

Ben explained that in their preliminary research into this they used the assessment tool, and a lot of that information is speculative information that they do not have access to and there is a lot of very detailed information they could not easily find just by going onto the website. It is something that needs to come from a body such as the PWETC.

Ava explained that this is very nuanced information, such as sidewalk lengths and what certain distance is between a stop sign. It is information they were not able to access.

Simon thought, if they had to estimate at this time, the City of Roseville would probably be in the bronze category, based off the information they would be able to find in their research.

Member Cicha asked if there are any other cities in the presentation that would be similar to Roseville.

Ava reviewed cities in Minnesota that have achieved the green team certification, but not the whole walk friendly certification. There are cities that are relatively similar to Roseville's size and demographic that have achieved walk friendly certification. Minneapolis is used as the main example just because that is similar in the sense that it is close in proximity and a lot of the programs that are used in Minneapolis can be transferred over to Roseville. There are also cities that are smaller that have been walk friendly certified.

Chair Ficek asked if this is an annual renewal or is the certification permanent.

Simon believed the City would get certified and would need to be renewed every eight to ten years.

Ava indicated the certification would last until it was time for renewal.

Ms. Bakken indicated that currently the green team is the PWET Commission, but the students are recommending opening it up and creating a more community-wide green team that includes staff, some Commission members, community members, and business owners, to have a nice forum to discuss things like the zero-waste ordinance and other things and how the community might react to those kinds of things.

Chair Ficek thanked the students for their presentation.

7. Speed Limits Update

Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer and Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer Jennifer Lowry provided a speed limit update to the Commission.

Chair Ficek thanked staff for the presentation.

Member Cicha indicated he would be curious to hear from police organizations who have gone through this experience and have had speed limits change and if their initial fears of their workload and resources have actually been impacted by the change in the speed. What he has heard from the City's police force is that there are not enough resources to try to follow up if the speed limits were to be lowered.

Ms. Lowry indicated she has been talking more with engineers than Police Chiefs and those she has talked to either do not have a dedicated traffic enforcement group or did not ramp up or have dedicated work. She thought it would be interesting to hear from those entities as well as what complaints have come in from those folks or other people.

Vice Chair Collins knew the Dale Street project is going to be coming up with new markings and he wondered if the speed limit will be the same as what it was or will there be any input as to possible changes.

Ms. Lowry explained county roads will remain the same even if the City were to implement a change in speed in the city and typically a speed change would be made after a road improvement, but a speed study would be done to determine what the speed should be. With a speed study there is a possibility and risk that the speed limit could be raised.

Member Mueller asked what a speed study entailed.

Mr. Freihammer reviewed how a speed study is conducted.

Chair Ficek asked if there is a timeline on the MnDOT study.

Ms. Lowry reviewed the timeline with the Commission but thought the process was supposed to be within the year. It was started in 2019, so it was supposed to be done already and she did not know if there was a set completion date.

Chair Ficek thought he saw something about Minneapolis and St. Paul follow up studies and he wondered if those cities were moving forward to evaluate their speeds now that those cities have changed the speeds and have a few years data.

Ms. Lowry indicated she would check. She talked to both cities but did not ask that specifically.

Chair Ficek asked if dynamic signs are done by request.

Mr. Freihammer indicated that was correct. The City usually gets a lot more requests than what staff can move around the city and as staff has learned that is done by a volunteer and does affect the variability. He noted there is one permanent one on County Road B but the one advantage to moving them is that people get used to them and ignore them, so it usually is good to rotate them with construction projects for cut-through traffic in neighborhoods.

Member Mueller indicated when she has reached out to the County before regarding the lack or visibility of speed limit signs on County Road B, as an example, she has been told that there are limitations with the number and type of signs that can be posted and that there has to be certain rights-of-way or distances or whatever and different sign types. She asked if that was accurate and something the City needed to consider for Roseville roads.

Mr. Freihammer explained only so many signs can be put up. The City's policy is to make sure there is one speed limit sign every half or quarter mile or some sort of stop intersection. He was not sure what the County's policy is, but speed limit signs cannot be placed close together.

Mr. John Kysylyczyn, 3083 Victoria Street, provided background information on the history of his political career and indicated he has taken an interest in this subject. He explained he was opposed to the efforts to adjust the speed limits in the city because he thought it was a complete waste of time and money. He pointed out that he has noticed there is no ticket data. There is data as to the traffic stops, but there is no data as to how many speeding tickets have been written and for what speeds they have been written for. St. Paul disbanded its traffic unit so the idea that the City will have more officers focusing on traffic is false and is actually going in the opposite direction. Roseville has done local enforcement and the outcome of the local enforcement efforts back twenty years ago was that the tickets and the people that were being stopped were the people that lived in the neighborhood. There is this rabbit hole he encouraged the Commission not to go down, which is that slower driving leads to less injury. The problem is not the speed, the problem is the distracted driving, the people that are reading their cellphones while driving down the road and talking on the phone while driving down the road. That is where the real problem lies. He would caution the Commission on studying data on what other cities have done because some cities make decisions that are politically driven, and some cities make decisions that are statistically driven. The cities of Brooklyn Park and Minneapolis are political party-endorsed where a lot of their decisions are based on politics. Shoreview, on the other hand, is not a political party-endorsed city and often times a lot of decisions made there are based on statistics. Another thing he wanted to raise caution about is passing laws that no one follows. That is the scientific versus politics. When you pass laws that no one follows people have a tendency of not respecting other laws. Another thing to point out is perhaps Roseville should stop paving local side streets that are four car lanes wide. Perhaps for the next reconstruction phase, quit paving four lane-wide local

side streets and cut them down to three or two and a half lanes. Lower speed limits do nothing to affect the noise that bothers him, which is loud exhaust and loud car stereos. Equity was raised and if the City passes laws that no one follows it gives law enforcement the ability to pull over anyone they want to. Do not pass laws that no one is going to follow, and scenarios will not be created like that. He indicated if the Commission wanted to do a study or a survey of people, he would encourage the Commission to take a look at the recycling survey that was done.

8. Pavement Management Update

Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer provided a pavement management update to the Commission.

Member Luongo indicated in some places the homeowner gets an assessment if the road in front of the house is reconstructed and she had never heard of this before moving to Minnesota.

Mr. Freihammer explained Roseville has an assessment policy and typically only assesses for reconstruction. As a part of the County Road B reconstruct, there will be assessments. The City does not assess what is considered maintenance projects and the City considers mill and overlay maintenance. Every city in Minnesota has a different policy, a different rate and varies dramatically.

The staff discussed with the Commission assessment calculations.

Mr. John Kysylyczyn reviewed with the Commission different sections of Minnesota Statutes regarding assessments on bonding. He explained if the City wishes to bond for a project, the City has to assess twenty percent in order to bond without a voter referendum. If the City wanted to assess fifteen percent, it would require a vote of the people so that is why this number is around twenty percent or higher and has to do with Statutes. The County follows under a different Statute that does not have the assessment requirement attached to it and is why the County does not assess and why the City does. It is all based on Statute.

9. Future Agenda

Discussion ensued regarding the upcoming 2023 PWETC agendas:

- Tour – Twin Lakes Parkway Area Improvements
- MS4 Update in June
- Sustainability Topic in June
- Prep for Joint Council meeting in July
- Envision Roseville

10. Adjourn

Motion

Vice Chair Collins moved, Member Hodder seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:37 p.m.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Motion carried.