

Minutes
Veterans Memorial Highway Association
South Zone Meeting
Held, Friday, February 6th, 2015
Warner Senior Citizens Drop In Centre
107 – 3rd Avenue
Warner, Alberta

- Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 11:02 a.m. by Chairman Barry Morishita.
- In Attendance: The List of Attendants is attached and forms part of these minutes.
- Introductions: All persons in attendance introduced themselves and what municipality or department they represented.
- Chairman's'
Report: Chairman Morishita provided comments on what the Board has been doing during the past year. The Board is focusing their activities to lobby for the improvements required on Highway 36 and Highway 881 in all zones. The focus has been narrowed so we can concentrate on the issues with the highways which are important for safety and improved traffic movement. The Board has met with Minister Drysdale and discussed with him how we can move forward on the needed projects. The Board is in the process of hiring a consultant to prepare a brief for the Association to use when approaching Alberta Transportation with the zone directed projects. The Association has also adopted a new logo which identifies both Veterans Memorial Highway and Highway 881. The logo represents the partnership the members have created to meet our goals.
- Chin Coulee: Chairman Morishita opened the discussion with regards to Highway 36 through Chin Coulee. Ben Elfring provided everyone in attendance with a copy of a report prepared by the M.D. of Taber on the slope failure of Highway 36. The south side of the highway is sluffing into the coulee. The study outlined the long standing problems, possible new corrective actions and needed immediate repairs. Attached pictures show how the highway has sluffed off as well as safety barriers placed by Alberta Transportation to keep traffic away from the dangerous area.

South Zone Meeting
February 6th, 2015
Page – 2 –

Mr. Darren Davidson from Alberta Transportation stated that the Department has been monitoring the problem since 1979. In 2004/2005 a plan was developed to re-align the road based on the bridge. This would have seen the road moved some 60 metres to the north, however the road has started to fail, so the short term solution is to widen the road to the south side and create an interim lane. For the long term Alberta Transportation is looking at the bridge itself. The bridge is over 50 Years old and needs to be evaluated as to its possible replacement. The plan would be to straighten the highway as it approaches the existing bridge. If a catastrophic failure occurs the traffic will be detoured on Provincial Secondary Highway system to cross the coulee.

Ben Elfring asked when would the interim lane be constructed. Mr. Davidson advised that tenders will be called this spring and construction completed in 2015. A new geotechnical report is also to be done. Jack Breun stated he feels the highway in its present condition is an accident waiting to happen. Ben Elfring asked Alberta Transportation to add more signage as people travelling the highway and not familiar with it are not prepared for the present lane closure and it would provide more advance warning.

Pull Outs: Ben Elfring restated his concerns that there are no pull outs or rest areas the wide and oversized loads between Warner and Cactus Corner. Gordon Zak of Alberta Transportation stated the department is still committed to working with the Association and Municipalities to solve the need for rest areas.

Pilot Car Training: Concerns were raised regarding the Pilot Car operators. Most operators do not give clear indications as to what they want oncoming or passing traffic to do. Without standardized training it becomes a guessing game for motorists. The need for pull outs is more important when the wide loads prevents passing and motorists become anxious.

South Zone Meeting
February 6th, 2015
Page – 3 -

Hwy #4 and #36

Intersection: Ross Ford indentified that the Highway 4 and Highway 36 intersection has seen a number of accidents. Asked whether the intersection could be re-designed to resolve the problems. Now that the Coutts crossing heavy truck by-pass is done getting onto Highway 4 is much easier. Installing the four way stop at the Highway 36 and Highway 61 intersection has helped cutting down the accident rate.

High Load: Ben Elfring said that Highway 36 being designated as a high load corridor It's important to have the rest stop and pull out areas available. Gordon Zak stated that the Province has had a partnership rest area program for a number of years, however there has been little interest in the program.

Travis Martin Shield asked whether the Travis system is working. Brian deJong stated that industry really like it for the one stop permit system and for rural areas it is working well.

Taber: Jack Breum stated Taber is looking at an industrial park development in the north and will be needing turn out lanes for the area. There has been a high number of collision incidents at the intersection of Highway 864 Highway 36 and asked for some investigation as to why this happening.

Maintenance: Chairman Morishita asked attendants whether they were having and maintenance issues or concerns. In other zones there have been some concerns raised over maintenance. The attendants did not raise any issues maintenance and seemed happy with the contractor. Gordon Zak stated that all the maintenance contracts in the Province should be relatively the same. Priorities do change from year to year depending on changes in traffic volumes. All timelines should be the same according to the priorities set in the given area. All work such as sign maintenance are under work order compatible with other areas. Darren Davidson stated that may be variances between Highway 4 and Highway 36 based on traffic volumes. Brain deJong asked if the municipalities and the contractor can work out

some arrangements between them so that a municipality that has to travel a Provincial Highway to a municipal work could do the snow plowing or grading as they make their way to the municipal work. Gordon Zak and Darren Davidson stated that it can be done, but it must go Alberta Transportation to facilitate this type of joint work due to contract Issues.

Adjournment: There being no further discussions, Chairman Morishita adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Secretary-Treasurer