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Commission approves traffic study of Bynum-Leatherwood Road



Photo by Stephen Gross/The Anniston Star

In this 2014 file photo, traffic fills Bynum-Leatherwood Road after the Anniston Army Depot's main shift ended.

By Eddie Burkhalter, Star Staff Writer, eburkhalter@annistonstar.com 17 hrs ago

Workers at the Anniston Army Depot who drive along Bynum Leatherwood Road might be pleased to hear of an upcoming study of the traffic signal timing along the roadway.

Calhoun County Commissioners at a meeting Thursday approved the \$8,900 study, to be done by Birmingham-based Sain Associates, which commissioners hope will help ease traffic along the busy roadway.

About 12,000 vehicles each day drive along a portion of Bynum Leatherwood, according to the

Metropolitan Planning Organization. Drivers to and from Calhoun County's largest employer, the depot, use that road, which connects U.S. 431 North with Alabama 202.

"We're going to see if we can get the traffic flowing a little better," said county engineer Brian Rosenbalm, speaking to commissioners before Thursday's meeting. "It's not been reviewed in 15 years."

The study will look at the timing of traffic signals where Bynum Leatherwood intersects with Eulaton Gate Road, Eulaton Road and Willingham Bridge Road, Morrisville Road and Old Gadsden Highway

According to information provided to The Star by the commission on Thursday the study will take place weekdays during the peak traffic hours of between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. and between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

After the vote to approve the traffic study, commissioners heard from visiting officials from several Calhoun County fire departments concerned that the fire service has no representation on the Calhoun County 911 board. On March 1 a vacancy will open on the board.

"This has been a problem for a while," said Oxford fire Chief Gary Sparks, speaking to commissioner "There's good people on the 911 board ... but they don't understand our problems at times."

Calhoun County 911 serves 15 Calhoun County fire departments, Sparks said, 10 of which are volunteer departments.

The 911 agency provides emergency dispatch services for all 10 of the volunteer fire departments and departments in Anniston and Jacksonville, Sparks said. The board handles calls for Oxford, Piedmont and Weaver departments and transfers those calls to those individual department dispatchers.

"So we're all affected by it," Sparks said.

Commission chairman Tim Hodges said the lack of fire service representation on the board has been discussed among commissioners, and asked that Sparks and the other fire officials submit a board nominee.

The board appointment could come up at the next commission meeting on Feb. 23, Hodges said.

In other business the commission:



- Made two proclamations honoring retired educators Sandra Sudduth and Willie Yarbrough in commemoration of Black History Month.
- Agreed to sign support of the Association of County Commissions of Alabama's proposed legislation to approve a \$1.2 billion bond issuance for road construction projects.
- Reappointed Echols Bryant to the Calhoun County Water and Fire Protection Authority Board.
- Appointed Pam Fite to the Longleaf Botanical Gardens Board.
- Declared nuisance abatements for Anniston properties at 4917 Saks Road and 3620 Haygood St.
- Declared as nuisances properties at 1710 Dewey St. in Oxford, 3333 W. 14th St. in Anniston, 2310 Adams St. in Anniston, 20 W. 43rd St. in Anniston and 410 Williamson Ave. in Anniston.

- Approved bids to demolish and remove items from 12 county properties deemed nuisances at a cost of \$9,200.

- Approved purchase of a 2016 Chevrolet passenger van from Cooper Chevrolet in the amount of \$25,998 to be used by the county's Environmental and Enforcement Office.



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