

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
THE CITY OF BELLE MEADE

MAY 23, 2011

A special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the City of Belle Meade convened at Belle Meade City Hall, 4705 Harding Road, Nashville, Tennessee, on Monday, May 23, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. Those present were: Mayor Gray Thornburg, Vice Mayor James Hunt, Commissioner Cathy Altenbern, Commissioner Ed Freeman, Commissioner Steve Rick, City Manager/Treasurer Beth Reardon, City Recorder Linda Berner, Public Works Director George Bartlett, and City Attorney Bob Patterson. Also present were Bob Murphy and Amy Burch of RPM Transportation Consultants, LLC.

Before the meeting started, everyone stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Vice Mayor Hunt.

The first item of business was the consideration of crosswalks and striping for vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle lanes on Belle Meade Boulevard. Commissioner Altenbern made the comment that she liked all the points made by residents over the weekend. One that hit home most to her was the Vice Mayor's comment that the Board should have done a better job of reviewing the crosswalk plans prior to implementation. She concluded that the Board would not be unwise to acknowledge this, no matter what the decision on the striping will be. Vice Mayor Hunt stated he did ask Chief Tim Eads to write an article for the newsletter about the correct use of

crosswalks, and who has the right of way. There was short discussion on the appearance of the crosswalks on the boulevard.

Mayor Thornburg stated she would like to address a few things. She feels that whatever the Board does, the pedestrians need to be kept near the median since that is what everyone is used to. Mr. Murphy stated that considering the history of pedestrian traffic in Belle Meade, it will be fine to leave the pedestrians near the median. It is not a typical situation but given the history, it is acceptable.

Mr. Patterson asked Mr. Murphy if there was a recognized legal standard for the location and the width of a designated pedestrian lane. Mr. Murphy answered that there is no industry standard for striping a pedestrian walkway or that it must be on the outside lane. He understands the commissioners feel it is safest to put the pedestrians facing traffic in the lane that has the least amount of traffic, which in this case is the inside lane next to the median. Mr. Murphy confirmed there is no legal reason not to do what the commissioners are proposing, given the fact that there are two lanes of traffic on either side of a center median on Belle Meade Boulevard. Discussion continued.

Mayor Thornburg offered a suggestion of striping the south end of the boulevard from Harding Place to the Park the same as the north end, with stipulations on vehicle travel and passing. Commissioner Rick suggested using cones to block off the lane closest to the median for pedestrian use during the weekends.

There was extensive discussion on these ideas, and modifications to these ideas. There was also discussion regarding some residents' comments about the Board capitulating to those in opposition to the original proposal. Commissioner Freeman reported there are people who are upset that the Board was swayed by the negative comments made by a few vocal residents in attendance at the May 18<sup>th</sup> commissioners meeting. Commissioner Freeman suggested putting this out to a vote to the residents. Mr. Patterson stated there are no requirements to put this matter before the citizens for a vote, since this is a representative form of government where the commissioners were elected to guide the city. Being a small city, there is a lot more input from Belle Meade constituents than most cities.

Discussion continued with suggestions from all the Commissioners. After much debate, Mayor Thornburg made a motion that (the lanes of) Belle Meade Boulevard be striped 9.5 feet wide until you get to West Tyne and Chickering Road, then it be reduced to 9 foot lanes away from the median so that we allow as much pedestrian area as possible next to the median. During the months of June, July, and August, on the weekends, cones are used on the left lane (Chickering Road to the park) so that pedestrians can have a much wider area in which to walk. In September, a citizen survey will be posted on the website and/or done in person.

Commissioner Rick seconded the motion.

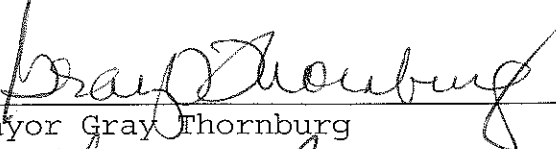
Mr. Patterson stated a procedural point; this meeting was noticed about striping Belle Meade Boulevard. Therefore, the formal action to be taken today should address the width of the lanes and striping only. Vice Mayor Hunt asked if the proposed experiment should be a separate meeting, and Mr. Patterson answered it may not require a meeting, but that he would make a recommendation on how best to proceed. Mechanically, at some point there needs to be a survey and some education of the community, and that may need to occur before the commissioners start the experiment.

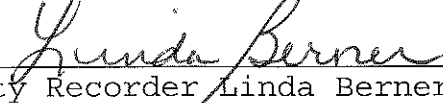
Mayor Thornburg amended her motion to read that the City stripes the Boulevard on the south end, with the lanes beginning at West Tyne /Chickering Road and ending at the park being reduced to 9 feet wide. The lanes from Harding Place to West Tyne/Chickering Road will be striped at 9.5 ft. wide. Commissioner Rick seconded the amended motion. Upon vote of the amended motion, all voted aye except Commissioner Freeman who abstained from voting. The amended motion passed on a majority vote. Upon vote of the original motion with the amended portion, all voted aye except Commissioner Freeman who voted in the negative. The motion passed on a majority vote.

The next item of business was the consideration of the estimate for the island extension at Percy Warner Park entrance on Belle Meade Boulevard. Commissioner Altenbern asked for the diagram of the intersection. Mayor Thornburg stated there will be an extension to the bulb-out from Percy Warner Park, the asphalt will be removed, sod will be installed and new curbing added. Belle

Meade will do this and Metro Parks will maintain the area. Commissioner Altenbern asked if the Board could encourage the police department to ticket people parked too close to the stop sign. Mrs. Reardon stated she would have to check. Commissioner Freeman asked what the difference was between what they are voting on now as compared to the last meeting. Mrs. Reardon answered that at the last meeting, the bulb-out coming out from Percy Warner Park was not included because the City thought Metro Parks would construct it. Since then, Mrs. Reardon found out Metro Parks would not do it because there is no money in their budget for it. Commissioner Rick made the motion to approve the request as submitted, and Vice Mayor Hunt seconded the motion. Commissioner Freeman stated he was not sure how the Minkoffs would react and Mrs. Reardon answered that Mrs. Minkoff was at the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting and stated she was fine with the reworking at the park entrance. Mayor Thornburg answered the Minkoffs are upset with where people are parking in that area. Upon vote, the approval of the request was unanimous.

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners, the meeting was thereupon adjourned at 9:24a.m.

  
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Mayor Gray Thornburg

  
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City Recorder Linda Berner