

**EAST BETHEL ROAD COMMISSION MEETING**  
**December 10, 2013**

The East Bethel Road Commission met on December 10, 2013 at 6:30 P.M at the East Bethel City Hall for their regular monthly meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Pierson-Kolodzienski Deny Murphy  
Roger Virta Al Thunberg Tim Harrington Kathy Paavola

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Jeff Jensen

ALSO PRESENT: Nate Ayshford, Public Works Manager  
Bob DeRoche, City Council Member

Adopt Agenda **Thunberg motioned to adopt the agenda as submitted. Pierson-Kolodzienski seconded; all in favor, motion carries unanimously.**

Approve – Virta thought the minutes were very clean this time. He didn't see anything personally  
October 8, himself. He only noticed that Jack Davis was also at the meeting. Add him as also  
2013 Meeting present.  
Minutes

**Pierson-Kolodzienski motioned to approve the October 8, 2013 minutes with said change. Murphy seconded; all in favor, motion carries unanimously.**

Roads Ayshford said the operations budget is doing pretty well. It shows we had 13% of our  
Financial budget left. We did make a large sand/salt purchase and also cutting edges. Barring any  
Information major snow storms we should be ok on the budget for 2013.

The main line items we went over on were fuel and equipment parts. All the cutting edges for the snowplows come out of the equipment parts. Overall it is a good investment for the City buying the carbide cutting edges.

Virta asked what the carbide cutting edges are. They are the lower six inches on the plow that wears down and is replaceable. Ayshford said the one we buy has a carbide insert which helps them last a lot longer and require fewer change outs.

Murphy asked what the minimum amount of snowfall the City will plow. Ayshford said our ordinance says two inches. With that amount we plow everything. We plow and scrap the main roads after just about every snowfall. We sometimes plow smaller snow falls in the neighborhoods depending on the weather forecast and type of snow. If it is going to be warm out, we might not plow and let nature help with the melting.

Thunberg asked if in 2014 if there would be another transfer of \$425,000 to the Roads. Ayshford said yes, it was approved at the last Council meeting. DeRoche said the City of St. Paul is making changes to add more salting and plowing.

Roughly \$275,000 will come out of the Road Capital budget next spring for Whispering Aspen. We want to make sure we have a better product so the final lift will be applied in the spring. We also have a big lift station project going on up there. It should be pretty nice

once the weather changes in the spring. They made a lot of changes to the section of road that had drainage issues and put in drain tile. We also put in sewer and water connections for future residential hookups at the same time.

Metro  
Transit  
Service

Beginning in August of 2014, Metro Transit will begin operating express bus service from East Bethel to downtown Minneapolis. Nine trips will be taken to and from Minneapolis during the rush hours. The coach-style buses will be purchased by Metropolitan Council and an interagency agreement with Anoka County and be operated by Metro Transit. The initial phase will be a three-year demonstration project that will be used to evaluate the need for long-term transit service to the north metro. After that time, they will see if there will be a permanent need for it.

The express bus service will make three stops. The first stop will be in the parking lot at the East Bethel Theater. The next stop will take place at Family of Christ Lutheran Church in Ham Lake and the final stop will be in Blaine where a new park and ride will be built. That will be off of Paul Parkway.

The project is being funded by \$6,630,762 in federal Congestion Mitigation Air Service grant dollars and \$1,642,478 in county matching funds.

Thunberg asked if there was any other information on where they would be stopping in Minneapolis. Ayshford said no, not at this point. Long term they would like to see something go in permanently near the theater or future developed areas. The County asked if something happened on the northwest corner having it located in that area. Virta asked if the buses would be able to use the shoulders on Hwy 65. Ayshford said the other buses do, but he thinks they only do it on the express areas.

Thunberg asked if the monies were potentially also going to be used to create shoulders on Hwy 65. Ayshford said he didn't think so, it was only for service.

Virta said it is really great, and he said in his wife's case it came 30 years too late. Ayshford said a lot of people use the one off of Foley and 610. Thunberg said some people use the park and ride off of 35W and 95<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Ayshford asked if they used the shoulders on that one. It was stated yes.

2013 Traffic  
Counts

The City of East Bethel has just completed the 2013 traffic counts for numerous State Aid roads. The traffic counts are required every two years and are useful for community planning and securing state funding for construction projects.

Attached are this year's traffic counts along with the two previous year's counts. The biggest change took place at 187<sup>th</sup> Ave and TH 65. During previous counts at this location, the average daily traffic was just under 2,000 vehicles. For 2013 this number jumped up to 3,377 vehicles per day.

This increase echoes what we have discussed in the past about the possibility of needing to change or control the current intersection and access points. We have talked with some developers and with developing the east side and they would like to see a controlled intersection.

Pierson-Kolodzienski said quite a few trucks are trying to get out into traffic and they have

trouble. When two dump trucks pull out, it takes quite a bit to get up to speed. This is something as a Road Commission we will have to get involved with. We have met with MnDOT to discuss a stoplight. The minimum on the spacing between stoplights is 1 mile. If they would move the intersection down to 185<sup>th</sup>, that would be a mile. Virta said 187<sup>th</sup> is by the theater. Pierson-Kolodzienski said there is no other way out and sometimes there are trucks backed up a long ways.

Ayshford asked if the trucks coming out are mostly trying to take a right and or if they are trying to go either way. Pierson-Kolodzienski said it is almost impossible for them to get out in the morning to go north. Ayshford asked if an acceleration lane would help, like by Cemstone. Pierson-Kolodzienski said yes it would. Thunberg said there are a couple roads left in those areas, which are MSA that would connect with Hwy 65. Ayshford said yes, Roger you mentioned concerns with having commercial traffic going back to Jackson and the residential areas around there. Virta said dumping commercial traffic onto a residential street isn't right, put your self in their shoes. If you dump the traffic down to 181<sup>st</sup>, the road wouldn't take it. You would just move the traffic. Pierson-Kolodzienski said you couldn't extend Buchanan because of the trailer court. She said the other night traffic was backed up and she finally went south instead of going north, because she couldn't get across. It is an issue. Virta said it is a real safety issue. DeRoche said it took a lot for them to get a light into 221<sup>st</sup>.

Ayshford mentioned the J turn in Ham Lake where everyone would have to go south to go north. Thunberg said he thought it looked crazy at first, but it is really effective. He said most of them pulling out at 187<sup>th</sup> are going south. Pierson-Kolodzienski said yes typically, but they do go north also. She said going north after work is very hard. Virta said there was some discussion in the past about closing that cross over. Pat Monier was big on closing that off. Ayshford said the City had an approval to put in a stoplight in that intersection when the Festival Foods was going to go in. But that went away when the project died. Pierson-Kolodzienski said there is a lot that comes from the east side to the west side. Thunberg said if we could get an acceleration lane that would help a lot. If we could also get longer turn lanes.

Ayshford said the rest of the traffic counts were similar to previous years.

Thunberg asked if the State requires the counts. Ayshford said yes. Virta said do you actually do them. He said no, the City Engineer has a person on staff that does it. They did not do a count going into Coon Lake Beach. It would be interesting to see how many cars are on that.

Virta said we have one area that jumped, and it is in a developing area. He thinks the acceleration lane would be a good idea. Pierson-Kolodzienski said when they were putting in the system there was a lot of traffic. Paavola said would they do a traffic count in the beach in the spring. Ayshford said we could do them anytime we have the counters.

Lincoln  
Drive

In 2010 the City of East Bethel adopted a resolution that designated numerous city streets as being part of a Rural Residential District and therefore provided a speed limit posting of 35 mph. To be considered a Rural Residential District, the road must contain businesses, homes or other access points at intervals of less than 300 feet regardless of which side of the road they are on.

The other type of designation used on city streets in developed residential areas is an Urban District. To qualify as an Urban District, the road must contain businesses, homes or other access points at intervals less than 100 feet and will be posted with a speed limit of 30 mph.

In May of 2013, residents along Lincoln Drive had expressed concerns about the lack of a speed limit designation and requested that the road be posted. Staff and the Road Commission discussed the issue at their May 14 meeting and felt that the Urban District designation was appropriate at that location and had it posted at 30 mph.

Upon placing the 30 mph signs, staff has received calls with concerns that the speed limit is too high. The 30 mph is the lowest statutory limit that the City can post. It is possible to set up a special 25 mph zone on residential streets if adopted by the road authority having jurisdiction over the residential roadway. The road segment cannot exceed ½ mile in length. The road segment on Lincoln Drive under discussion is .39 miles.

At their Nov 6<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting the council decided to table the item until the residents of the neighborhood could voice their opinion at the monthly Coon Lake Beach meeting. The results of that meeting will be discussed by the Road Commission and a recommendation will need to be made to the City Council for their December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ayshford said Davis wanted the Road Commission to look at it one more time. They took this discussion to the Coon Lake Community Center meeting. DeRoche said the residents want it posted at 25 mph, other than Heidi Moegerle. We were there for a meeting for the CDBG grants, and this question was posed. For the people that were there, they wanted it. Paavola was at the meeting, but had to leave early. Ayshford said we recommend not using stop signs for speed control but rather for safety at intersections. Ayshford asked if there have been a lot of accidents down there. Paavola said no, there hasn't been. Virta asked if we received any information on enforcement in the area.

DeRoche and Paavola think it should be 25 mph. Paavola said if you say 30 mph they push it. DeRoche said if it says 25 mph and you are going 30 they will tag you. Paavola said they come in and are barreling through. They roll through the stop sign by the market. Ayshford said his experience to get even to 30 mph you have to really work at it between existing stop signs. You really have to step on the gas. DeRoche said most of the violators are not residents but visiting for other reasons.

Virta asked the rationale for sending it back was because why? Ayshford said because they wanted input from the residents at the CLB meeting.

**Thunberg based on the feed back from the Coon Lake Beach meeting, motioned to designate Lincoln Drive as a Rural Residential District as a 25mph zone. Paavola seconded; all in favor, motion carries unanimously.**

Virta said several years ago someone circulated information on traffic calming. Maybe we can take a look at those things in the future. DeRoche said ban cell phones.

Other and  
City Council  
Report

DeRoche said actually the Town hall meeting went rather well. We had a representative from Met Council. He wasn't on the Council when we came on. We are setting up a meeting in January, with a couple council members, Jack and a couple of people up high in

Met Council. Between State Legislators, the Council and Met Council they think this project should have never happened.

The 17-½% tax increase ended up being 15.1%. Some peoples taxes went up 7%, some went down. The last three years we have lowered the general levy. With the sewer water project there was no ifs, ands, or buts about it. Four of us voted to refinance the bonds. Should save us three to four million. Thunberg asked who voted against it. DeRoche said Moegerle voted against it. We had twenty meetings on the budget. There were a lot of cuts. His personal opinion was to not cut the different funds – for Roads, etc. When it came time to do the budget, three said yes, Lawrence voted for it, and said we could cut more. We were at a point, where the only thing to cut is people. People are just going to have to face the realization that the project went through, we have to pay for the bonds. It is not that they were the wrong bonds they were general obligation bonds. Some people came to the budget meetings, not knowing about the sewer project. It should not be a big surprise. The notice you got in September was a proposed tax levy. The statement you get in March is what your actual taxes will be.

The project/plat, Viking Preserve, was approved by the Council. There is going to be sixty lots. That is a good thing. There are a lot of forks in the fire, but until they materialize, you can't really say much. We are moving in a positive direction. All the real tough decisions have been made, anywhere from SAC and WAC charges to lateral assessment fees. He encourages anyone to get on to City Council, and you get a real different perspective on things. It is hard, interesting and a challenge. When you start talking about what 12,000 people want, not one or two.

Again we will meet with Met Council to say this is where we are. You need to work with us. There is enough political pressure, and eyes on the outside watching saying we need to work together. Does anyone want taxes to go up? There are people moving in. Apparently businesses haven't been shoed away. Still the focus is to develop a corridor and leave the rest of East Bethel alone.

Eco-Farm on Hwy 65 was passed. They will have berries, pumpkin patch, a building to get married in, etc. It is on the northeast corner of Hwy 65 and Klondike Dr. It is a family owned business. They have been there for a 100 years. The way it is zoned now, it isn't zoned for what they want to do with it. According to the comp plan, it doesn't fit. If we aren't quite sure, that is the first major intersection after County Road 22. Those connections aren't going to be there if you have an eco-farm. They got an interim use permit for two years.

There is not a lot of useless spending. We aren't in a position to spend a lot of money.

Virta said we had this increase because we came up short for this year. DeRoche said it is for next year, not this year. Virta said could we have an increase next year. DeRoche said, yes, we could. But we are looking at 2016 there might be an increase. He said he did an interview with the Minneapolis paper, explaining how the budget is formulated. You need to start out high and then you can back things off. The whole budget is online. All the little details. Everyone took a hit. There are people doing cross jobs. You have to provide public works, the treasurer, the city clerk and a planner. There are a lot of cities with a lot of issues that don't have with what we have got. Who ever set up these funds was doing a good thing. At some of the meetings you will hear we will just take money out of this fund

to pay for something. At some point you will have to use what you got or raise taxes to replenish those funds. You can't think just today, you have to think in three years or five years. We are paying the interest on the bond payments. The City made the deal with the bonds.

When we did the lateral connections initially it was thought we would charge \$7,500 per ERU. After a lot of discussions, it was decided it would be \$11,500 for each hook up. If it is developed in the future, anything new will be paid by the developer. If you hit the businesses up so bad that they leave, the taxpayers have to pick up the cost anyways. The people are already paying for SAC and WAC fees. How do you do it and be fair to everyone. If you have a lot and want to split it up, then you pay the charges. He thinks it was a contentious meeting, but it worked out. He said one guy from Northwoods woodworking. The guy has an 8" pipe going into his business. He just spent over \$100,000 on a new septic. He was just getting it paid off. Now we are telling him he has to hook up to the sewer and water. Why don't we just wait a year? He said Kurt said you couldn't just wait a year because if someone wants to buy a lot, they won't know what the assessment would be.

Harrington asked if they straightened out the where the line was placed by the bank. DeRoche said they said they didn't get a letter supposedly.

Ayshford said Aggressive Hydraulics is now the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest employer in the City. Shade Tree construction sold their property to North Metro Concrete. DeRoche said things are moving. Virta said the economy is starting to turn around.

The Roads Commission will be part of the review process for the Viking Preserve, if we want to set up a standard for high-density neighborhoods for lighting. It will be nice once it gets up and going.

The gravity sewer is all done up in Whispering Aspen. Most of the force main is completed also. The Met Council portion is still being worked on. They will have a few road closures in the spring. It should be operational by July. Virta asked if on the NW side of Viking Boulevard and Hwy 65 is on force main and the water. Ayshford said it is the City's force main and Met Councils.

Harrington said they are all done on the east side of Hwy 65. Ayshford said there is still some more construction on the east side and they will have to tear up the road behind Fat Boys this spring.

Harrington said two guys came in to the Open House and said their taxes went up over 20%. Is that correct? DeRoche said their house value was increased. Harrington said they went up 20% and 24%. He said there was also something also with the St. Francis School District. DeRoche said that is classic media. They create a panic.

Adjourn

**Pierson-Kolodzienski motioned for adjournment. Paavola seconded; all in favor, motion carries. Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jill Anderson  
Recording Secretary