
**CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS
TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 19, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Traffic Commission of the City of Laguna Hills, California, was called to order by Chair Lukes at 7:01 PM in the Laguna Hills City Council Chamber, 24035 El Toro Road, Laguna Hills, California.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair Bieber.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

Present: Vice Chair Chris Bieber, Commissioner Susan Caskey, Chair Anna Lisa Lukes, and Commissioner Mark Schaff.

Absent: Commissioner Manuel Hernandez

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

2. MINUTES

**THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION APPROVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 17, 2021, REGULAR MEETING, BY M/COMMISSIONER CASKEY, S/VICE CHAIR BIEBER.
APPROVED BY A VOTE OF 4-0, COMMISSIONER HERNANDEZ ABSENT.**

3. PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

4.1 NELLIE GAIL RANCH EQUESTRIAN CROSSING REVIEW

Associate Engineer Amber Shah reported, Staff met with the Nellie Gail Ranch Equestrian Ad Hoc Committee (Committee) in the fall of 2020 to evaluate equestrian crossings in the Nellie Gail Ranch community. The Committee requested an evaluation of the driveway crossing at the Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association Equestrian Center on Nellie Gail Road southerly of Oso Parkway and expressed concerns about traffic controls at nearby intersections. Based upon the Committee's

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concerns and in accordance with the Residential Streets Management Policy, Staff initiated a review of the Nellie Gail Equestrian Center driveway/equestrian crossing and three intersections along Nellie Gail Road at Empty Saddle Drive, Hidden Trail Road and Rocking Horse Lane. The Traffic Engineers of Hartzog & Crabill, Inc., (HCI) were retained and completed a traffic control and operational review of the Nellie Gail Equestrian Center driveway/equestrian crossing and analyses of the three intersections. The report was presented at the January 2021 meeting of the Traffic Commission. Public comments received via email were distributed to the Traffic Commissioners and acknowledged at the meeting. The Traffic Commission continued the matter for further data collection.

Following an update presented at the March 2021 meeting of the Traffic Commission, follow-up speed surveys were performed in April 2021. Ms. Shah indicated the vehicle speeds recorded by radar were consistent with previous radar speed surveys primarily in the reasonably expected range of 32-34 mph, commonly found on streets with a 25-mph speed limit, and not, in and of themselves, of concern. Those vehicle speeds recorded above 34 mph are should be addressed through enforcement.

Staff evaluated the implementation of speed humps in the vicinity of the Equestrian Center Crossing based upon the minimum criteria set forth in the Residential Streets Management Policy. However, the road conditions do not support, and Staff does not recommend, the installation of speed humps. Alternatively, Staff considered the feasibility of a speed table at the Equestrian Center driveway/equestrian crossing. Installation of a speed table may be feasible but additional engineering design and analysis is required before a final recommendation can be made due to the location at a driveway intersection with larger vehicles and horse trailers needing proper transitioning to ascend to the raised table, turn, and descend to/from the driveway.

Staff recommended and strongly encouraged the Equestrian Committee and Nellie Gail Ranch Owners Association pursue a solution that would improve the equestrian trail access from the Equestrian Center to the existing Nellie Gail Road equestrian tunnel to make it a more desirable route. This approach would require some retraining of the equestrian community and would positively resolve expressed traffic control issues of concern at the use of the Equestrian Center Driveway at-grade crossing. Use of the tunnel provides a protected crossing that physically eliminates vehicle/equestrian conflicts. Ms. Shah indicated the City would also cooperate with these efforts and, if needed, seek to add lighting to the tunnel.

Staff also supported the Equestrian Committee's request to install two additional Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) in the median at the Equestrian Center Crossing to enhance the visibility of the existing at-grade crossing.

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Installation of RRFB at other equestrian crossings was not recommended due to the low volume of pedestrian and equestrian crossings at the other locations.

Angela Waian, a resident and professional equestrienne, spoke in favor of additional traffic control at the equestrian center.

Paul Buller, a resident, spoke in favor of installing a speed table.

Allison Smith, a resident, played two videos of her crossing the street with her horse, and spoke in favor of additional traffic control uphill from the equestrian center and a speed table at the equestrian center crossing.

Ryan Smith, a resident, spoke in favor of additional traffic control, and a speed table.

Jennifer Portnoff Tullis, a resident, spoke in favor of additional traffic control and a speed table.

Pamela Fraser, a resident, spoke in favor of a speed table.

THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION RECOMMENDED 1) THE EQUESTRIAN TRAIL CONNECTION FROM THE NELLIE GAIL RANCH OWNERS ASSOCIATION EQUESTRIAN CENTER TO THE NELLIE GAIL ROAD TRAIL TUNNEL SOUTHERLY OF OSO PARKWAY BE IMPROVED TO MAKE IT A MORE DESIRABLE ROUTE; 2) THERE BE AN INSTALLATION OF TWO ADDITIONAL RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACONS IN THE MEDIAN ON NELLIE GAIL ROAD TO ENHANCE THE EXISTING EQUESTRIAN CROSSING VISIBILITY AT THE EQUESTRIAN CENTER; 3) SPEED ENFORCEMENT BE SCHEDULED ALONG NELLIE GAIL ROAD, AS RESOURCES PERMIT; 4) DIRECTED STAFF TO CONTINUE THE RESEARCH, DESIGN AND FEASIBILITY STUDY OF A SPEED TABLE INSTALLATION AT THE EQUESTRIAN CENTER. BY, M/VICE CHAIR BIEBER, S/COMMISSIONER CASKEY.

APPROVED BY A VOTE OF 4-0, COMMISSIONER HERNANDEZ ABSENT.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5.1 SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT VERBAL REPORT

Sergeant Scott Steinle, reported the Sheriff's Department has directed Staff to prioritize traffic enforcement in and around the equestrian center. Sgt. Steinle has a deputy transitioning to a motorcycle position to specifically enforce this area. Sgt.

Steinle indicated 50-100 citations have been issued in the area, and the violators have all been residents of the Nellie Gail community. Sgt. Steinle emphasized the narrative

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of Nellie Gail as a cut through and the speeders not living in the community is not accurate, as the citations have indicated. Sgt. Steinle assured the Commission that the Sheriff's Department takes the safety of the residents, pedestrians and horses very seriously, and they are working diligently to heavily enforce the area.

5.2 RADAR SPEED TRAILER

Staff submitted the schedule for the radar trailer.

**THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION RECEIVED AND FILED THE REPORT.
BY M/COMMISSIONER SHAFF, S/VICE CHAIR BIEBER.
APPROVED BY A VOTE OF 5-0.**

6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

There were no Commissioner Comments.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Traffic Commission at this session, Commissioner Bieber declared the meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Prepared By:

Amber Shah, P.E.
Associate Civil Engineer

Approved By:

Chair Anna Lisa Lukes