



MINUTES

Monday, February 25, 2019
Work Session
Municipal Courtroom, City Hall
Approved: April 10, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sharon Konopa called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilors present: Mayor Sharon Konopa and Councilors Rich Kellum, Bill Coburn, Bessie Johnson, Alex Johnson, Dick Olsen, and Mike Sykes

Councilors absent: None

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

4:00 p.m.

Tom Cordier, 2240 NW Park Terrace, Albany, said his wife hit the curb of the bulbout at Seventh and Ellsworth while pulling away from the mailbox on the left side of the street. He said from the mailbox you can't see the curb in front of the car. He has asked the City to mark the downtown bulbouts with paint so they can be seen, or to install plastic stakes that bolt into the sidewalk.

Cordier also said he measured the Fairmount school speed zone on Springhill Drive and found it to begin and end 420 feet from the north and south driveways. He thinks that's too long in a 40 miles-per-hour (mph) speed zone.

Ray Kopczynski, 1303 Tamarack Court SW, Albany, said the item for receiving the mayor's veto on the meeting agenda lists the action to be taken as "information and decision." He encouraged the council to think carefully before making a decision on an ordinance at a work session. He feels there could be concerns about transparency.

Ray Hilts, 2748 Foxglove Loop SE, Albany, said, regarding the school speed zone on Waverly Drive, that the gate to the sidewalk from the school grounds is locked, so kids can't get out except by climbing over the fence. He also said he encouraged the City to have a gas tax measure election about a year ago. The citizens voted the measure down, so now the council needs to discuss a utility tax to fix the streets, which are getting worse.

WAVERLY DRIVE REDUCED SPEED SCHOOL ZONE

4:10 p.m.

Transportation Systems Analyst Ron Irish presented a handout to the council (see agenda file). Last November, the council asked him to refer the question of the school speed zone on Waverly at South Albany High School to the Traffic Safety Commission. Irish will present their opinion tonight. The engineering study in the agenda packet is based on Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) guidelines for school zones. Reduced speed zones next to high schools are based not on the presence of the school but on how the crossings operate. Standard crossings at high schools don't automatically require a reduced speed zone. A reduced speed zone is required if something problematic is found at a crossing: traffic or volume, sight distance, etc. The engineering study looks at all issues at the two crossings on Waverly to determine whether something justifies a reduced speed zone.

Irish said one of the crossings the study examined is at 36th Avenue with pedestrian-activated flashing lights; the other is 620 feet south of 36th, where there is no intersection, but a crosswalk through the median. Irish described the findings of the study. The study showed that at times when kids get out of school, increased traffic from parents picking children up at the school restricts the visibility of through traffic southbound on Waverly. Irish explained stopping sight distance. When sightlines are blocked, stopping distances at 40 mph endanger pedestrians crossing at 36th Avenue. The study concludes that this intersection justifies a reduced speed. The crossing at the median island south of 36th Avenue does not justify requiring reduced speed. The study recommends centering a reduced speed zone on the intersection of Waverly and 36th. The reduced speed zone would be shortened from 1,200 feet to about 450 feet.

Staff presented the study to the Traffic Safety Commission, who liked the idea of a smaller zone, but on the condition of installing a pedestrian-activated flashing light at the median island crossing. Councilor Rich Kellum asked if the reduced speed could be offset, instead of centered on the intersection, so drivers approaching the intersection would have to reduce speed but could resume speed after crossing through the intersection.

The council and Irish discussed movement of traffic at the intersection, and how the pedestrian-activated light cycle affects vehicle traffic.

Irish said he doesn't see why the reduced speed zone couldn't be offset, as Kellum proposed. The end of the zone shouldn't be so close to the crosswalk that drivers are looking at the sign instead of at the crosswalk.

Councilor Bessie Johnson asked if the city will be installing "end speed zone" signs in all school speed zones. Irish said the new Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) says school zones should have "end speed zone" signs. Albany's signs were installed under the old MUTCD, which allowed either "end" signs or just speed limit signs. Albany normally would replace its signs at the end of their service life. In the interest of absolute clarity, the City should put "end" signs in all school speed zones.

Councilor Alex Johnson said he is concerned because after evening activities, a lot of kids cross the road, many of them dressed in dark clothing, and drivers can't see them. Irish said there is no streetlight at the median island crossing, but it probably should have one. Pedestrian-activated flashing lights would be better, but either will cost money.

MOTION: Councilor Bill Coburn moved to reduce the length of the reduced speed zone as recommended by staff. Councilor Dick Olsen seconded the motion. Kellum asked if the motion could include offsetting the zone by traffic direction. Coburn said we don't know if that would be workable. He suggested that staff look into the feasibility and include that information as part of their recommendation.

VOTE: the motion passed 6-0.

City Manager Peter Troedsson read an email he received from Diane Conrad praising Irish's responsiveness to her concerns about the speed zone (see agenda file).

WATER TREATMENT PLANT ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

4:40 p.m.

Utility Superintendent – Water Karen Kelley introduced the Public Works energy management team. She introduced a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the energy management program (see agenda file). The program's purpose is to improve efficiency and reduce cost and environmental impact. The program has achieved its goal of reducing electricity and natural gas use by 5% per year for three years. The reductions were made possible by looking at all processes in new ways.

Kellum asked what it cost the city to accomplish the reduction. Deputy City Manager/CIO Jorge Salinas said there were no major capital projects, just process changes.

Olsen asked if the canal permitting process has been accomplished. Public Works Operations Director Chris Bailey said the draft plan has been submitted to various fisheries agencies. Once Public Works receives their comments, they can submit the application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Treatment Plant Supervisor Scott LaRoque also showed a slide presentation (see agenda file). He explained the strategic energy management program. On any given day, the city is saving 3,500 kilowatt hours (kwh), and our overall power cost is going down. The energy management team has received great support from other city work groups.

B. Johnson said she appreciates city staff being willing to step away from "this is the way we've always done it" to save energy and money. Salinas said there's been a culture change. By making processes more efficient, we are saving not only money but also wear and tear on equipment.

RECEIVING THE MAYOR'S VETO OF ORDINANCE NO. 5924

5:23 p.m.

Councilor Mike Sykes said Albany's Charter says the city clerk, not the deputy clerk, must read the mayor's veto. City Attorney Sean Kidd said the Charter says that the "recorder" must read the veto. The recorder read the mayor's veto.

B. Johnson suggested that since the received date stamp on the veto message wasn't initialed, and since the veto didn't have the number of the ordinance being vetoed, the veto was not valid. Kidd says the Charter says little about vetoes. The Charter is silent about whether the ordinance number must be on a veto. Kidd's opinion is that the number doesn't need to be on the veto because citizens would understand from the veto's text which ordinance is being vetoed.

Kellum said the councilors who voted to adopt the ordinance asked for a compromise, but the veto does not offer a compromise. He believes the vote on the veto should happen in a televised regular session of the council.

The council agreed to vote on whether to overturn the mayor's veto at the meeting on Wednesday, February 27.

RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS TRADE OR COMMERCE IN ACCORDANCE
WITH ORS 192.660(2)(g).

5:35 p.m.

RECESS: the council recessed into executive session at 5:35 p.m.

RECONVENE: the council reconvened into regular session at 6:10 p.m.

Councilor Alex Johnson moved to direct staff to develop a proposal for Stack Metallurgical. Kellum seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL

6:10 p.m.

Olsen said some of his constituents are worried about the pump station next to the Dave Clark path. He asked staff to make some drawings available. His constituents are concerned that the pump station may block their view of the river. There was discussion of what part of the pump station would be above ground. Olsen thinks concerned citizens will want to speak at the Wednesday, February 27, meeting.

Coburn said he will be out of town for the first work session and first meeting in March.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

6:12 p.m.

Troedsson announced a tour of the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) on March 18, 2019. He also noted that the first Albany Development Code Amendment task force open house was tonight, and that the council work sessions will move to Council Chambers beginning with the March 25 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Allison Liesse
Deputy City Clerk

Peter Troedsson
City Manager

Note: Staff handouts referred to in the minutes as (see agenda file) are available on the website in the "Staff Handouts" column.