

Final Meeting Minutes – WSNA – 2019-02-18

Jim Allhiser called the meeting to order at 7:08PM. 124 members signed the roster, but more bodies were present. E.M. Easterly moves to approve minutes – second by Craig Evans. Vote unanimous approval.

Presentation:

Polk County Sheriff's Levy presentation by Lyle Mordhorst – Polk County Commissioner, Sheriff Mark Garton, and Polk County DA Aaron Felton. You can watch the presentation here: <https://youtu.be/lxlg2zbsUho> . Attachments regarding the presentation provided at the end of these minutes.

Read More at <http://www.keppolksafe.com>

Motion to support the Levy, and for WSNA to submit a letter stating so, to be voted on at next meeting.

Reports

Salem Police – Officer Amador:

Amador – 5 stolen vehicles, 2 recovered. Residential and Business burglaries down. Car smash and grabs are steady. Please continue to stay vigilant, locking car doors and closing garage doors, removing any items of value or items in view through windows. Also, well lit areas are less enticing. Use your porch, carport, and garage lights all night.

WSNA Member Question – did robber of the sushi place get caught? Lieutenant says yes.

WSNA Member Question – Do you track felonies? Not specifically, but we can bring them to the next meeting.

WSNA Member Question – Opinion on Ring or Nest doorbells? Yes, useful. We'll put pictures and video out with an ATL (attempt to locate) to find the responsible individuals.

Edgewater Partnership – Steve Anderson

Sunday 3pm – Boys & Girls Club – Youth paint rocks with notes of love. Cookies, hot chocolate, talk. June 13th – Super Saturday. Farmers Market – Starts in May

Traffic and Infrastructure – Nick Fortey

Traffic Island/Curbing/Painting at Glen Creek, much better now. It was strange when the curbing was laid, but the painting wasn't done yet.

---Reports Suspended for Agenda Modification---

Special Presentations:

Salem River Crossing Presentation from Salem Bridge Solutions in support of the Salem River Crossing

Salem River Crossing Presentation from Steve Anderson not in support of the Salem River Crossing, but other solutions.

Neither presentation is representative of the WSNA's entire membership nor is either specifically endorsed by the WSNA.

WSNA Members Speaking After Presentations Representing 2 Views-

Mike Evans – Written copy of notes not yet available, stay tuned. That is, these minutes will be amended with Mike's comments.

Jeff Morehead – Yield

Jennifer Sprague – Salem Bridge Solutions does not represent all of us that live in West Salem. <comments not in support of SBS> I fully support the city council's decision. I know Councilor Kaser and others were elected because of

their position on the bridge. <Further comments against SBS.> I'd like to learn more about Rep. Evans' pending legislation.

Brent Culver – I'm sad that I won't be here to see whatever new bridge we come up with built. I was sad to see the outcome of the congestion task force – that there is no way out, no solution. In 2040, the Salem River Crossing would have got us to where we are now, that is, bought us 15 years or so of relief, and time to keep improving. Comments about adding a swing and overnight shift for State Workers should be sent to Kate Brown.

Tyler Shockley – I've been moderately active in the last 8 years. I've seen little meaningful progress on congestion solutions. I believe we've seen little or no progress. My ask is to have the city council "Do Something." More people are moving here, population continues to grow. Now is the time to act – unite the city council on the proposed solutions from the task force. Do something to solve our critical transportation issues now, instead of leaving them to the next generation.

Rick Ritter – Resident off and on for 50 years. Steve Anderson had good suggestions. Let's get together and come up with a solution that our community can support. The existing one had too many flaws. Congestion task force recommendations are "common sense" – why not implement the minimal cost solutions, then focus on retrofits, adding lanes, seismic upgrades, etc. Tyler, you're right, the population will continue grow here. What we have to look at is transportation alternatives such as mass transit. Individual cars are a short term solution.

Mark Wigg – Yield

Kathleen Dewoina – I would like to thank the city council for their decision. I don't know if you've read the environmental impact statement or the recommendations from the congestion task force. I'd like to thank council for studying those reports. *Measures for relieving traffic congestion include vehicle queue length. Comparing build the bridge to the no build option, the build the bridge option improves vehicle queue length an estimated 5 feet at the Marion bridge head in the morning peak traffic hour which is less than a third of a car length. Vehicle queue length increases to 30 feet about 1.5 cars in a vehicle queue at the Marion bridge head in the afternoon peak traffic hour. The Salem River Crossing Preferred Alternative does not produce the congestion relief it seeks in its stated purpose. This data comes from Table 7 and Table 8, page 54, of the Staff Report prepared for Salem City Council Work Session January 30, 2019, entitled Salem River Crossing Project Questions and Answers (amended statement submitted in email by Kathleen Dewoina, 2019-02-26).* I think we have excellent suggestions in our existing transportation systems plan. I think the other thing for livability in West Salem is the de minimis impact. I believe the impact to Wallace Marine Park would have been terrible. I look forward to plans where we integrate our land use planning and transportation systems planning.

Craig Evans – I love West Salem. What I want to see for our community is good leadership, good planning. We are foolish to allow this opportunity to have gone by. We all know it, we all drive it, we can all see it and experience it every day. Building the bridge would have reduced the congestion issues. The fact is that the bridge would have helped. Also, the Salem river crossing would not be the last bridge we'd need to build. We'd have to start planning for the next river crossing to support our population projections. Our society is a car dependent one. To think otherwise is really a fallacy. I believe we need to build infrastructure. For example, if we overloaded our sewage system by 15% and it spilled into the river, we wouldn't ask people to have offset toilet flushing schedules, nor would we claim that by increasing the sewage system capacity, people will simply poop more and overfill it again, so why bother. We had congressional partners lined up to help us with the funding plan. (time expired)

Jim Lewis – I've lived in Salem for 19 years. I've spent 15 years with the City of Salem. 10 years on the planning commission, 5 with the city council. Nobody has the right to be more heartbroken than I am. No one has the ability to be more angry than I am. And I am angry. According to my watch, the time is now. The past is dead and gone. Breathe in, breathe out, move on. (quote from Jimmy Buffet). 3 times in my life, I've had to follow that advice. First when I was cast out by my industry after working there 30 years. 2nd regarding my little sister. 3rd, Today. I've decided to move forward with that advice. I'm willing to work with anyone. Anyone, who is committed to work on our mobility and congestion issues. I'm happy to listen to Rep. Evans. I want to see it. Almost everyone is repeating what candidate

Varney said. Everyone knows we need a 3rd bridge. Even councilor Andersen supports a 3rd bridge now, he said so supporting Rep. Evans' legislation.

Roger Williams – Yield

Bob Cortright – Resident for 30 years. I've been engaged for the last 13 years. Money Changes Everything – something we simply can't afford. 425 million is every cent the region expected to have for the next 20 years. Everyone's frustrated with the congestion, and everyone thinks a new bridge would solve it. Adding a bridge will not resolve it. We'll be in the same place we are today. We have other, better solutions. If we have a problem with emergency services, build emergency services on this side of the bridge.

Paul Evans – Representative House District 20

I have introduced House Bill 2974. 3 amendments pending, and there will probably be more. A special district is just 1 more tool. Voters will have a decision. Must be initiated by Dec 2024, or it goes away. Urgency is paramount. Mayors coalition talked about the regional necessities. So, I am interested. A reasonable, rational support to growth.

WNSA Member Question – (long question, did not get all of the pieces). Evans Response: Not everyone in all the counties would have to be a part, but people living in an area could be. SDAO didn't want bridge districts all over Oregon, but in some places it makes sense. 2nd piece, I don't know what the region will be, specifically. That's part of the discussion. 3rd part – blank check – not really, compression (how much can be spent in a given time or given place) is the answer. Fire districts and school districts operate in the same way. I'd also say that until there is some consensus on where new bridges would go, we wouldn't form the district.

Cara Kaser – Where do we go from here? I want to work with anyone. The congestion task force did produce some short-term solutions, things we can do NOW. Your vice-chair Tyson Pruett moved forward one of the suggestions, regarding court street. I'd like to see Rep. Evans concept move forward. It will give us more of the right tools to move this forward. It also gives us a way to get more of a regional solution, for those other communities to have some skin in the game. I want to echo what Jim Lewis said, I want our energy spent on moving forward. This meeting has been divisive, and I don't think that helps move our community forward. Thank you.

Darrell Hoggenburg – Comments that the interstate bridge will be the first in this state to get funding. That's the first area that's going to get any money. Looking at congestion relief, slow lane addition, down Musgrave, and connect to Marine drive. Also, remove the signal at Edgewater and Wallace.

WSNA Member Question –

How many plans (locations) were there before? – Is it possible to save time, back up, and pick up some of those again?

Mike Jaffe – Lots of lines on maps. I also reserve the right to be disappointed. I've worked on this for 20 years. Pine was selected as the best choice. We've been through this process. 20 years. This was the furthest we ever got with an environmental impact study. Starting over will take many, many years, and will be just as expensive, if not more so, than before. In short, no, we cannot go back.

Ron Liedtke – The further we get away from the current bridges, the less we reduce congestion? Can you explain that Mr. Jaffe?

Mike Jaffe – Plenty of people crossing the existing bridges want to have a destination in Salem. There are studies and numbers that can be pulled. Maybe 15% of traffic that crosses the bridges is destined for I-5 North. The rest have a destination in Salem. The farther we push the new solution from the downtown area, the lesser effect it will have on reducing the volume on the existing bridges, because it doesn't facilitate transportation to a Salem location.

Josh Pollock – I applaud Rep. Evans for thinking regionally. I think we do need to get the other regions to bear the burden as well, for moving the goods and services. The other thing I want to say – support Marine Drive – we need to

build it. Using it for local circulation and transportation will relieve Wallace road from at least some of its current traffic load.

Danielle Hamilton – Question, do we need to pay back 8.5 million? Answer: No. No-build is a valid recording status for the “Record of Decision.” We would have only needed to pay if the council did nothing at all. The motion to send a letter to record a “no build” decision carried and is moving forward. 2nd Question, ODOT / FHWA sounded frustrated. How does ODOT or FHWA become engaged at this point? (Partly answered by Mayor Chuck Bennett. In short, we’ll have to repair that relationship with FHWA. They still pick up the phone when I call, so, there’s that.)

Mayor Chuck Bennett – I wanted to hear the conversation. On a personal level I was discouraged, deeply. But, I’m not as discouraged after listening to my colleagues on the city council. I think there will be more on Marine Drive, since it is no longer linked to a bridge. I think our congestion relief task force will have some impact. I’m interested in hearing more about Representative Evans’ ideas. What I would hate to see happen is we all go back to our corners and start yelling at each other back and forth. I think we can work together still. I think it is a longer trail than it would have been, but, it doesn’t mean we can’t move forward. You can count on me, and count on your councilors. Our friends at ODOT may or may not want to hear from us again any time soon. Our friends at FHWA aren’t interested, at least, not in the short term. Jaffe had some work and data regarding the seismic upgrades to Center St Bridge (time expired).

Chris Lebel – It’s interesting to me all of the infrastructure we talk about – the housing keeps being built (apartment complexes). I work on the team at the hospital that helps heart patients get stints. It’s rare that I can meet the response time directive for my team, especially if there is bridge congestion for any reason. The housing building needs to stop if we’re not going to do anything about infrastructure. We should have the developers over here pay into our infrastructure more.

END of public comments on Council decision

RESUME Committee Reports:

Land Use – Tyson (in for Wes Hill)

Site Plan – 1032 3rd Avenue and Multifamily Housing Rule – Engage on the WSNA Land Use Page. Comments are due by Feb 26th, so if you have an opinion to share, please do so! Files are posted to the Land Use page for review.

Micki Varney – Parks

Concerns about Wallace Park and Homeless – Recently appointed to the food and sundries distribution task force. Goal is to provide recommendations regarding the distribution of food and sundries to the homeless, and ways to mitigate the impact to the parks from our homeless populations. They are Thursday Feb 21st, 28th, March 7th for now. 6PM. City Hall conference room.

Disaster Preparedness – Mike Evans

SB 652 – 60 million for retrofitting Center Street Bridge. SB652 is designed to take that funding, in 2025, to move it to the dead-last project to receive any funding from the 2017 package. Brian Boquist is the bill sponsor. <secretary’s note - A back and forth discussion with Rep. Evans ensued, but I was unable to record specific questions and answers. The gist was that Rep. Evans did not agree with the WSNA Member’s interpretation of Boquist’s bill.> We need to let Boquist know we need the funding for that bridge retrofit, don’t push our project to the end of the list.

Watershed Report – E.M. Easterly

The Watershed Council has invited West Salem residents to participate in a Citizen Scientist training workshop. The neighbors of the Oak Savannah were invited to observe and record environmental changes occurring over time on the Oak Savannah. The first training and engagement was held on Saturday, February 16th. The Watershed Council is formally asking the Salem Parks and Recreational Advisory Board (SPRAB) to review and update the city’s integrated Pest Management Master Plan and to develop a more diverse landscaping plan to improve Salem pollinator habitats. The

Watershed Council has agreed to fund plan materials for the Salem Eola Ridge Park Pollinator garden originally proposed in 2017. The next Glen-Gibson Watershed Council meeting is on March 12th.

New Business:

Rich Fry – Parking at Hope & River Valley

River Valley drive. Hope avenue goes East of Wallace road due to the apartments. In front of the apartments where it turns left, there's no driveways, but parking on both sides of the street, causes a congestion issue.

Maps and pictures will be provided at the next meeting. A motion to ask for no-parking on one side of the street will be made and voted on, next meeting.

Michigan City Lane – Speed Limit –

Current is Basic Rule – 55 Mph. ODOT speed change investigation recommends 35 miles per hour limit.

E.M. Easterly moves the following, 2nd by Steve Anderson

I move the WSNA support the posting of a 35 mph speed limit, on Michigan City Lane, both directions.

Morehead – friendly amendment – within the city urban growth boundary (UGB).

Accepted amended motion.

Short discussion.

All still in attendance vote aye with exception of 4 abstentions.

Meeting ended at 9:00PM

Respectfully submitted – Chris Wilhelm – WSNA Secretary

ATTACHMENTS:

Polk County Levy #27-129 Fact Sheet

Polk County Levy #27-129 Flyer

Polk County Levy #27-129 Frequently Asked Questions

Bridge Decision Support Presentation

Bridge Decision Non-Support Presentation

House Bill 2974

Letter from State Representative Paul Evans – District 20 to WSNA Chair Jim Allhiser

Salem Bridge Solutions – Response to House Bill 2974

Mark Wigg – The West Salem Loop trail