

Open Work Session

Proposed 2021 Wicomico County Priority Letter for Transportation Projects

May 18, 2021

Mr. Tony Rudy, Airport Manager, and Mr. Mark Whitelock, Deputy Director of Public Works came before Council. Mr. Rudy said this year they have reduced the number of projects they are asking for as they have some CARES funding that will help them along. He said the two most important projects are the runway extension and the air traffic control tower. He said there are some issues that popped up with the air traffic control tower with weatherproofing equipment, and they would like that to be taken care of, so that is what the Airport is asking from the State for this year.

Mr. Whitelock said the road improvements include the Route 13 weigh station relocation, which was on the list last year and is still on the list this year. He said they are asking for it to be relocated.

Mr. Whitelock said next is the Salisbury Bypass feasibility study. He explained, coming off the Bypass going northbound, there is weaving of traffic between the left-hand and right-hand lanes. He said this also includes southbound entrances and some pedestrian crossings as Mr. Hastings was interested in pedestrian crossings last year.

Mr. Whitelock said on Snow Hill Road they want to do an intersection safety traffic signal warrant study to see if it warrants having a traffic signal at the intersection of Nutters Crossing and Snow Hill Road. Mr. McCain said he used to live out that way for a long time and that is a tough one. Mr. Hastings said he used to take that road to work every day. He then asked if they have ever considered a traffic circle, to which Mr. Whitelock responded, he has not heard that recommendation. Mr. McCain said he thinks the traffic moves too fast in that area and traffic circles are normally in a municipality where there is a lower speed limit. Mr. Hastings said the Fruitland traffic circle seems similar to him. Mr. Whitelock said the only difference with the Fruitland one is that the road comes up from Morris Mill and the traffic is slower. Mr. Holloway said the speed limit on Mt. Hermon Road is 50 MPH.

Mr. Whitlock continued and said next on the list is the Route 50 Access Management for Wor-Wic Community College. Mr. Holloway said the County has been putting that project on the list for a number of years and it has never gotten anywhere, but he does not think there has really been a push for it. He said he thinks the County needs to put emphasis on the traffic at the Walston Switch and Route 50 intersection to try to bring more attention to it. He said Wor-Wic is in favor of it, and he knows there is a lot more traffic on some of the back roads and coming out of the traffic circle in that area, but he does not know what else they can do. Mr. Whitelock said they are suggesting ingress and egress off Route 50 solely for the college. Mr. Holloway said egress would be a big help, but he thinks ingress would create real confusion. Mr. Holloway suggested putting a star next to that project or putting it at the top of the list, and when they meet with the Department of Transportation, they need to get a little stronger on it.

Mr. Whitelock said the Nanticoke Road drainage improvement study is next, and they know there are certain points along Nanticoke Road that need drainage help that have not been addressed from the State as of yet. Mrs. Acle asked if the West Side Collector project would help with flooding, to which Mr. Whitelock responded, yes, but not for that particular portion of the road. He said they are addressing some drainage issues behind Centennial Village, but they are more County issues than State issues.

Mr. Whitelock said next is pedestrian improvements. He said they are looking at sidewalks along the Route 13 and Route 50 corridors and some other streets, such as East Main Street and Church Street.

Mr. Dodd said he likes the idea of the bike paths, but he does not see anybody riding a bike in them mainly because the speed limit is so fast and it is pretty dangerous, to which Mr. Whitelock agreed.

Mr. Whitelock said the requests from the City of Salisbury are basically the same, except number five on the list where the City has added the creation of a pedestrian and bicycle oriented promenade along Eastern Shore Drive to serve as a safe route between Salisbury University and Downtown Salisbury, including roundabouts at each end of Eastern Shore Drive and the intersections of Carroll Street and College Avenue. He said those are the big changes for the City of Salisbury.

Mr. Whitelock said the Town of Delmar wants to look at signalization studies at the Foskey Lane and Connelly Mill crossovers and some pedestrian improvements and amenities along alternate Route 13. Mr. Holloway said there have been numerous accidents on Foskey Lane and Route 13. He then asked if they can get a State study on that intersection, to which Mr. Whitelock responded, that is one of the things they are asking for. Mr. Davis said they put some crossing lines in that intersection. Mr. Holloway said that is a pretty tough place to get in and out of. Mr. Dodd said that is a busy intersection.

Mr. Whitelock said the Town of Hebron is still looking at the rails to trails initiative and requesting assistance from the State for the planning and construction. He said they also want to look at some traffic signalization on Route 50 where the Shore Stop is located. Mr. Davis clarified, that is Route 670. Mr. Whitelock said they are also looking at storm water drainage and other issues that the town is having along some of the State roads.

Mr. Whitelock said Pittsville is looking for drainage help along Gumboro Road coming off Pitts Avenue, and the Willards is asking for the State to take control of Bent Pine Road. Mr. Holloway said that road was recently paved, so if the State wants it, it is a nice new paved road, but the town would still like for the State to acquire and maintain that road. Mr. Whitelock said there is a connector between Route 50 and Old Ocean City Road that the town does not want to maintain due to budget shortages.

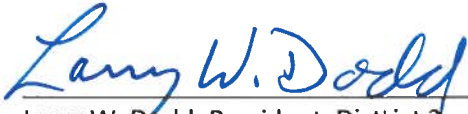
Mr. Dodd said the priority letter needs formal approval by Council, which they can scheduled for June 1.

Mr. Hastings said there is a broader issue that he needs to follow-up with Keith Hall and the Salisbury Metropolitan Planning Organization, which is the need to secure easements for roadway connecting the circumferential highway, as every major city that has ever grown has a circumferential highway. He said the Bypass was extended in the past, but it is going to have to connect one day. He said there is development going out in that area, and the County eventually needs to connect those roads, just like every other major municipality does. He suggested the County put that into planning and start thinking about it. Mr. Whitelock said maybe they can put it in the same letter as future planning.

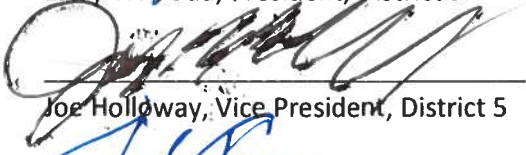
There was no further discussion.

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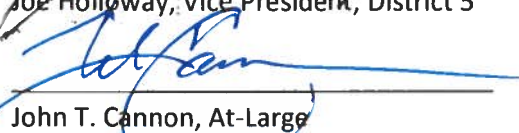
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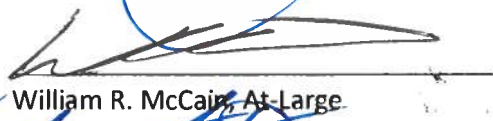
Larry W. Dodd, President, District 3



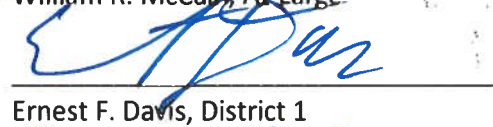
Joe Holloway, Vice President, District 5



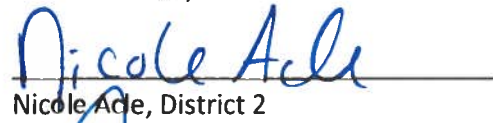
John T. Cannon, At-Large



William R. McCain, At-Large



Ernest F. Davis, District 1



Nicole Ade, District 2



Josh Hastings, District 4



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator