

MINUTES
WASHINGTON COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

PRESENT: Jack Peters, Coordinator; Chief Dean Schmidt, Slinger Police Department; Trooper Kris Perales, WI State Patrol; Sergeant Tim Huibregtse, WI State Patrol; Captain Steve Gonwa, Washington County Sheriff's Department; Mike Panosh, D.O.T.-W.S.P.-BOTS; Ken Pesch, Washington County Highway Commissioner; Tom Heydel, WI D.O.T.; Norbert Neuser, Chairman

EXCUSED: Sheriff Dale Schmidt, Washington County Sheriff's Department and Pam Monroe, R.N.

CALL TO ORDER

The Washington County Traffic Safety Commission meeting of **March 5, 2008** was held at the Washington County Sheriff's Department, and was called to order by Chairman Norbert Neuser at 9:03 a.m.

There were two corrections to the December 5, 2007 meeting minutes made by Ken Pesch. On page 1, the second last sentence, the word "*uniformed*" should be changed to "*uniform.*" On page 2, the third paragraph, line four, the sentence "*With the lowering of the accident rate,*" should be changed to "*With the low accident rate, good compliance*" etc.

The Traffic Safety Commission Meeting Minutes of **December 5, 2007** were approved as presented on the motion of Ken Pesch, and seconded by Norbert Neuser. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

At our December 5 meeting we were advised that the speed limit lowering on STH 164 would take place on 02/01/08. This has not occurred as of today's date, and Captain Gonwa stated the Sheriff has not received any new information about when this change is going to take place. Tom Heydel stated upper management of D.O.T. should make a decision shortly on when and if this lower speed limit is going to take place.

NEW BUSINESS

There has been citizen and Sheriff's Department concerns about the markings of the center island on STH 33 near Oak Road where West Bend Lakes Golf Course and several taverns are located. Tom Heydel presented several diagrams, one showing the existing signage, which will stay as is and is proper and has adequate signage for the area. He also stated when the weather permits in

spring some repainting of left turn arrows and some additional chevron type markings on the roadway before the islands will be painted. He also stated D.O.T. does not light non-signal light intersections.

A discuss of any changes that could be done to the intersection of CTH NN with its intersection with CTH G at Jackson Drive took place. It was discovered that the computer printout for our consideration was rather confusing and did not properly address the issues we were looking for. This item will be tabled until the June meeting, at which time a different computer printout, along with a diagram showing turning movements and accidents per million vehicles entering this intersection are available.

Ken Pesch asked Tom Heydel to present a status of proposed changes of the intersection of STH 60 at CTH G and a possible proposed round-about which was scheduled for 2011 rebuild. Ken asked that this status be presented at our June meeting.

Ken Pesch and Tom Heydel both advised us that STH 28 from Kewaskum east to STH 144 is scheduled for a complete rebuild, which will include six foot wide shoulders. This will be a future construction.

Ken Pesch also talked about the severe winter and its effect on county roads. One of the roads we talked about was CTH H from STH 144 to Fillmore, which is very rough. Ken Pesch stated that a rebuilding is in the design stage only at this time and that one of the problems is a conflict between the Department of Natural Resources, the Parks Department, and Highway Department about raising road beds above flood plains. At the present time the budget calls for patching in the spring only to correct problems on CTH H.

REVIEW OF FATAL ACCIDENTS

As of today's date there were 13 fatal accidents in Washington County for the year.

Washington County Sheriff's Department:

On 01/09/08 Jesse R. Gamache, age 19, died as a result of a one car accident on STH 164 1/4 mile north of STH 167 in the Town of Richfield. Vehicle was southbound on STH 1654 when it struck a deer in the roadway. After hitting the deer, he lost control of the vehicle, leaving the roadway into the west ditch line. Vehicle then rolled down the embankment, making contact with a tree, then coming to rest. Subject was ejected from the vehicle, prior to making contact with the tree, and was located face down in a water filled ditch line. Subject was pronounced dead at the scene. Alcohol does not appear to be a factor.

On 01/20/08 Anthony J. Raess, age 18, died as a result of a single vehicle accident that occurred at the intersection of Ridge Road and Prospect Drive in the Town of Kewaskum. The single vehicle was traveling eastbound on Ridge Road at a high rate of speed and lost control when negotiating a 90 degree turn onto Prospect Drive. The vehicle began to roll while it was spinning; it then hit a tree, and came to rest on its roof. Anthony was the driver and was partially

pinned under the vehicle. Once extricated from the vehicle, it was learned he was fatally injured. He was not wearing a seatbelt at the time of the accident. He was pronounced dead at approximately 0123 hours on 01/21/08.

Germantown Police Department:

On 02/04/08 Everett J. Parker, age 82, died as a result of a one vehicle rollover accident in the Village of Germantown. He was the passenger in a vehicle traveling southbound on Appleton Avenue (STH 175). They were just south of Meeker Hill when the vehicle left the roadway and rolled over coming to rest on the west side of the road. No medical transport per the report; he was pronounced dead at approximately 5:00 p.m.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS PERTINENT TO THE COMMISSION

Mike Panosh reported to the Commission there were 84 fatal accidents to date in Wisconsin vs. 107 in 2007. He then presented a handout entitled 'Improving Traffic Safety Culture in the United States,' which is 11 pages long. It is recommended that all Traffic Safety Commission members seriously study this handout and discuss any possible solutions to the serious traffic problems in the United States.

We had a long discussion on the poor public attitude towards traffic laws, and the poor response to traffic violations by Judges and District Attorney Offices'. It was felt by his panel that most people do not take traffic violations very seriously at all anymore as evident in the State's refusal to make laws enacting mandatory seatbelt usage, the poor record of putting repeat drunk drivers in prison, and the softening of the operating after revocation and operating after suspension laws that call for fines only, which are repeatedly not paid, and people just keep on driving because there is no threat of incarceration as there was in the past.

It is hoped that Commission members will have suggestions and that we take a proactive stance about this Traffic Safety Culture and present it at the next meeting.

ADJOURN

The Commission Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m. upon motion by Norbert Neuser, and seconded by Ken Pesch. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be held on **June 4, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.** in a meeting room at the Washington County Sheriff's Department.

Respectfully submitted,
Lt. John C. Peters, Coordinator