

CITY OF PEKIN SPECIAL TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 23, 2022 @ 4:00 p.m.
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT: Josie Esker, John Dossey, Justin Reeise, Trent Reeise, Mark Rothert

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Danielle Owens, Superintendent Pekin High School District 303; Ryan Wrigley, School Board President Pekin High School District 303; Mark Luft; Dave Nutter

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Motion by Trent to approve the agenda, seconded by Justin. All in favor.

New Business:

1. Traffic Pattern at Court Street and Stadium Drive

This meeting was called for the sole purpose of discussing this item. The left turn lane has been eliminated on Stadium Drive for traffic going onto Court St. Josie started out the meeting by formally and publicly apologizing to the Superintendent and School Board President of Pekin High School District 303 for not giving them advance notice of the traffic pattern change in this location.

Josie stated that the change was not primarily related to crash history, rather than that it is hard to turn onto Stadium Drive with a left turn lane in that location. The change was brought about when she received a request to restripe the street in this location.

Josie reported that there is no estimate regarding completion of the intersection redesign at this time. She is currently waiting on IDOT. She can add special provisions to the contract to try to limit the work in this location while school is in session, however, she can't promise that the entire intersection will be completed during the school summer break. She will further discuss this with the school district as the project progresses. She stated that the intersection will be widened and a traffic signal will be in place. She will keep the school district informed of updates as she knows about them. At the present time the project is scheduled to start next year and last for approximately a year and a half. She will be scheduling planning meetings in the next few weeks.

Mayor Mark Luft stated that the lack of communication in this case has been addressed. He stated that he isn't always aware of all day-to-day work that is going on with each city department. Going forward anything being done by the city that has impact for either school district, the district will receive communication in advance of any action. He feels that all parties are looking out for what is the best for the future of Pekin. He stated that, hopefully, this change will cut down on vehicles turning left and will find its own rhythm in time as drivers get used to the change. When the redesign is in place, this intersection will be much safer for everyone.

Mr. Wrigley asked how the change came to be. He now understands the reasons behind the decision to keep the change in place for the safety of all. He stated that calling the special meeting and the opportunity to discuss this matter is appreciated by

the school district. He stated that his concern was the lack of communication ahead of putting the change in place. He asked if there is an estimate regarding completion of the intersection redesign.

Dr. Owens stated that the frustration was that it appeared to be a last-minute decision to make the change. She stated the change made an impact on the daily traffic in and out at that location. She stated that Pekin High School is one of the biggest employers in Pekin and there are a lot of people who need to get where they need to go. She feels that the change has caused a lot of confusion when there is a long-term solution in the works. She stated had the school district had advance notice, they could've communicated it to the faculty, parents, and students in advance of the change. She feels that the biggest negative to the decision is for traffic in this location outside of the 3:05 p.m. to 3:20 p.m. time frame on school days. She reported that the school district has a number of projects in the works and are wanting to coordinate them with the intersection redesign project.

Trent voiced his concerns with reversing the decision that was made for the safety of everyone. He reported that at the end of last school year he was approached by a firefighter who presented a concern with school busses and fire trucks attempting to turn onto Stadium Drive from Court Street when a vehicle is in the left turn lane. The street is not wide enough to accommodate three lanes of traffic.

John stated that this location is right turn only at this time. The accidents that have occurred on Stadium Drive in this location were because of the intersection even if the accident didn't occur right at the intersection. Accidents in the backed up line of traffic on Stadium Drive occur when a vehicle attempts to make a left turn. He reported that he has been monitoring this location over the last week. He stated that an average of 19,000 vehicles travel in this location per day. There are a number of things in place that contribute to the traffic issues in this location; everyone trying to leave the high school at the same time, a large number of inexperienced drivers, pedestrians (students) attempting to cross the street, and no clear line of sight from either direction. He noted that the vast majority of vehicles do turn right. It makes sense to have this traffic pattern change in place for the safety of vehicles and pedestrians.

Mark Rothert directed Staff to remove the cones in this location as the area has now been marked and signage is in place.

The decision made by the Traffic Safety Committee will stand.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lee Ann Wrhel

NEXT REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 2, 2022 @ 8:30 A.M.