MINUTES OF TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING OF THE CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS

REGULAR MEETING – JANUARY 13, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular meeting of the Traffic Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on January 13, 2016, in the Council Chambers, 3191 Katella Avenue, Los Alamitos, California, Chair Mejia presiding.

2. ROLL CALL

Present:	Commissioners:	Chair Javier Mejia Vice Chair Gina Biri Commissioner Dave Emerson Commissioner Daniel Patz Commissioner Jason Seaman Commissioner James Wilhelm
Absent:		None
Present:	Staff:	Steven Mendoza, Development Services Director Ruth Smith, Traffic Engineer Rick Moore, Police Captain Dawn Sallade, Department Secretary

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Patz.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Mejia opened the meeting for Oral Communications.

Josh Wilson, Chair of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Commission for the City of Los Alamitos, indicated he is extending the official challenge for Race on the Base participation from each Commission. Each of the Commissions is hereby challenged as well as the City Council to have as many participants either race or volunteer for the event on February 27, 2016.

Mr. Wilson also reported that there will be a weekend art festival on January 19.

Lastly, Mr. Wilson reported that the Parks Commission has an opening and asked that if Commissioners know of anyone that would like to serve, to please have them apply as they have a lot of fun.

There being no further speakers, Chair Mejia closed Oral Communications.

5. TRAFFIC COMMISSION REORGANIZATION

This report provides relevant information for the Traffic Commission's annual reorganization by the election of Chair and Vice Chair.

Recommendation: Nominate and elect the following officers:

1. Chair
2. Vice Chair

Chair Mejia indicated that there has been some discussion on how nominations have gone on in the past and asked each Commissioner that has an interest in wanting to be Chair to talk about why they would like the nomination and what they would like to accomplish during their term.

Commissioner Wilhelm indicated with his term ending in May and after being on the Commission for six years, he would recues himself from any nominations for office.

Chair Mejia asked Commissioner Wilhelm if nobody steps up for appointment to the Traffic Commission, would he consider not leaving the Commission.

Commissioner Wilhelm answered that that would depend on how he feels; perhaps he would stay for an additional two months or so.

Commissioner Patz reported that if he were to be nominated, he would be delighted to serve. He did serve as Vice Chair two years ago and he couldn't serve as Chair last year due to work commitments. Also, with his term up in December, this will be his last opportunity to serve as Chair as he has no idea if the City Council will reappoint him to the Commission for another term.

Chair Mejia said he has been delighted to serve as Chair but he would like to see another Commissioner have an opportunity to serve the City as well. It's an honor to do so and felt that anybody on the Commission would do a great job.

Vice Chair Biri said she has been blessed to serve as Vice Chair with Chair Mejia since 2015. She indicated she is glad that Commissioner Patz indicated he would like to serve as Chair as she would love to serve as Vice Chair under Commissioner Patz.

Commissioner Seaman indicated he is not interested in serving as Chair due to work commitments.

Commissioner Emerson indicated he has served once as Chair already but would be willing to serve again if needed. He observed that serving on the Commission as Chair takes more time than people think and part of that is making sure that things move quickly and orderly. He said the Traffic

Commission and Staff needs to be proactive and feels that the Chair needs to meet with the Mayor to get a sense of what the Council wants for the City. He said he believes all members of the Commission would be qualified to serve as Chair.

Chair Mejia thanked the Commission for their support during his tenure spent as Chair this past year.

Mr. Mendoza asked if there were any nominations for the position of Chair.

Commissioner Emerson nominated Commissioner Patz for the position of Chair.

Vice Chair Biri seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, Chair Mejia closed the nominations.

Unanimously Carried: The Traffic Commission appointed Commissioner Patz as Chair.

ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Biri	Yes
Commissioner Emerson	Yes
Chair Mejia	Yes
Commissioner Patz	Yes
Commissioner Seaman	Yes
Commissioner Wilhelm	Yes

Chair Patz asked if there were any nominations for the position of Vice Chair.

Commissioner Mejia nominated Vice Chair Biri for the position of Vice Chair.

Commissioner Seaman seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations, Chair Patz closed the nominations.

Unanimously Carried: The Traffic Commission reappointed Vice Chair Biri as Vice Chair.

ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Biri	Yes
Commissioner Emerson	Yes
Commissioner Mejia	Yes
Chair Patz	Yes
Commissioner Seaman	Yes
Commissioner Wilhelm	Yes

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approve the Minutes for the Regular Meeting of November 12, 2015.

Motion/Second: Biri/Emerson.

Carried 4/0/2 (Mejia and Seaman abstained): The Traffic Commission approved the minutes of the Regular meeting of November 12, 2015.

7. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

A. Traffic Commission Status Log

- Traffic Engineer Ruth Smith indicated that B-1 should be moved to column "A" as it is completed; and, also, everything before 2015 will be removed from the Log.

Questions / comments were raised by the Commissioners and they feel the following items should be added to the Log. They are:

- Suburbia Estates – Where the utilities are undergrounded, there are floating plastic caps over all the cable boxes in storm drains that should be bolted down;
- Reagan & Farquhar – Limit lines need to be sandblasted off;
- Northbound turn lanes on Los Alamitos Blvd. coming up to Katella Ave. backing up and congesting the other lanes which in turn backs up traffic. Need to take a hard look at the traffic engineering there;
- OCTA is supposedly resetting the signals on Los Alamitos Blvd. and it presents an opportunity to enforce the speed limit automatically by having signs that say "Signal set for 40 MPH". From Katella to PCH, there is only one intersection that is controlled in either direction so basically there are 14 signals. It would be easy to synchronize the signals in our City while Caltrans is working on Seal Beach Blvd. assuming we get cooperation from Caltrans. Would like to meet with OCTA to give the City's input and probably need to coordinate with the City of Seal Beach as well.

Traffic Engineer Ruth Smith indicated that Dave Hunt had just found out this week that there is no OCTA project for Los Alamitos Blvd.; it is only for Seal Beach Blvd. within the Seal Beach city limits. She indicated they were surprised at this because normally this is not how things are done; they take it from the whole length of the street so she is unsure what happened with this. Ms. Smith said that this is something we need to talk to them about as what can we do in the future to finish up that length and do the whole segment. The rules are that once a segment or street is done, you can't come back for three years.

Commissioner Emerson said he felt that before the project gets done, perhaps the City needs to throw a little money into the project and have them finish the project into Los Alamitos. There's not that long of a stretch as there are only three more signals until you get to Katella Ave.

Ms. Smith indicated that the project engineer said the project is not quite to Bradbury.

Commissioner Emerson said we should find a way to have the study include Los Alamitos' signals.

Ms. Smith said she can contact OCTA and tell them that the City is interested in this project and also talk with Mr. Mendoza about what the options are as well.

Mr. Mendoza said Staff will bring an update back to the Commission at the next meeting. Ms. Smith will do her research and separate the facts from the fiction and report back to the Commission.

Continuing with the items to be added to the Log:

- The intersection of Los Alamitos Blvd. and Florista – All four of the overhanging street signs/letters are peeling off;
- Katella and Cottonwood Way – Westbound green light overhanging the Number 1 lane is out;

Vice Chair Biri inquired about what is being done by the City to prepare for El Nino.

Mr. Mendoza explained that a plan has been placed on the City's website for resident's use. There are sandbags for home use and Staff is also watching the drains.

Continuing with the items to be added to the Log:

- Status on Item 10-A - Move Cherry/Katella crosswalk to the west side of Katella but none on east side – and, does this need to go to the Council?

Commissioner Mejia indicated he noticed that the Caltrans sign on Katella (entering the freeway) is upside down and has been for about a week. He also wanted to ask about the status of speed bumps going into the alleys as well as some of them (original ones that were put in) are coming apart.

Mr. Mendoza explained that the reason the City hasn't purchased the bumps yet is that in prior years the City received a large discount on them if they bought them in December but this year, there was no discount offered.

Continuing with the items to be added to the Log:

- F Items on the bottom of Log (Initiated Items) – What determines when they are actually addressed? F-2 (Pedestrian signal @ northbound

Bloomfield & Katella has been on the Log for quite some time and its probably not serious in terms of the number of people that are impacted by that but it could be serious if somebody loses patience and makes a right turn while there's still kids in the loitering on the corner. There's a crossing guard there but they don't know how to address the problem so the crossing guard keeps his back to the drivers in that pocket. When Commissioner Wilhelm first brought this up, there were two suggested approaches, one of course would be to provide a right turn arrow and the other would be for the Police Department to educate or train the crossing guards if possible in how to liberate people that are trapped in that turn pocket. Is this something that will be reported or analyzed in the near future?

Mr. Mendoza said tonight's meeting gives Traffic Engineer Ruth Smith an opportunity to know the Commission's concerns and address this list. She will be able to bring back to the Commission more information about what the current status is; she'll be able to dig into Dave Hunt's history and figure out what wasn't done, what was done, etc. and she'll get that information back to the Commission at the next meeting.

Continuing with the items to be added to the Log:

- Two signs on Bloomfield identifying a school being present (Laurel High) need to be removed as the school is no longer there.

8. TRAFFIC COMMISSION INITIATED BUSINESS

Commissioner Emerson

Indicated that on the Status Log, he wanted to clarify what Commissioner Mejia was asking for with regard to Item A-10 as it should read: Move Katella/Cherry crosswalk to the east side of Cherry to the west side. Nobody really wanted to add another crosswalk; it was just a matter of facilitating turn flow there.

He said regarding Item C (items pending City Council) on the Status Log should also include the School Traffic Study because that is where it went. They spent a lot of time on that and it's actually pending Council and District approval but he prefers that he not see that fall through the cracks.

Vice Chair Biri

She asked who decides how many people sit on the Commission and where that is written.

Mr. Mendoza answered that some Commission's are ordinances and some are in resolutions.

She said she was wondering about whether seven is the magic number for the Traffic Commission as it seems like a lot considering that they usually don't have extraordinary things to discuss. Since the Commission is down one commissioner and then with Commissioner Wilhelm finishing up his term in May, she just thought perhaps a five person Commission is appropriate.

Mr. Mendoza further explained that the Traffic Commission is in the City Charter; changing the City Charter is a vote of the people, not the Council.

Vice Chair Biri wanted to call to everybody's attention that in today's News Enterprise Newspaper, there was a piece that reads, "Council to discuss parking regulations" and read the article which dealt with parking in the Old Town East and the medical center area. The meeting where the Council will deal with this is January 19th. She said that this took her by surprise as she didn't know that that was on their agenda.

Mr. Mendoza explained that they first had a big meeting in November so this is a continuation of that meeting. The Council asked Staff to do a little bit more leg work with the residential area (Old Town East). Staff did a survey that the Council requested which was a survey of those residents to see if they would be willing to loosen the residential parking standards to allow commercial parking in front of their homes. The results were: Out of 61 responses, 56 said no. He further explained that there are 87 residential units in that area and Staff received 61 responses from owners and tenants which was really good! So the results of that survey will go to the City Council because they requested Staff to obtain this information and then bring it back to them.

Vice Chair Biri indicated she is running for the Los Alamitos Education Foundation Queen of Hearts Court and requested that if anybody would like to participate in any way, please reach out to her.

Commissioner Mejia

With regard to the parking issue, he said he attended the November City Council meeting and listened to the discussion and it was a little hard to do because the Traffic Commission as a group spent a lot of time discussing parking issues throughout the City. The way it was presented at the Council set him back because it was presented in a manner that parking is not in the Commission's purview. Because of this, he felt that the Commission wasted a lot of time, effort and energy. He said he didn't feel that the Commission's discussion on the issue really didn't hit home with them. He said he had a couple of private conversations with Council members and he didn't get the feel that they understood how much the Commission had discussed this item. If parking is not in the Commission's purview, if that's something that's not going to be going forward, then he wants it

to be made known so that the Commission does not waste their time and they can focus on other things.

Mr. Mendoza acknowledged that he was the one who made the comment that parking is not in the Commission's purview and said he didn't mean to sound harsh when he said it and apologized. He said the City Charter indicates the Traffic Commission is to review traffic safety conditions, speed limits, etc.; not parking. He explained that the Traffic Commission serves at the leisure of the City Council and they needed the Commission's help doing outreach on this project and the Commission did a darn good job for them. The Commission packaged it up very well and is helping them get to a very tough decision. A 30 year shift in policy is what they really have to consider. They never diminished the Commission's role in helping them get there and he said he doesn't want the Commission to be discouraged. There will be times that the Council asks the Commission to do things for them and the Commission does a very good job so Staff is always going to try to make it available to them. The Commission facilitating that table top exercise was extremely beneficial for the City Council.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Traffic Commission adjourned at 8:06 p.m.