

# TRAFFIC COMMISSION

City of Findlay  
August 19, 2019

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## MINUTES

### **ATTENDANCE:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Paul Schmelzer, Safety Director, Service Director/Acting City Engineer Brian Thomas, Police Chief John Dunbar, Fire Chief Josh Eberle, Councilman Jim Slough.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Matt Stoffel, Public Works Superintendent; Don Rasmussen, Law Director; Tom DeMuth, Traffic Signals Supervisor; Kathy Launder, City Clerk.

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Councilman Dennis Hellmann, Lee Weygandt, Beth Thomas, Kim Foust, Scott Mathews, Michelle Landis, Edwin Lentz, Del Nichols, Charles Williams, Sue Williams.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Request of Councilman John Harrington to review the traffic pattern around Jefferson School.

5/15/2017

Acting Chief Dunbar stated that he has assigned the Special Assignment Unit to review the traffic pattern around Jefferson School. They are to have their report completed by May 24, 2017, to bring back to Traffic Commission. It is suggested to reach out to Dennis McPheron to attend the next meeting when it is discussed.

Motion to table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Thomas. Motion passed 5-0.

06/19/2017

Chief Dunbar stated that Sgt. Brian Dill with the Special Assignment Unit reviewed the area for best options for traffic pattern around Jefferson School. He spoke with school personnel as well as the residents in the area. The following are several proposals for consideration:

- A. Remove the No Parking restriction on Seventh Street between S. Main St. and Maple Ave. to allow for additional stacking.
- B. Make Washington Ave. between Sixth St. and Seventh St. No Parking during school hours.
- C. Make Maple Avenue between Seventh Street and Fairlawn Place one-way going southbound allowing two lanes of stacking.
- D. Make Fairlawn Place from Maple Ave. to Washington Ave. No Parking during school hours.
- E. Maple Avenue between Fairlawn Place and Pearl Street has already been made No Parking Any Time on both sides of the street.

Schmelzer requested that Chief Dunbar develop a map with the recommendations and forward to the Superintendent of Findlay City Schools for review. The net benefit of these recommendations is to get cars off of Sixth Street and increase bus maneuverability on Fairlawn Avenue.

Motion to have the Engineering Department create an exhibit to reflect proposals A, B, C, and D from Special Assignment Unit, and forward to Ed Kurt, Superintendent of Findlay City Schools, and Jefferson School Principal for review, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Monday. Motion passed 5-0.

08/28/2017

Motion to lift item from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 4-0.

Director Schmelzer reported that Findlay City Schools Superintendent Ed Kurt stated that it is very difficult to make any changes to traffic patterns around schools during the school year. Superintendent Kurt stated that they would continue to monitor the traffic around the school throughout the year and, if necessary, make a change at the beginning of the summer to get resident acclimated and then parents. The Principal of Jefferson School stated that the double stacking on the one way of Maple Avenue is not a safe idea. Will look at periodically throughout school year with school staff and take notes.

Motion to table item and evaluate traffic patterns throughout the school year, by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 4-0.

6/17/2019

Director Schmelzer stated that he does have additional information from Dennis McPheron at Findlay City schools and will be following up with him. He will bring back the recommendations at the next meeting. Councilman Harrington mentioned that the only thing he would change with the recommendations listed is extend the one-way on Maple from Seventh to Pearl.

7/15/2019

Remains tabled.

8/19/2019

Motion to lift item from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

Motion to recommend that changes be made as stated below and monitor school traffic based on changes made as well as pedestrian traffic at Sixth Street and Washington Avenue, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough:

Make Maple Avenue from Fairlawn Place to Seventh Street one-way northbound;

Make Fairlawn Place No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Main Street to Washington Avenue both sides of the street;  
Make Seventh Street No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Main Street to Washington Avenue north side of the street;  
Make south side of Seventh Street No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Main Street to Washington Avenue for a Bus Lane;  
Make Washington Avenue Street No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Seventh Street to Fairlawn both sides of the street;  
Place sign for "Student Pick-up/Drop-off Left Lane Only" on Maple Avenue from Fairlawn Place to Seventh Street;  
Recommend to Jefferson School the Public Access Route from Main Street: Do not enter Seventh Street, Turn east on Fairlawn Place, turn north on Maple Avenue, unload students at Maple Avenue, exit on Seventh Street;  
Recommend to Jefferson School the Public Access Route from Sixth Street: Turn south on Washington Avenue, Turn west on Fairlawn Place, turn north on Maple Avenue, unload students at Maple Avenue, exit on Seventh Street.  
Motion passed 5-0.

2. Request of Del Nichols, 1210 South Street, to make Williams Street one way going south from E. Sandusky St. to the end of Williams Street.

6/17/2019

Mr. Nichols stated that there are semi trucks that travel back and forth on Williams Street which is not wide enough for two semi trucks to pass. The semi trucks then travel off the roadway into residents' yards causing ruts and holes and a muddy mess in the yards of the property owners. Mr. Nichols stated that he talked with the Street Department who stated that they could not widen the road. Mr. Nichols does not have a preference which direction you make the one-way. Director Schmelzer stated that utilities can be moved to widen the street if needed. Director Schmelzer stated that we will pull the survey information for the right-of-way and contact property owners to gauge their interest in making Williams Street one-way.  
Motion to table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 4-0.

7/15/2019

Remains tabled.

8/19/2019

Motion to lift item from table, by  
Motion passed 5-0.

Director Schmelzer stated the City has received phone calls, emails, and letters regarding this request. Most who responded are not in favor of changing Williams Street to a one-way street.

Mr. Nichols stated that the road width is not sufficient for traffic to pass at the same time. He stated that there are electric poles in the way to widen the street. Mr. Nichols stated that recently his and his neighbor's mailboxes on Williams Street were hit by a vehicle.

Ed Lentz stated that when it floods in the Hunters Creek subdivision, Williams Street is the only way out of the subdivision, the only way out for a week during the 2007 flood was Williams Street.

Charles Williams stated that he gives his permission to place a camera on his property to monitor traffic on Williams Street. Mr. Williams states that no trucks go down the street. Mr. Williams stated that Williams Street is not the same width the full length of the street.

Sue Williams stated they had their business on Williams Street and still have the warehouse, and Eckrich used to be on Williams Street. Eckrich sold out to another company that only has vans. She stated that they would fill in the ruts that they made along Williams Street. Ms. Williams also stated that there is extra traffic down Williams Street due to Hunters Creek development. Ms. Williams is against making it one-way.

Director Schmelzer stated that the consensus is that although the nature of traffic may not be as heavy on the truck end or that the volume may not be there every day, there is sufficient concern with the neighbors and the property owners in the neighborhood, that we should not make a change, making it one-way. The concerns about the pavement width in the area relative to the amount of traffic on Williams Street is also a concern. Director Schmelzer stated that we will look at what right-of-way exists and what we can propose from a capital perspective to improve the situation regardless of the flooding situation. There is subdivision growth and more people in that area than there used to be.

Motion to deny request to make Williams Street one way, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough.

Director Schmelzer stated that it would be prudent to take a look at the right-of-way that exists in the area and what if anything is in the way of making some improvements to the pavement width. Mr. Nichols stated that the power poles are 21 inches from the pavement. Director Schmelzer stated that the poles are in the City's right-of-way, so if it comes to the point where the City puts together a plan to expand the pavement, we take it to Council, and we have a Capital discussion about it. More than likely we will take a look at some traffic counts in the area, so that we can say here is what the traffic looks like in the area now, this is what it's like relative to the pavement width in that section, we think it would be a worthwhile investment to make this pavement section wider. If Council agrees with that during our Capital discussion we would get in touch with AEP and we would see what it would take to move those poles. In some instances depending on agreements put in place when AEP used the City right-of-way, AEP moves those utilities for no charge. Don't want to get bogged down today with what infrastructure exists that make it look tough. The point is it is something we need to explore more. Mr. Williams interrupted to state that to defend his neighbor, there were trucks going down that street hauling dirt. He states that they hauled over 100 loads of dirt to Hunters Creek. He further stated that they brought the houses three feet out of the ground. Mr. Williams stated that they put a couple hundred loads of dirt into a floodplain. He further stated that the house at the end of the street, 27 loads of dirt taken into a floodplain. Director Schmelzer stated for the record that those pads were removed from the floodplain before any dirt was permitted to be hauled in.

Motion passed 5-0.

Director Schmelzer stated that the City will repair the ruts along the edge of Williams Street.

3. Request of Christopher Strzempka for speed bumps on East Lima Street and request for stop signs at the intersections of East Lima Street and Beech Street and East Lima Street and East Street, making these intersections 3-way stops.

6/17/2019

Mrs. Strzempka attended the meeting on behalf of Christopher. She stated that last year, a traffic study was to be done in the area regarding the amount of vehicles and the speed of the vehicles. Marathon traffic has become worse with speeding. Mrs. Strzempka stated that the stop sign request for E. Lima and East St. would not be feasible. She withdraws that request. Director Schmelzer stated that a traffic study would steer away from installing stop signs. The traffic counts would not support the addition of a stop sign. Director Schmelzer stated that the City does not put up stop signs to control speed. He stated we need to observe what the traffic looks like during the peak times. Don't think we need traffic counts. Just need steady observation by Police Department and/or Police Chief or Director Schmelzer just to see what it looks like. Director Schmelzer stated that he initiated conversation about speed humps in one particular location to control the speed of very large trucks. The City is not in favor of putting speed humps on residential streets. Mrs. Strzempka mentioned that there are several stop signs on West Lima Street, but there are no stop signs on East Lima Street. Mayor Muryn stated that she will reach out to Marathon to remind their employees to be good community stewards, obeying all traffic laws.

Action item: develop plan between Director Schmelzer and Chief Dunbar to see what traffic looks like in the AM and PM peak times and Director Schmelzer will follow up with Mrs. Strzempka.

Motion to table pending investigation by Police Department and Safety Director, by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 4-0.

7/15/2019

Remains tabled. Police Department has completed its data gathering and submitted to Safety Director Paul Schmelzer for review.

8/19/2019

Motion to lift item from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 5-0.

Police Department placed unmarked police cars in the area to monitor the am and pm peak hours for speed and number of vehicles. Director Schmelzer stated that the data collected showed that the highest speed recorded was 33 MPH; average speed was 27 MPH on East Lima Street and less on Putnam Street.

Motion to deny request based on data collected, by Councilman Slough, second by Director Schmelzer. Motion passed 5-0.

4. Request to review pedestrian safety downtown Findlay.

6/17/2019

Councilman Grant Russel stated that a resident that was struck in a crosswalk recently downtown approached him with ideas to make downtown streets safer for pedestrians. A suggestion is to make all intersections in Downtown Findlay "No Turn on Red." Also, installing left turn lights on all traffic lights Downtown. DeMuth stated that plans are already in place for traffic light upgrades which will include left turn lights on all intersections that have left turn lanes in Downtown. Director Schmelzer stated that we can look at the Capital Plan, and in the interest of pedestrian safety downtown, we can move the request for signal upgrades up on the list to have them completed sooner.

Discussion regarding "No Turn on Red" during certain hours. Have not done research on other downtowns or how this affect the Uniform Traffic code. Used to be No Turn on Red prior to 2003. Director Schmelzer stated that it makes sense for special hours. May back up traffic. What do we want to do in the interest of pedestrian safety. See what introduction to no turn on red would make on stacking. Maybe not on Main Cross and Sandusky intersections, but all other intersections in downtown have the "No Turn On Red" designation. Have DGL take a look at. Demuth stated that if you can't see to turn right on red without entering into the crosswalk to see to turn, then it should be "No Turn On Red." Director Schmelzer stated this should be part of the criteria along with stacking. Director Schmelzer requested the Engineering Department to do a study on the intersections with the criteria and come back with a list of intersections and a map to determine where we want to introduce the No Turn On Red. If we don't have anything conclusive, then look at engaging DGL. Director Thomas will contact DGL for a cost to do the study, if needed.

Motion to review the Capital Plan as it relates to the traffic signal upgrades in Downtown to determine if those projects can be moved up in the schedule; have Engineering Department study each Main Street intersection in the Downtown using the two criteria for right turn on red: 1. Do you have to encroach into the crosswalk to make a decision as to whether or not it safe to move forward in your vehicle, and 2. Stacking, then bring it back for further discussion, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 4-0.

7/15/2019

Remains tabled.

8/19/2019

Motion to lift from table by Director Thomas, second by Director Schmelzer. Motion passed 5-0.

Director Thomas stated that they looked at the intersections downtown, looked at which intersections if you stop at the stop bar you can see and which ones you can't when you turn right. Director Thomas will be checking on pricing with DGL to do a model regarding stacking with data relative to traffic counts that we collected for the Downtown project, provide level of service projections for those intersections if those movements are restricted.

Motion to table request, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Request of Jill Wagner, Wasbro Rental Property and The Sherman House, to change the direction of the one-way on Taylor Street from northbound to southbound.

7/15/2019

Ms. Wagner stated that they own rental property at 229 Center Street. When taking potential renters to this location to show the rental, they have to go past 210 Taylor Street. When renters see this property, they don't even want to stop to see the rental property at 229 Center Street because they do not want to live near 210 Taylor Street. Ms. Wagner also inquired as to why Taylor Street is one-way northbound. It is very difficult and dangerous to turn left on to and travel across Center Street. Making Taylor Street one-way going southbound might make it safer. Director Rasmussen stated that we have a couple open court cases on 210 Taylor Street regarding the condition of the property. Director Thomas stated that we will need to have consensus from the property owners on Taylor Street to change the one-way direction. Chief Eberle stated that we may want to delay any changes until a plan for the development of the 100 block of North Main Street is completed. It may change the look of the neighborhood. Chief Dunbar inquired how changing the direction of the one-way would affect Salvation Army. Ms. Wagner stated that she will talk with the property owners on Taylor Street for their thoughts on changing the one-way direction of Taylor Street from northbound to southbound. Once she has talked with the property owners, she will bring it back to Traffic Commission. Motion to table item, by Director Thomas, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 3-0.

8/19/2019

Remains tabled.

6. Request of John DePuy, 3430 Crosshill Drive, to make the west side of Crosshill Drive from Hillshafer Drive north to dead end of Crosshill Drive.

7/15/2019

Concerns about vehicles parking in front of his mailbox as well as concerns about emergency vehicles being able to access his home.

Motion to table request until signatures of property owners approving the change can be obtained, by Director Thomas, second by Chief Dunbar, Motion passed 3-0.

8/19/2019

Remains tabled.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Request of Beth Thomas, Fifth Third Bank, downtown branch, to make all parking spaces on the north side of East Crawford Street one hour parking or three spaces on the north side of East Crawford Street closest to South Main Street designated for Fifth Third Bank customers only.

Beth Thomas stated that since the southend branch of Fifth Third Bank has closed, they have had a lot more business at the downtown location.

Motion to convert the first seven parking spaces on the north side of East Crawford Street from S. Main Street from 2 hour parking to 1 hour parking, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

2. Request of Kimberly Foust, 121 Baldwin Avenue, for a "No Parking Any Time" or No Parking in Alley" sign in the alley between 131 Baldwin Avenue and 201 Baldwin Avenue.

Ms. Foust stated that there are multiple times that the alley is blocked due to a trash hauler who lives on the alley parks their vehicle in the alley. Also, a lawn care business parks in the alley as well. This prohibits her from utilizing the alley.

Motion to install No Parking Any Time signs in the north/south alley between 131 Baldwin Avenue and 201 Baldwin Avenue due to safety concerns, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Request of Cathy Weygandt, 204 Greenlawn Avenue, for a traffic signal at Sixth Street and Washington Avenue due to concerns of pedestrian and cyclist trying to cross over Sixth Street.

Lee Weygandt stated that it is difficult and dangerous to cross Sixth Street at Washington Avenue. Suggests installing a signal similar to the one at South Main Street and Baldwin Street, a traffic tripped light and a button to push for pedestrians. Some children cross there to get to Jefferson School. Would like a study done. Director Thomas stated that there are crosswalks there but no signal. Schmelzer wants to differentiate between how long you have to wait to cross a busy road and something we would

put in place to actuate to stop traffic. Would take a look at adding a midblock crossing with signalization if a significant number of students cross there to get to Jefferson School. Would like to see what the

changes look like around Jefferson School before making a decision. Will be doing additional monitoring in the area due to changes we are making around Jefferson School and will monitor this area as well.

Motion to table request pending additional investigation and analysis of the proposed changes of traffic patterns around Jefferson School, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

4. Request of Shirley Morgan for consideration of removing "No Turn on Red" sign at the intersection of Western Avenue and West Main Cross Street.

Michelle Landis is against removing the "No Turn on Red" sign at the intersection of Western Avenue and West Main Cross Street due to safety reasons. Director Schmelzer stated that removing the "No Turn on Red" signs will not get the desired result that Ms. Morgan believes it will.

Motion to deny request to remove "No Turn on Red" sign at the intersection of Western Avenue and West Main Cross Street, by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Request of Matt Stoffel, Public Works Superintendent, to remove two No Parking signs on Filmore Street near North Main Street.

Stoffel stated that he received a request from Gateway Church to remove the No Parking signs on Filmore Street.

Motion to remove two No Parking signs in the first block of Filmore Street off North Main Street, by Chief Eberle, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

6. Request of Stacy Pickett, 1047 White Birch Drive, to make the intersection of Technology Drive/White Birch Drive and Hilary Lane a four-way stop.

Director Schmelzer stated that the City does not place stop signs to control speed. The placement of the stop sign is very close to the stop to the west.

Motion to deny request given the traffic volume and the intent to move traffic and the closeness of the stop sign to the west, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 5-0.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting of the City of Findlay Traffic Commission will be held on September 16, 2019, at 2:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy K. Launder  
City Clerk

## **WORK ORDERS**

Minutes approved by Council on October 1, 2019

Motion to recommend that changes be made as stated below and monitor school traffic based on changes made as well as pedestrian traffic at Sixth Street and Washington Avenue, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough:

Make Maple Avenue from Fairlawn Place to Seventh Street one-way northbound;

Make Fairlawn Place No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Main Street to Washington Avenue both sides of the street;

Make Seventh Street No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Main Street to Washington Avenue north side of the street;

Make south side of Seventh Street No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Main Street to Washington Avenue for a Bus Lane;

Make Washington Avenue Street No Parking from 8am-10am and 3pm-5pm School Days Only from Seventh Street to Fairlawn both sides of the street;

Place sign for "Student Pick-up/Drop-off Left Lane Only" on Maple Avenue from Fairlawn Place to Seventh Street;

Recommend to Jefferson School the Public Access Route from Main Street: Do not enter Seventh Street, Turn east on Fairlawn Place, turn north on Maple Avenue, unload students at Maple Avenue, exit on Seventh Street;

Recommend to Jefferson School the Public Access Route from Sixth Street: Turn south on Washington Avenue, Turn west on Fairlawn Place, turn north on Maple Avenue, unload students at Maple Avenue, exit on Seventh Street.

Motion passed 5-0.

Motion to convert the first seven parking spaces on the north side of East Crawford Street from S. Main Street from 2 hour parking to 1 hour parking, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough.

Motion passed 5-0.

Motion to install No Parking Any Time signs in the north/south alley between 131 Baldwin Avenue and 201 Baldwin Avenue due to safety concerns, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 5-0.

Motion to remove two No Parking signs in the first block of Filmore Street off North Main Street, by Chief Eberle, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

## **ADMINISTRATION ACTION**

ACTION.