

MINUTES OF
A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TRAFFIC COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF ROLLING HILLS
THURSDAY, JULY 23 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Traffic Commission of the City of Rolling Hills was called to order by Chair Wilson at 8:30a.m. on Thursday, July 23, 2020 via teleconference.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Bobit, Raine, Virtue and Chair Wilson.
Commissioners Absent: Margeta
Others Present: Elaine Jeng, City Manager
Meredith T. Elguira, Planning & Community Services Director
Vanessa Munoz, Traffic Engineer
Deputy Tami Bouse
Captain James Powers
Jane Abzug, Assistant Attorney

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

NONE.

4. PRESENTATION

A. PRESENTATION OF NEW TRAFFIC COMMISSION TY BOBIT.

Our New Traffic Commission member Bobit, replaces Commission Hawkins who is no longer on the board. Commission Bobit recently retired and gave a brief background of his career and experience. He is also a longtime resident of the City, since 1991.

B. PRESENTATION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, LOMITA STATION, ON TRAFFIC STATISTICS FOR THE CITY OF ROLLING HILLS.

Deputy Bouse opened by stating that traffic has been very light since the beginning of 2020. Therefore, no supplemental traffic enforcement statistics are available for the month of January. For month of February, the Sheriff's concentrated their effort on Crest Road and Eastfield, there were 12 citations (6 speed and 6 stop). For March, the Sheriff's concentrated their efforts on Crest Road and Portuguese Bend Road, stating there were 18 reported violations, 15 of which were speed related. For both April and May there was very little traffic and no activity reported, due to Covid-19 and the stay home order. Therefore, the Sheriff's department will not bill Rolling Hills for both April and May of 2020. Deputy Bouse stated that during both months, they did come in and out of the City several times, but no violations were observed. The month of June, the Sheriff's concentrated their efforts on Portuguese Bend Road and Eastfield, however they reported traffic remained light. But there were 5 reported traffic enforcement violations, 2 of which were speed related.

Commissioner Virtue asked, if in general the sheriff's department found it to be true or have noticed more drivers' driving at a higher rate of speed due to the lighter traffic we are experiencing. Deputy Bouse responded that has not been noticed, so no that is not true.

5. OLD BUSINESS

NONE.

6. NEW BUSINESS

NONE.

7. **OPEN AGENDA - COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

NONE.

8. **MATTERS FROM MEMBERS OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

Community Association presentation on volume of delivery vehicles, provided by Mark Grindle, Gate Supervisor.

A. **DISCUSS THE INCREASE IN VOLUME OF DELIVERY VEHICLES ENTERING ROLLING HILLS. (COMMISSIONER BOBIT)**

Commissioner Bobit has heard through the association and from several residents but mainly from the Caballeros side, that riders have experienced unsafe traffic conditions while riding. During his conversations he recognized the repeated comments that truck drivers were not giving horseback riders the right of way. Rolling Hills is an equestrian community, but because the truck and delivery drivers are probably not residents of the City, therefore may not be aware of the horses' need to feel safe.

Commissioner Bobit reviewed the statistics of delivery trucks that entered the City for both 2019 & 2020, that were provided by Mr. Grindle. He noted there was an increase of delivery trucks overall in 2020 from 2019, with a significant increase beginning in April, a 68 % increase May an 84 % increase, June had a 73 % increase, from 2019. The increase of parcel and food delivery, as well as the significant reduction of traffic coincides with the beginning of Covid-19 and the stay at home order.

During a conversation Commissioner Bobit was having with the Community Association they expressed their concern of what they could do to bring better awareness to the delivery drivers and the importance understanding and providing safety for the riders, horses and walkers. The Association printed leaflets read "Caution if you see horses, please stop or drive very slowly and pass when safe to do so". The leaflets were given to the gate attendants for handout to the non-regular truck drivers with the idea that the regular drivers are familiar with horse and pedestrian rights of way and the crossings. However, it has also been reported that a Fed Ex truck sped right by a group of women and did not slowdown in any way. It is unclear how many or how aggressively the leaflets were handed out. To date, their effectiveness is not yet known. Commissioner Bobit stated that since the "stay home" order was issued he has also noticed an increase of walkers within the City, suggesting the leaflets be reworked to include walkers. In addition, several people have mentioned that truck drivers do not seem to move over in the other lane and provide a safe distance between the truck while passing walkers, even when there is no oncoming traffic.

Commissioner Bobit suggested a quarterly reminder to drivers to provide the right of way to horse riders and pedestrians and slow down when passing or stop if there is oncoming traffic, then pass slowly and providing adequate room when passing, especially when driving on Crest Road.

Captain Powers reinforced that one of the most important things the City can do is to educate it residents and entering delivery drivers and guests. This can be done through letters, leaflets at the gate or signage at the gate and/or on the streets within Rolling Hills. He also stated that walkers would be safest if they walked in the direction of oncoming traffic and not with traffic, allowing them to see any cars coming towards them.

Commissioner Virtue mentioned that it has been her experience that the City's residents' attitude is such, that animals, people, and horses are free to roam back and forth across the streets. Therefore, it is important that the delivery drivers clearly understand their responsibility to observe their speed and drive cautiously. Commissioner Virtue re-emphasized the importance of notifying all drivers, especially newer delivery drivers and the elderly residents, which she believes they drive too fast anyway. The regular drivers may know where they are going, they still tend to drive very fast. She expressed the importance of educating drivers, of the number of people within the city, how many walkers and bike riders there are, in addition to the horseback riders, be included in the flyers.

Chair Wilson stated this might be a good time to bring back the use of an unmanned police car, due to its effectiveness of keeping speeds down, especially on Crest or even on Portuguese Road. Commissioners Bobit, Raine, and Virtue, all expressed supporting the idea. Chair Wilson wanted to know what one would be cited for if failing to pass at a safe distance or too close to an animal or person when passing or not give the right of way to horseback riders or pedestrians.

Captain Powers briefly mentioned there are pros and cons of an unmanned car and the length of time left at one location, such as vandalism to the unmanned car. He also reported that in general people drive too fast, and even if speed is not the primary cause of a collision, it is usually an associated factor.

Traffic Engineer Munoz recalled that Commissioner Hawkins wanted to add language to the Municipal Code 10.36 regarding the protection of animals not only at crossings but throughout the streets and not just for equestrian sightings. She suggested that maybe this additional language could be used when citing unsafe drivers but cannot recall if completed or implemented. Commissioner Virtue does not recall implementing the additional language because at that time some sentences were dropped, and others were being added, and cannot recall if it was ever completed.

City Manager Jeng also recalls that there was some proposed language and the proposed language came back to the Traffic Commission several times, as well as offline conversations were held. She believes that at one time Commissioner Hawkins was satisfied with other areas of the municipal code, did not push through to completion, is her recollection

Commissioner Raine stated, he has no problem with pedestrians walking in the street and it is what he enjoys about living in the City.

Captain Powers mentioned that the Community Association has identified locations where the easements need to be cleared back to 8 feet. Once cleared, this will allow more room for the walkers to walk out of the way of traffic.

Chair Wilson expressed the need to stay aware of traffic within the City, to ensure the safety of its residents, horseback rider and all other domestic animals that are free to roam.

Commissioner Virtue stated that something she sees more and more on Crest Rd. That when there are dogs on both sides of the street eventually the dogs want to greet each other and run into the middle of the street and cause the traffic to stop in both directions. Therefore, speeding is a significant hazard, especially on Crest Road. She supports the direction of educating the residents, truck and delivery drivers, through flyers, leaflets, and newsletter.

Commissioner Bobit stated that he would talk with the Community Association about re-working the leaflets to include walkers and all animals. He will also ask that they be more aggressive in their distribution to all incoming trucks, guests or non-residents, at least for a while.

Deputy Bouse responded to Chair Wilsons' earlier question, "what would a driver be cited for?" Had they not passed at a safe distance or driven too close the horses or pedestrians. She said that Municipal Code 10.62.020, refers to reckless driving and could be cited if it was truly reckless.

Chair Wilson opened the item to public comment. No comments from the public were received.

Chair Wilson stated that he knows horses and spends a lot time around them and knows that certain horses can be more skittish than others, so when he comes upon a horse when driving, especially on Portuguese Bend Road, he is very cautious to not scare them. He pointed out that even going 30 miles an hour over the bumps can really scare the horses, so drivers do have to learn to be careful and aware of this. Therefore, it's very important to remind trucks and delivery drivers, who may not be around horses and will require on going reminders. Commissioner Bobit mentioned he recently notice how many signs there are already at the gates and believes that posting too many signs, makes them all ineffective or invisible.

City Manager Jeng stated that the City has recently deployed the 2019-2020 Stripping Project, which include delineation striping for horse crossing. They have identified 30 horse crossings, 15 of which were existing and only required sprucing up plus 15 new crossing were also added. At the existing crossing there were signs already posted, identifying the "Horse Crossing". Signs were also posted at the newly added crossings and at the code required height. She also stated that ability to cite a driver for reckless driving would be difficult for the sheriff's department because it requires their visual observation, therefore, it may be more effective to come from the point of view of behavior change or modification. She stated that she would contact Kristen to discuss an effective approach.

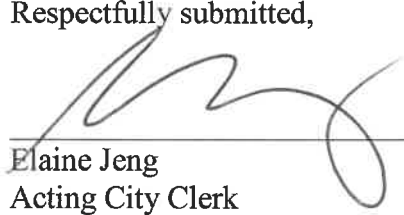
9. **MATTERS FROM STAFF**

NONE.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business before the Traffic Commission, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:16 a.m. to the next meeting of the Traffic Commission scheduled to be held on Thursday, September 24, 2020 beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the Rolling Hills City Council Chamber at City Hall, 2 Portuguese Bend Rd., Rolling Hills, CA.

Respectfully submitted,


Elaine Jeng
Acting City Clerk

Approved,


Patrick Wilson
Chair