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Pittman Center Times

Official Newsletter of the Town of Pittman Center

Dear Subscribers,

Thank you for continuing to read the Pittman Center Times! We believe this is one of the best methods to communicate with the citizens of this community. We look forward to continuing communicating with YOU, the CITIZEN!

If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to call Town Hall at (865) 436-5499 or you can email us at asutton@pittmancentertn.gov.

Your PC Times Staff



MESSAGE FROM MICHAEL

It's hard to believe we are already one month in to the new fiscal year! We hope that everyone had a safe and fun Independence Day. The Town has recently rated the Town's roads and we hope to begin paving sometime in August or early September. The impacts of COVID-19 are still being felt as we saw a 9-14% decrease in our various sources of revenues for the month of June verses last fiscal year. The Town is devoted to being fiscally conservative and managing our existing resources well and have adjusted our expenditures accordingly. We hope that everyone in the community is managing well during these difficult times. Please remember our COVID-19 Citizens Assistance Program is still available. Lastly, we would like to report that TDOT has responded to the citizens questions regarding Grassy Branch Bridge that were submitted last month. Please let us know if you have any questions regarding the project. I will

be more than happy to meet with anyone that has questions regarding this project.

Michael T. Borders
City Administrator

TOWN MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

All Town meetings are open to the public. Members of the community are encouraged to attend! Complete minutes (after they are approved) are available on the Pittman Center website. Below is an unofficial and brief overview of the meetings.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission during the regularly scheduled meeting held on July 13th:

1. Review and Consideration of Building Height Regulations Ordinance and Recommendation to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. This Ordinance was recommended to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for approval.
2. Discussion of Ordinance No. 159. Ordinance No. 159 was recommended by the Planning Commission to be repealed by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.
3. Discussion of Campground Regulations. No action was taken. Staff were instructed to review and compare campground regulations with surrounding municipalities.
4. Discussion of Temporary Signs. No action was taken. Staff were instructed to draft temporary sign regulations.
5. Review and Consideration of an Ordinance Amending Section 11-310 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Pittman Center, Tennessee to Allow Mixed use Developments in the C3- Commercial Crafts District. A clarification that allowed mixed use in the same structure was added. The Ordinance was then recommended to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for approval.
6. Review and Consideration of an Ordinance Amending Section 11-307 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Pittman Center, Tennessee to Allow Single Family Dwellings in the TR – Tourist Residential District. The Commission recommended the Ordinance to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for approval.

Board of Zoning Appeals

The Board of Zoning Appeals during the regularly scheduled meeting held on July 13th:

1. Request for a side yard setback variance for an addition for property located at 538 Hook Road Gatlinburg, TN 37738 (Map: 108 Parcel: 212). The Board approved the side yard setback variance request.
2. Request for a height variance for property located at 3044 Laurel Creek Road Sevierville, TN 37876 (Map: 109 Parcel: 51). The Board approved the height variance request.
3. Request for a front yard and side yard variance for the placement of an accessory structure located at 145 Tunis Road (Map: 109 Parcel: 31). The Board approved the front and side yard variance requests.

Design Review Commission

The Design Review Commission during the regularly scheduled meeting held on July 13th:

1. Review and Consider a Sign for property located at 2717 East Parkway Gatlinburg, TN 37738 (Map: 109 Parcel: 18). The Design Review Commission approved the sign.

Board of Mayor and Aldermen

The regularly scheduled Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting was cancelled for the month of July.

Tree Board Meeting

The Tree Board met on July 29th at the Spring Branch Walking Trail. This was the first meeting of the Pittman Center Tree Board since the new board appointments. The Tree Board:

1. Discussed the Bee City designation with new members and discussed possible pollinator habitat ideas.
2. Discussed riparian restoration along Spring Branch.
3. Identified invasive species and discussed removal strategies.
4. Discussed the completion of the Spring Branch Walking Trail Loop.
5. Discussed inventorying the Trees at the Pittman Center City Hall Park.

Upcoming Meetings

The Board of Mayor and Aldermen will meet on Thursday August 20th at 4:30.

The Planning Commission/Board of Zoning Appeals/Design Review Commission will meet on Monday August 10th at 4:30.

The next Tree Board meeting will be September 30th at 3:30 location TBD.

Please check our website and Facebook for up to date information. If you have any questions regarding agenda items or action please contact the City Administrator at (865) 436-5499.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

COVID – 19 Citizens Assistance Program

We would like to take this opportunity to remind the citizens of the Town that the COVID – 19 Citizens Assistance Program is still available for those that need it! Thus far our partnered organizations (Hills Creek Baptist Church, Burnett Memorial United Methodist Church, and the Church at Pittman Center) have helped two families! If you, your family, or a family you know of needs assistance and meets the criteria for this program please call us at (865) 436-5499.



THIRD PARTY NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The Town has been contacted by several citizens that have not been receiving our newsletter distribution. After working through some scenarios with our IT folks it seems that the Microsoft Exchange server that we use is unable to send our newsletters to so many addresses! We are therefore looking into third party distribution services used by other government entities. If you are uncomfortable with using a third party distributor please contact us at asutton@pittmancentertn.gov and we will remove you from the newsletter list. We apologize for any inconvenience; we just want to make sure everyone is staying informed!

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

The maintenance department has continued working on the Butler Branch Crossing, removed several downed trees from our creeks and rivers, cleaned out ditches, cleaned drainage tiles, installed new signage, and overall have continued to keep the Town looking great! If you have any maintenance requests please contact us, we strive to be responsive and timely!



TDOT PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

The following are TDOT project status updates as of July 22nd:

SEVIER COUNTY SR-73 US-321 Buckhorn Road to SR-416 (Phase2) PIN: 100989.00

- Length – 1.4 miles (widen)
- Engineering is underway.

SEVIER COUNTY SR-73 US-321 from near SR-416 to near Shultz Road (Resurface and safety) PIN: 127100.00

- Length – 2.260 miles
- Contractor: Charles Blalock & Sons, Inc.
- EST. Completion Date: September, 2020

REMINDERS...

Please remember in order to participate in the citizens comment section at the Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting you must fill out a form provided by Town staff and return the form prior to the end of day Tuesday before the Thursday meeting. You can find the form at www.pittmancentertn.gov go to the “government” tab in the ribbon bar then to “printable forms”. You may also contact Town staff and have the form filled out over the phone at (865) 436-5499.

Please utilize animal proof trash receptacles or take your trash to the curb on the morning of trash day. We have recently had an uptick of critters getting in the trash. Please help keep our Town litter free.

DID YOU KNOW...?

The Town of Pittman Center recently updated it’s website address from a “.com” to a “.gov”? Come check out our website at www.pittmancentertn.gov. Our website has our meeting agendas, minutes, updates, all of our previous newsletters, and much more!

GRASSY BRANCH BRIDGE – TDOT QUESTIONS



The Town of Pittman Center complied questions from citizens to ask TDOT regarding the Grassy Branch Bridge Replacement Project. The following is the answers received from Mr. Steve Borden, TDOT Region 1 Director:

Dear Mr. Borders:

Thank you for your e-mail regarding the Grassy Branch Bridge project and for including citizen comments. Our responses to the questions are included in red text below.

1. Can a one lane bridge be built using funds from the State of Tennessee? **Under TDOT traditional funding sources, a one lane bridge cannot be constructed. TDOT has certain design standards that must be followed on all projects. These standards vary depending on road classification, traffic volumes terrain, etc.**
2. Can a one lane bridge be built using federal funds? **Not by TDOT's traditional funding sources. There could be other programs (grants) that may available that include federal funds, but TDOT does not have access to those programs. These programs are highly competitive and very time consuming. It would be the responsibility of the local municipalities to apply, coordinate, and oversee the project throughout the entire development process. In addition, these programs or grants would likely include a 10-20% match from the local municipalities. Under the current project, the cost to the Town of Pittman Center is capped at approximately \$6,000.**
3. What are the reasons the minimum standard bridge is two lanes; wouldn't a one lane be less expensive? **TDOT standards which are based on AASHTO Greenbook guidance which are both approved by FHWA, require a minimum width of bridge to be constructed for new bridge replacements based on traffic volumes and road classification. The additional bridge width will allow for motorists to pass each other on the structure in the event of two vehicles entering upon the structure in opposite directions at the same time. One lane bridge's carry an inherent safety concern for this reason. If opposing vehicles enter upon the existing bridge at the same time one of the vehicles will need to yield to the other to allow safe passage. Potentially a vehicle could be required to exit the bridge in reverse or wait in traffic as the opposing vehicle clears the structure. This poses a major risk to safety for the traveling public.**
4. How will TDOT determine what side of the existing bridge the new bridge will be built on? **TDOT is currently conducting an environmental review for the proposed project. The planning report showed the proposed bridge being constructed to the southside of the existing structure. During the environmental review process, the Department identified a potential environmental sensitive area south of the structure. TDOT is currently conducting a phase II study on the south side of the existing bridge for determination of this option, this study is anticipated to last 6-9 months.**
5. When will TDOT determine what side of the existing bridge the new bridge will be built on? **Once the environmental review process is complete.**
6. What is involved and considered during TDOT's environmental review? **TDOT uses Federal NEPA guidelines even on projects with no Federal funding. Purpose, need, and impacted areas are established for the project and studies ensue. The various study areas include: Air/Noise Pollution, Hazardous Materials, Historical Significance, Economic Justice, Parks and public spaces, Ecology/Endangered Species, Archaeology, Native American Coordination with recognized regional Tribes, Civil Rights, Streams and Wetlands, Emergency Services. These impacts are all studied in order to ensure that TDOT meets public transportation needs while carefully stewarding Tennessee's Cultural, Financial, Social, and Natural resources.**
7. How will TDOT ensure the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, golf carts, visitors, and children with a bridge that is larger than the smaller roads going to and coming from the bridge? **The wider bridge and approaches will better accommodate other modes of transportation. The existing bridge and route is not signed or designated as pedestrian access facilities currently. The department understands that local pedestrians may utilize the**

proposed structure but ultimately cannot officially sign and allow access for pedestrian traffic across the structure. Bike and walking paths can be included in the structure cost if the local government has such existing adjacent/connecting facilities or if a master bicycle/pedestrian plans is in place showing the need for these facilities to be added. Ultimately if additional facilities are added the width of the proposed structure will need to be increases to accommodate those facilities appropriately. The proposed bridge as designed will improve safety for the traveling public by improving vehicular access by allowing opposing traffic to safely navigate across the structure without needing to yield.

8. Is it possible to build one lane (open it to traffic), remove the existing bridge, and then build the remainder of the bridge in the location of the existing bridge? Staged construction is an option that could be considered. However, the proposed bridge width presents some challenges when it comes to stage construction. The proposed bridge width is 24 feet. If stage construction is used, approximately 15 feet of the new bridge will need to be constructed in order to maintain traffic safely.
9. Can we remove the existing bridge and build the new one in its footprint? It is possible to construct the new bridge in the same location; however, the footprint will be larger due to the increase in structure size. It's important to note that is the structure is in the same location, a detour will have to be utilized during construction. All detours on local roads require approval from local municipalities.
10. What will TDOT do with the blue slate walls at each shoulder of the existing bridge? Currently TDOT is not aware of any special requests to save or keep the blue slate walls. Depending on the final design, there could be some options that could meet design standards and fit the character of the community.
11. Can the Tulip Poplar and the Black Walnut at the corner of the existing bridge be saved? Currently, we are not far enough along in the plans development process to know the exact impacts. However, if the trees mentioned fall within the footprint of the anticipated construction limits they will need to be removed.
12. Can federal funds be adjusted to fit the character of the community (build a one lane bridge)? Not by TDOT's traditional funding sources. There could be other programs available that include federal funds, but TDOT does not have access to those programs. Any other federal program would likely include a 10-20% match from local municipalities. Under the current project, the cost to the Town of Pittman Center is capped at approximately \$6,000.
13. We have other one lane bridges in our community will they have to be two lanes in the future if they are replaced using State or Federal funds? Yes, if traditional funding sources are used.
14. Is it possible to use precast pieces to expedite construction? It is possible to use precast beams, but the deck will be poured in place.
15. Will TDOT work with the Town to make the bridge more aesthetically pleasing (such as wooden guard rails, stamped concrete, dye, etc)? Wooden guard rails cannot be used as they do not meet TDOT design standards, but TDOT will work with the Town of Pittman Center on other ways to incorporate the character of the community while meeting design standards. The National Park Service has a different set of standards that allow them to use non-TDOT standard items (such as wooden guardrails) on their facilities. TDOT is held to FHWA design standards while the National Park Service is not.
16. What is the estimated construction time of the bridge? Construction time frames are established after the plans development process is complete and just prior to letting. Based on similar projects TDOT would anticipate construction time frame for this project to take approximately 18-24 months.
17. If the Town terminated the agreement with TDOT would the Town have to pay back any funds? If so, how is that amount determined? Yes, approximately \$60,000.

18. Why did TDOT do a site plan and environmental study on the North side of the bridge? Was the Town involved? **The original planning document showed the proposed bridge being shifted to the south. As part of the required NEPA process, TDOT's Environmental Division must perform environmental studies for the proposed project. Typically, TDOT staff will look at a wider footprint than what is needed to construct the proposed project. During the initial studies, the department specifically requested our archaeological offices to investigate both sides of the bridge to evaluate multiple alternatives since a potential environmental sensitive area was identified on the south. This evaluation is part of the required NEPA process and was not at the request of the Town of Pittman Center.**
19. Will TDOT be doing the construction or will it be contracted out? **It will be contracted.**
20. Will the bridge be striped? **Yes**
21. Can I receive a copy of the environmental study results and what was found? **To date the environmental study has not been completed. Once the environmental document is completed a copy of the document can be provided if requested.**
22. Will TDOT hold a meeting once the environmental study and design is completed for citizens to ask questions regarding the design? **TDOT does not typically hold a public meeting for a bridge replacement project but will be happy to participate in a townhall style meeting if the Town of Pittman Center would host such a meeting.**
23. Will the new bridge help alleviate flooding? If yes, how so? **TDOT performs a hydraulic analysis for all bridge replacement projects during the project development process to ensure that the proposed project does not cause more flooding issues. TDOT is not a flood control agency. There are times that flooding can be alleviated easily, however there are also times that it is not cost effective.**

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Steve



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