

# Dixie High School Community Council

## Minutes

January 8, 2013

### Members Present:

Shauna Challis, Kathryn Anderson, Kevin Simmons, Kay Berry, Toni Schroath, Janece Gardner, Kevin Robinson, Gerald Thomas, Sheryl Snow, Jim Bown, Craig Hammer, Larry Bergeson.

### Items Discussed:

Craig Hammer, Executive Director of Secondary Ed for the Washington County School District, attended the meeting to provide background regarding the options available to increase safety for students crossing 700 South from the ROTC building to the main campus of Dixie High. He had spoken to Gary Esplin, St. George City Manager, who reported that a light to stop traffic at that crosswalk is not feasible without fencing the entire length of the school campus along 700 South. Also, Mr. Esplin explained that they have located flashing speed warning lights at some locations throughout the city, but have found that they have no lasting impact in slowing drivers. The City will not install school crossing signs that flash, such as the one near Dixie Middle School, because they are no longer required by code.

Kathryn Anderson suggested that it might be beneficial if no on-street parking was allowed along 700 South. Currently, signs prevent parking there during school hours, but many of the hazardous situations for pedestrians occur after school during extracurricular events when the danger is heightened because of darkness. Craig Hammer volunteered to contact Monty Thurber, St. George City traffic engineer, to explore this possibility.

Mr. Hammer also spoke to Phil Solomon, city power engineer, about the possibility of moving the street light on that intersection to the east so it would stand at the north end of the crosswalk. However, the existing pole there is a power line, which prevents any change. However, Mr. Hammer suggested that the school might install a decorative light pole at the crosswalk to increase pedestrian visibility after dark. Council members discussed attaching a bucket of reflective orange warning flags to the pole that pedestrians could carry as they cross the street, and this seemed a good option.

Other options were mentioned, such as using the marquee to warn drivers and assigning the school resource officer to monitor the crossing more regularly. It was noted that a St. George police officer is frequently stopping cars near the Middle School before school each morning. Mr. Bergeson stated that his observation of unsafe driving often occurs at the end of the school day. It was suggested that police monitoring at this time of day, even for a short period of time, might increase driver awareness and slow drivers down.

The final concern regarding this issue relates to ROTC students who act as crossing guards, walking into the crosswalk, holding up their hands, and stopping oncoming cars. Sgt. Thomas reported that these students are given this assignment when posting and retiring the flag so the procession can walk unimpeded from the ROTC building to the flag pole. It was questioned whether this was an acceptable practice, given the concerns of liability and risk of injury to those students. Council members also indicated that they had seen ROTC students resort to this same procedure when crossing the street during class breaks. Sgt. Thomas was not aware they were performing this task at other times of day, so it appears the students have done it on their own initiative. Mr. Bergeson will seek the advice of risk management and determine whether this will be allowed to continue.

Mr. Bergeson also summarized the results of the UHSAA reclassification decisions that were made this year. Dixie High and all other schools in Washington County will compete in Class 3A for all sports except football. The state will be divided into six classifications for football only, with Dixie competing in 3AA. Schools in our region will include all existing schools along with Payson High, with the exception of Canyon View which will move down one classification. Reclassification will now occur every two years in Utah rather than four. Mr. Bergeson explained that these efforts are made to ensure that no one is required to compete in a classification with schools that have enrollments of more than twice their size.

The next meeting of the Community Council is scheduled for February 12, 2013.