



450 Thunder Head Lane • P.O. Box 1150 • Annetta, Texas 76008 • (817) 441-5770

City Council Meeting Minutes

The City Council of Annetta met in a specially scheduled meeting via videoconference on Thursday, January 7, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. in the Annetta Town Hall at 450 Thunder Head Lane to consider the following agenda:

Dustin Schmitt hosted the WebEx and gave an introduction and instructions to the panelists and attendees.

- I. **Call to order.** Mayor Bruce Pinckard called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation of Prayer.** Council Member Sandy Roberts led the pledge and Council Member Danny Coffman gave the invocation.
- III. **Roll call/Quorum check.** A quorum check revealed that Mayor Pinckard (via WebEx) and Council Members Kent Stasey, Jim Causey, Danny Coffman (via WebEx), Shane Mudge and Sandy Roberts were all present. Also present was Jamee Long, City Secretary.
- IV. **Public Comments:** Mayor Pinckard requested Council Member Roberts to discuss the public comments submitted prior to the meeting. Council Member Roberts read and summarized the public comments submitted by Alyse Chung, Anne Mullins, Kristi Tuner and Mark Wohl. Citizen, Kristi Turner, called into the meeting and read her public comments again regarding the sidewalk. Citizens, Al and Karen Gloer, attempted to call into the meeting but were having technical difficulties. Marcy Galle called into the meeting and stated that she lives at 500 Squaw Creek Road in Willow Park. Ms. Galle stated that she has been helping Kristi Turner with a sidewalk in front of Stuard Elementary. She stated that her questions are "is there a need, does the community support a sidewalk, what is the cost and does Annetta have the funds to cover the cost?" Ms. Galle discussed the survey that Ms. Turner conducted and information she has obtained from the Town's audit. Council Member Stasey apologized for the injury to Ms. Chung's son that happened due to a distracted driver on Lakeview. He discussed the General Fund and that funds are allocated for future road repairs. Council Member Stasey stated that the Town's attorney has advised against using CCPD funds for a sidewalk because the sidewalk would be considered a public works project. He stated that CCPD funds have been used for traffic control in the past for flashing lights along Thunder Head Lane. Citizen, Al Gloer, 273 Highland Drive, stated that Ms. Chung's son was injured at Lakeview and Thunder Head Lane. Mr. Gloer stated that he is disappointed that tonight's meeting is not a town hall meeting and asked that the meeting be postponed. Mayor Pinckard agreed that he would prefer the meeting not be a WebEx meeting. He stated that a workshop alone would not allow for council to take action on the item and that tonight is a review of all data. He stated that since tonight is a special meeting, the Council will have the ability to act on this item.

V. **Discussion and Action:** Discussion and consider action regarding installation of a sidewalk along Thunder Head Lane. Council Member Roberts gave a presentation titled "Thunder Head Sidewalk and Pedestrian Thoroughfare." She discussed several aerial views of the site for the proposed sidewalk along Thunder Head Lane. She also discussed Halfff's engineering report, utility obstacles, costs of the sidewalk, right-of-way acquisition and possible survey questions. Citizen, Tim Pierce, stated "place it on the November ballot." Ms. Turner stated that parents are having trouble with the WebEx. Dustin stated that there is no one pending to join the meeting. Council Member Roberts stated that the presentation will be available for anyone that wants the presentation. She continued with the presentation discussing the Safe Routes to School application. Council Member Stasey asked if there were any other studies the Town could review regarding possible environment issues. Council Member Roberts stated that this was in Halfff's proposal. Mayor Pinckard stated the directions for completing the Safe Routes to School application are 43 pages, the application is 17 pages, and it requires a thorough process to apply for the grant. He stated the engineering estimate is not a bid for construction costs. Mayor Pinckard stated the estimate from CT Dirtwork did not include drainage work or engineering. He stated that bids cannot be sought until there is a plan. Leigh Hollis, the Town's engineer, stated there is a different standard for a public works project. Ms. Hollis stated the drainage considerations must be addressed prior to constructing a sidewalk. She also stated the cost estimate for the square footage of the concrete would be in compliance with ADA. Ms. Hollis stated that a public works project has requirements with the state and the standards are more stringent. Council Member Stasey asked Ms. Hollis if there are dangers regarding crossways of the streets across from the sidewalk. Ms. Hollis stated there are safety concerns crossing Thunder Head Lane to get to a sidewalk. Council Member Stasey stated that he does have safety concerns for pedestrians crossing Thunder Head Lane. Ms. Hollis stated that further review and traffic studies would be required. She also discussed possible crossing guards at the school. Council Member Stasey discussed drop off zones for buses and vehicles at the school. He stated that he had been a school bus driver that the schools are designed for vehicle and bus drop offs. Citizen, Brian Berryhill, stated the sidewalk should be a joint effort with the Town, school district and Lion's Club. Ms. Chung asked how many estimates were received. Council Member Roberts stated the only estimate is from Halfff. She also stated we cannot obtain bids until there is a plan which would cost \$68,100 to begin the engineering work. Mr. and Mrs. Gloer asked if the school district or Lion's Club would waive the right-of-way costs. Council Member Coffman stated he has had discussions with the school district but do not have a final yes or no from the school district. Mayor Pinckard stated there has been a meeting with the school district and we will continue to discuss this project with the school district. He stated that safety is his main concern and he wants to make sure the sidewalk would not create more danger. Mr. Berryhill stated he agrees with the Mayor and his concerns. Citizen and Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman, Traci Fambrough, asked if the estimate included the drainage issues? Ms. Hollis stated there were a couple of places that were noted as erosion issues that are on the school's property and that was not included in the estimate. Ms. Galle asked Ms. Hollis what her experience is on tax exempt entities charging other tax exempt entities for ROWs? Ms. Hollis stated that the easement acquisition process and cost is not necessarily in the procurement of the land itself but the surveying, legal, filing fees, and a lot of other things involved in land changing hands. Council Member Stasey stated that the engineering cost of \$68,000 would require a budget amendment for the engineers to create a plan in order to obtain bids. Mayor Pinckard stated there are steps in the application process that if done ahead of time are not reimbursable. He encouraged everyone to review the application and the process for obtaining the grant. The Mayor also discussed the need for a professional grant writer if the Town decides to "go down this path." He discussed the environmental portion of the application process. He stated the minimum cost of this project is \$300,000 and is a complicated process. Mayor Pinckard stated that the citizens need to educate themselves on the process and this may need to be placed on the ballot. He discussed a possible bond or tax if the citizens want to move forward. Council Member Coffman stated that the estimate from CT Dirtwork was only preliminary and did not take into consideration the drainage issues and engineering work. He stated this was originally started as a park concept. Council Member Causey stated that the Council has been taking measured steps on the project and the costs. He stated the sidewalk could "eat up 3-4 years of road money." He stated this is a significant impact on the Town. Council Member Coffman stated that his original idea was

that donations and fund raising would assist in the cost of the park concept. He discussed the impact COVID has had on businesses and individuals he had planned to ask for assistance. Citizen, Tim Pierce, asked about the "funding reserve target." Council Member Causey stated that a specific target has not been established. He stated the Town has multiple months of reserves for future expenses but "the city is complicated" and that is why the city is operated conservatively. Council Member Stasey stated the General Fund balance is higher than normal because the county was unable to do as much work on roads but is planning to get more miles done than previous years. Mayor Pinckard stated the sales tax revenue is higher than normal because citizens are staying home and ordering more online, but he does expect this trend to remain constant. He stated the recommended target for most cities is 3-4 months of reserve in operating expenses. The Mayor stated the Town is financially conservative and the "unknowns frighten everyone." He stated that the citizens of Annetta do not need to be concerned about a property tax because of "an oopsy by the city. Mr. Pierce stated that he wished there was a defined target and the city not "blindly saving." Mayor Pinckard discussed the annual audit and the Town has a Finance Committee that meets to review the Town's finances and track data. The Mayor discussed the roads, Precinct 4 and the cost savings by using the county for road repairs. Council Member Stasey discussed the reserve amounts and that since Annetta does not have a property tax, there is no ability to raise taxes to increase revenue. Council Member Causey stated that the sidewalks have been described as a safety issue, but he feels that road work needs are also a safety issue. Council Member Roberts continued with her presentation and discussed public improvement districts. Council Member Coffman stated that the Town would need to authorize the engineering costs prior to any further work. Mayor Pinckard stated that if the Town moves in the direction of the grant, the grant application needs to be completed prior to spending any funds. He stated that he will follow the advice of the Town's municipal attorney about not using CCDP funds for a public works project. Mayor Pinckard stated that CCPD funds could be used for traffic control and possible crosswalk lights. Council Member Stasey stated that grants are "nothing but federal taxes." He stated that he has trouble asking the government for grant money for the "wants of a few." Council Member Roberts requested citizens submit their questions and comments to the Town on how to move forward. Mayor Pinckard stated there is lack of connectivity to the neighborhood and asked to review the arial views again. He stated that Stuard Elementary has not increased in size since it was built 20 years ago. He stated the enrollment at Stuard Elementary is approximately 590 and there are currently only 31 students learning remotely. The Mayor stated there are about 57 students that live near the school. He stated the grant application would need to be part of a transportation plan that does not exist right now and is not included in the engineering work. He pointed out that all of the homes are across Thunder Head Lane and would require students to cross the street to get to a sidewalk. Council Member Stasey stated the style of Annetta's roadways are not like those in larger cities. He stated that we would not be able to connect the proposed sidewalk to neighborhood sidewalks because there are none. He discussed "yield roadways" and the Comprehensive Plan. Council Member Stasey stated there are also students that live 3 miles from the school. He stated that he has trouble asking everyone to pay for a sidewalk that will be "used by a few." He also stated there is no connectivity to other sidewalks. He is concerned about the pathway parallel to the road because it intersects with the roads going onto Stuard Elementary's property. He stated that the buses and cars enter to a "drop off zone" at the school. He discussed pedestrian exposure and incidents related to how people drive. He stated that since there is a drop off zone at the school and students are dropped off from a vehicle, there is zero pedestrian exposure. He stated that vehicles and buses are the safest option for students to come to school. He said there have been no pedestrian incidents at Stuard Elementary and he believes a sidewalk would increase the risk of tragedy. He said that due to these concerns, he "has a problem with how the sidewalk is proposed and would operate." He also has concerns due to multiple property owners being the Town, Lion's Club and Aledo ISD. He "believes that Aledo ISD should lead in the safety of students on Aledo ISD property every step of the way." He stated that "more convenience leads to more exposure." He stated that the most people he has ever seen walking to and from Stuard Elementary is 6 people. He discussed his neighbor walking his child to school each day and the route he takes from Highland Drive to the crosswalk near Meadow Park Drive. Council Member Stasey requested the zoomed in arial to be brought back up in the presentation. He discussed the crosswalk at Meadow Park Drive and how the streets in that area all join to

Meadow Park Drive. He proposes the school district extend their sidewalk from the entry of the school on the north wing and down to Meadow Park Drive. He stated that then the Town could use CCPD funds to add a lighted traffic control device at the crossing. He believes this option would truly improve the safety for students that walk to school. Mr. and Mrs. Gloer stated "that it would be nice if citizens could share Councilman Stasey's soapbox however this format absolutely precludes that." Mayor Pinckard asks for all citizens to weigh in rather than only pursuing the previously proposed path. Dustin Schmitt stated there are 14 attendees to tonight's meeting and Mayor Pinckard thanked everyone for attending. Mr. Berryhill thanked Mr. Stasey for his input. An attendee named "David" stated that he supports the sidewalk. Ms. Galle asked if the city would forego the sidewalk down the street. Mayor Pinckard stated there is no motion. Ms. Galle asked if Kent's plan was to ask the school district to extend the sidewalk down the street. Council Member Stasey stated that he proposes the school district take the lead since the sidewalk would be on their property. He stated that so much of the project is on the school's property, the school should take the lead. Council Member Causey asked if the traffic control device should go ahead and be added now to improve the crosswalk using CCPD funds. Council Member Stasey stated that he feels the school should build the sidewalk first so there would be connectivity to the crosswalk. Council Member Causey stated that he agrees there is a safety issue with pedestrians crossing Thunder Head Lane. He stated that the Council needs to decide whether to approve the sidewalk or not. He also stated he is not in favor of using 3-4 years of road money for this project. Ms. Turner also stated the sidewalk either needs to be approved or not. "David" asked if there is a specific dollar amount for Council Member Stasey's plan. Council Member Stasey stated the only dollar amount for Annetta would be the cost for the crosswalk control device at Meadow Park Drive. "David" asked what is the target amount for the reserve fund? Mayor Pinckard stated that every year after the audit is complete the Finance Committee meets to discuss but has not met since the audit was presented last month. Mr. Berryhill stated that any student safety issue should be Aledo ISD as the primary financier. He stated that he agrees with Kent's proposal for a crosswalk control device and agrees that the school district should construct the sidewalk first and take the lead. Mayor Pinckard asked if the crosswalk would need to be moved to Meadow Park Drive? Council Member Stasey stated that his idea is to move the student traffic on campus to Aledo ISD and they would be best to take responsibility for that. He would then like for the Town to be involved after they provide the safest way to cross Thunder Head Lane. Council Member Coffman stated that he believes the control device is a good idea even without a sidewalk. Ms. Hollis stated that adding a control device would require a study based on the amount of people that would use the crosswalk. She discussed a rapid flashing beacon and this would be a fairly inexpensive cost for the Town. She stated that a study is required for any traffic control device. Council Member Stasey moved to authorize the staff and Mayor to close the proposed sidewalk option in Annetta and notify the Aledo ISD to take the lead on AISD property pedestrian traffic with the option to engage the Town of Annetta to potentially provide crosswalk control devices at Meadow Park Drive, Council Member Causey seconded the motion, with all aye. Council Member Coffman stated that there have been 14 people online for tonight's meeting and that he does not believe he can vote yes or no to a sidewalk tonight. He discussed a possible survey for the citizens of Annetta and stated that additional data is needed for a crosswalk. Council Member Mudge stated that he works for the railroad and they are always working toward crossing safety. He stated he agrees with having just one crosswalk. Council Member Roberts stated that she would also like to hear from the citizens and that the current proposal is a "sidewalk to nowhere." She discussed how the sun blocks vision while driving down Thunder Head Lane at certain times of the day. She stated that her number one concern is safety and does not believe the proposed sidewalk would increase safety. Mayor Pinckard stated that we all have a responsibility as elected officials to research all proposals and follow Texas law. Motion passed unanimously.

- VI. **Discussion and Action:** Consider a resolution approving the method for making written requests for public information. Mayor Pinckard stated there is a need to make sure requests get "funneled to the correct location" and he read the resolution. Council Member Roberts moved to approve a resolution approving the method for making written requests for public information, Council Member Coffman seconded the motion,

with all aye. Motion passed unanimously. The Mayor again thanked the citizens for calling to tonight's meeting.

VII. **Adjournment:** With no further business before the council, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 10:25 p.m.

These minutes were approved on the 18th day of February, 2021.



Jamee Long, City Secretary



Bruce Pinckard, Mayor