

February 2, 2015

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, February 2, 2015 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Commissioner Bajaj led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Bajaj, Sargent, Siani, Thomas, and Chairperson Rudolph.

Absent: Commissioners Furey and Habel.

Also Present: Engineering Manager Semaan, Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo, and Torrance Police Lieutenant Underwood.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Siani moved to grant Commissioner Habel an excused absence for the February 2, 2015 Traffic Commission meeting. Commissioner Sargent seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

It was noted that Commissioner Furey was reappointed to the Commission but has not been sworn in yet.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Siani moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Sargent seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5a. MINUTES OF DECEMBER 1, 2014**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sargent moved to approve the December 1, 2014 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Siani seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioners Habel and Furey).

**6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1**

Chairperson Rudolph explained the policies and procedures of the Traffic Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to City Council.

**6a.** Commissioners and staff welcomed new Traffic Commissioner Dan Thomas.

**6b.** Engineering Manager Semaan asked Commissioners to R.S.V.P. for the Traffic Commission Workshop on March 14. Commissioners Siani and Bajaj indicated that they would attend; Commissioner Sargent and Chairperson Rudolph stated that they would not be attending because they have been previously.

**7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

**7a. REVIEW OF CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM**

Engineering Manager Semaan introduced the item that was forwarded to the Commission by City Council's Employee Relations and Public Safety Committee for its review and input. He provided background and welcomed Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo and Torrance Police Lieutenant Underwood.

Lieutenant Underwood reported on how the City coordinates the volunteer valet program with Torrance Unified School District (TUSD). He stated that they surveyed 40 schools and learned that 16 are satisfied with their program, 18 do not want one, and the remaining six schools either would like to implement a valet system or would like to improve the one they have. He stated that schools that have successful valet programs were asked and are willing to assist those six schools.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, he stated that the commonality of successful valet programs are confidence in having the program at the school, principals who support the program, and teachers and/or parents who have been involved in it for years.

Commissioner Siani asked why some schools do not want the program, and Lieutenant Underwood stated that there are many reasons that include concern about liability and not having enough volunteers.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that the valet program is a school run, volunteer program and that staff works with schools to support their needs, such as to assist them in creating a drop off/pick up zone on a public street.

Lieutenant Underwood discussed continuing education regarding driver and pedestrian safety. He explained how the Police Department has open lines of communication with TUSD, with four full time school resource officers and two area traffic officers. He stated that the Police Department sends out fliers and e-mails to parents at the start of each school year, educates through enforcement, and participates in school events such as bike rodeos. He noted that in the future they plan to implement a new system of communication through social media.

Responding to Chairperson Rudolph's inquiry about educating those who are not involved with schools, he stated that the entire Department plays a role through neighborhood watch programs, speaking engagements, message boards, community fairs, radar trailers, and enforcement of traffic laws.

Referring to a supplemental map of the City's Elementary Schools and Street Sweeping times, Engineering Manager Semaan discussed "No Parking" zones and the impact of street sweeping. He stated that the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) has mandated cities to limit trash, bacteria, and toxins discharged into

the storm drain system. He noted that street sweeping is the most effective way to accomplish this and described the time specific "No Parking" signs being installed to increase effectiveness for street sweeping to accommodate the regulations. He stated that it is a staggered system, with one side of a street "No Parking" on one day and the other side a different day. He explained that elementary school zones were changed from 9:00 to 12:00 instead of 8:00 to 11:00 to minimize the impact of drop-off traffic.

In response to Commissioner Thomas's inquiry, he stated that it would be at least a year before street sweeping is implemented City-wide.

Lieutenant Underwood stated that the Crossing Guard Program is run and supervised by the Police Department. He noted that there are 29 crossing guard locations with 29 full time and six alternate crossing guards. He stated that officers and staff conducted a survey of the number of children crossing at each of the 29 locations.

Engineering Manager Semaan pointed out the elementary schools map in Attachment A, a list of crossing guard locations in Attachment B, and maps of school area zones, signage, crosswalks, and school-age pedestrian counts at each crossing guard location in Attachment C.

Using Anza Elementary School (Figure E2), as an example, Assistant Civil Engineer Gruezo explained the morning and afternoon pedestrian counts and crossing guard locations at signalized and unsignalized intersections.

Chairperson Rudolph inquired if the level of safety was identified at intersections with and without crossing guards, and Engineering Manager Semaan responded that controls are looked at in and around the locations and that accident history is looked at first.

Chairperson Rudolph questioned if the Commission should try to identify all locations, and the number of school age children crossing, in order to develop a criteria to determine where crossing guards are needed. He stated that a spreadsheet with a matrix would be helpful, with as much information included as possible.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that there are a limited number of crossing guards available in the City, and that staff is looking for an assessment of effectiveness of the guards at their current locations during this school year. He noted that the Commission might want to consider making modifications and relocating guards to different locations.

When Chairperson Rudolph expressed interested in knowing the statistics where there are no guards, Engineering Manager Semaan stated that they are still collecting data and in April would bring back data of children crossing at marked crosswalks without guards within the boundaries of the schools. He noted that Commissioners would have a complete picture of what is out there today and would be able to make recommendations for implementation before the next school year.

In response to Commissioner Sargent's inquiry, Lieutenant Underwood stated that he did not know how the current locations of crossing guards was chosen but that traffic accidents may have precipitated their placement.

Commissioner Siani stated that interviewing crossing guards could provide valuable input. In response to her inquiry, staff speculated why there are different morning and afternoon pedestrian counts.

Commissioner Thomas inquired why private schools have crossing guards and Engineering Manager Semaan explained that crossing guards are City employees and not volunteers. Lieutenant Underwood added that crossing guards have no enforcement capabilities but often make good witnesses.

**8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**8a.** Commissioner Bajaj stated that there are residents on Mansel Avenue who want to have sidewalks installed, and staff referred him to the Public Works Department.

**8b.** Commissioner Siani stated that at a City Council meeting Councilmember Griffiths raised the possibility of waiving one parking ticket per year for street sweeping.

**8a.** Chairperson Rudolph offered his observation that drivers are speeding on 182<sup>nd</sup> Street between Hawthorne Boulevard and Prairie Avenue at the end of the day.

**8d.** Commissioner Siani informed staff that street name signs for Carson Street are not visible when going north or southbound on Cabrillo Avenue.

**8e.** Chairperson Rudolph inquired about the new Transit Center, and Engineering Manager Semaan advised him that construction is scheduled to start this summer.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:36 p.m., Chairperson Rudolph adjourned the meeting to March 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall and, hearing no objection, so ordered.

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Approved as submitted March 2, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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