
MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF CONWAY, ARKANSAS

Conway, Arkansas
Tuesday 6:30 p.m.
May 10, 2007

On this date the City Council of the City of Conway, Arkansas met in special session. The following members being a quorum were present and acting; Alderman Hawkins, Alderwoman Smith, Alderman Vaught, Alderwoman Mehl, Alderman Grimes, Alderwoman Whitmore, Alderman Bell and Alderman Jones. Also, present and acting: Mayor Tab Townsell, City Attorney Michael Murphy. City Clerk Michael Garrett was not in attendance.

1. *Call to Order*
2. *Roll Call*
3. **Old Business**

A. Discuss/Consideration of a roundabout at Prince Street & Western Ave.

Carroll Bishop, Asst. Superintendent; Conway School District, addressed the council stating he believes that improvements to Western St. will help drainage issues and give students an opportunity to leave the campus in a timely manner. Mr. Bishop explained the school has no plans to close the main entrance and the additional exit will provide students one more way of exiting the campus. Terry Fiddler, President; Conway School Board, stated when the school purchased the land on the corner of Prince St. and Western they were not sure of what would be built there, but ultimately it was decided to build the new gymnasium. Mr. Fiddler explained that the southwestern corner of the property will be used as a city park, and also stated that the school gave all the land necessary for the improvement of Western. The school will let the city determine how to improve eastbound school traffic and traffic in general, but explained it is necessary for the school to find a way to get students traveling east out quickly, and the new driveway will serve this purpose. Mr. Fiddler stated the district knew nothing of the roundabout until the city showed them the proposal, and the school is fine with whatever the city decides. Mr. Hawkins asked Mr. Fiddler what the thought process was on the placement of the new driveway. Mr. Fiddler stated the Weems St. exit is two-way traffic, with one lane exiting the campus. The new drive will be two-way traffic which will allow another exit from the campus. The school doesn't want to move the drive any further south due to the green space. Mayor Townsell asked if the school could help pay for the roundabout in lieu of impact fees credits in the future. Mr. Fiddler stated yes. Alderman Hawkins asked if the school district has any

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plans to close the main entrance of the school by the administration building. Mr. Fiddler stated that in the future the district will need a second high school; where and when that high school is placed will then change the philosophy of what will be done on the other campus, and it is possible that that entrance/exit could close, but there is just as much probability that it won't, and that will be determined by enrollment. Mr. Bishop stated that when the district goes through security audits they try to determine possible threats to the school; there are always suggestions of closing off a campus to keep terrorists from gaining access to the campus. If this were to ever happen there are gates that could be closed after traffic hours. Mr. Hawkins stated one concern that was raised was if that drive would ever be permanently closed. Mr. Bishop stated if that did happen it would be a gated situation. Mr. Fiddler stated the road would not be bulldozed and would remain open closing it would take too much traffic south. Alderman Hawkins asked if there is anyway the city could acquire property on the western side of Western Ave. to build a sidewalk to accommodate school children. Mr. Fiddler stated the school is already providing half of the sidewalk, and the school board would have to approve any additional land being given for sidewalks, but he doesn't believe it would be a problem. Mayor Townsell stated we would take that sidewalk on north down around the corner toward Ida Burns. Cindy Rush, 1022 Western Ave., stated she doesn't understand why a traffic signal is not the first option and feels a lot of students would be drawn to turn left out of the main entrance which would keep them out of the residential areas and she is against the proposed roundabout. Mike Rush, 1022 Western Ave., spoke against the proposed roundabout. Steve Serio, property owner of Elan Nails/The Brewery, expressed his concerns about how the proposed roundabout would affect vehicles entering his property from Western and parking. Debbie Rowley, Conway resident, spoke against the proposed roundabout. Robert Haskett, The Brewery, spoke against the proposed roundabout and asked the city to consider allowing him to operate a portable push cart in Simon Park to help offset the losses he anticipates during construction. Mayor Townsell stated this is possible. Susan McNabb, Conway School Board, asked what the financial commitment would be on the part of the school district. Ronnie Hall, City Engineer, stated the cost of the roundabout is \$80,000 if constructed by city workforce. Mayor Townsell stated that the roundabout is absolutely the best idea and went on to say that placing the roundabout at Western serves the street system, but to place it at the administration building would only be serving the school. Alderman Hawkins motioned to adopt the red roundabout plan. Alderman Bell seconded the motion. Alderman Hawkins amended his motion to require sidewalks the full length of Western back to Ida Burns; not impose any immediate requirements on parking or development of the property;

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installation of traffic calming devices, and to work with, and limit the impact on homeowners and businesses. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-4 with the Mayor voting in favor of the roundabout. Alderman Vaught, Alderwoman Smith, Alderwoman Whitmore, and Alderman Jones voted in opposition.

Adjournment

There was no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned.

PASSED this 10^h day of May 2007

APPROVED:

Mayor Tab Townsell

City Clerk Michael O. Garrett