

**MINUTES**  
**WASHINGTON COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION**

**PRESENT:** Jack Peters, Coordinator; Trooper Glen Jones, WI State Patrol; Sergeant Tim Huibregtse, WI State Patrol; Chief Dean Schmidt, Slinger Police 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; Captain Steve Gonwa, Washington County Sheriff's Department; and Sheriff Dale Schmidt, Washington County Sheriff's Department.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Washington County Traffic Safety Commission meeting of **June 6, 2007** was held at the Washington County Sheriff's Department, and was called to order by Chairman Norbert Neuser at 9:04 a.m.

The Traffic Safety Commission Meeting Minutes of **March 7, 2007** were approved as presented on the motion of Jack Peters, and seconded by Norbert Neuser. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

A citizen request for a stop sign for traffic from Pioneer Plaza onto Pioneer Road.

Jack Peters reported the owner does not want the stop signs at this time. Ken Pesch reported the owner is afraid of the liability. This issue has been closed by the Commission with no further action.

Update on intersection changes on STH 60 at CTH C (Hillside Road).

Tom Heydel reported this is under construction at this time. For the interim, traffic signals will be installed this summer. Ultimately a roundabout will be installed in 2011.

Update to D.O.T. improvements at the intersection of STH 175 and Hubertus Road, 2004.

Tom Heydel reported in 2004 an overhead stop sign was installed. Tom reported on the crash data from 2001 until 2003. The rate was 2.3 crashes. The analysis from 2003 until 2006, after the improvements, and the rate went down to a .47 crash rate. There is a project planned in 2011 in this area. More improvements including possible turn lanes are planned. STH 175 will be resurfaced through Hubertus Road at that time. D.O.T. will continue to monitor the area.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Election of Officers.

Nominations were taken for the position of Chairman for the Commission. Norbert Neuser was nominated. A motion was made to keep Norbert Neuser as the Chairman by Chief Dean Schmidt and seconded by Jack Peters. Motion carried.

Nominations were taken for the position of Secretary for the Commission. Jack Peters was nominated. A motion was made to keep Jack Peters as the Secretary by Sergeant Tim Huibregtse and seconded by Ken Pesch.

Congratulations to Norbert Neuser and Jack Peters.

Update membership list.

There was a discussion on the medical personnel attendance. The Commission currently does not have a representative from the medical field as a member of the Commission. Sheriff Dale Schmidt will talk to the former Medical Examiner and/or the Chief of a Fire Department for an E.M.T. to become a member. This issue has been tabled.

There was a discussion on sending a letter to the committee members who have not attended to remind them they and/or a representative have not attended the meetings.

By State Statute, the County must have a County Traffic Safety Commission. The Commission must exist of the County Highway Commissioner, Sheriff or designee, County Highway Safety Coordinator, a representative designated by County Board Chairperson from each discipline: Education, Medicine, Law, three representatives involved in Law Enforcement, Highway, or Highway Safety by the Secretary of Transportation. The Chairperson of the County Board may appoint additional persons.

Request for lower speed limit on CTH H west of Kewaskum.

Ken Pesch reported in March 2006 the Highway Committee recommended the County Board lower the speed limit in this area from 55 to 45. After a speed study there were 85 percentile speeds. In one location it was 46 miles per hour, and another location it was at 50 miles per hour. The Highway Committee did not take any action. Their recommendation was to leave it as is. Ken Pesch advised he did notify the citizen of the request.

Sergeant Tim Huibregtse reported Troopers have discussed the traffic lights on STH 60 and STH 164. There has been an excessive backup of traffic in this area during rush hour times. Sergeant Huibregtse asked if the lights could be timed differently. Tom Heydel advised he will check with his Supervisor on this issue. The lights currently installed are permanent signals.

Trooper Glen Jones asked when STH 60 between USH 41 and USH 45 will become four lanes. Tom Heydel reported about the year 2011. Ken Pesch advised the interchange of USH 41 and STH 60 is a complete reconstruction, bridge widening, ramp modifications, etc. Ken Pesch reported this is the same project with two separate project numbers. Ken Pesch also reported as part of this project there will be roundabouts at the interchange of USH 45 and STH 60. Three roundabouts will be constructed here, one at Tilly Lake Road, and the other two at the ramp terminals. Ken Pesch advised this will be a major project as the bridges over USH 41 at STH 60 need to be reconstructed. This will not be a one year project.

Sheriff Dale Schmidt asked about the traffic at USH 41 at STH 167/Holy Hill Road being backed up on the ramps. Sheriff Schmidt advised he received an e-mail from a citizen who travels the route every day. The concern is because of the traffic on STH 167/Holy Hill Road in late afternoons being so heavy the cars cannot get off the ramp. Some people are passing the line of cars on the right onto STH 167/Holy Hill Road, making a U-turn, and coming back on STH 167/Holy Hill Road. Sheriff Schmidt reported he did refer this to the Germantown Police Department for enforcement.

There was a discussion regarding a right turn lane and passing on the right (gravel shoulder). Trooper Jones advised it is legal to pass on the gravel on the right at walking pace. Captain Gonwa recommended enforcement by the Germantown Police Department for vehicles passing on the right up the ramp. Tom Heydel advised to forward the e-mail so they can check into this issue further. Pavement markers will be installed to improve lane assignments.

There was a discussion on the deer carcasses. The contractor collecting them did not renew the contract with the DNR. The DNR currently does not have a contractor to pick them up. Ken Pesch advised the possibility of the County Highway Department picking them up and disposing them, however does not know what landfill(s) to take them to.

### **REVIEW OF FATAL ACCIDENTS**

Sheriff Schmidt reported as of today's date there were four fatal accidents in Washington County for the year.

On April 29, 2007 at approximately 3:09 a.m. Joseph A. Safranski, 18, died as a result of a one vehicle accident that occurred on Kettle Moraine Road just north of STH 60 in the Town of Hartford. The vehicle was traveling southbound on Kettle Moraine Road when for some unknown reason went into a skid, traveled off road to the left, and struck a tree. Joseph was the driver of the vehicle. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

The passenger in the vehicle, Austin J. Kowalski, age 17, died as a result of the accident. He was flown via Flight for Life to Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee where he was pronounced dead at approximately 11:30 a.m.

Both parties in the vehicle were ejected; seatbelts were believed not to be worn. According to Sheriff Schmidt, the investigation revealed the speed at about 55 to 60 miles per hour. There are railroad tracks in this area, and the driver started to lose control prior to the railroad tracks. It appears this crash was a driver error issue. Excessive speed and alcohol are being investigated as possible contributing factors.

On May 28, 2007 Alan D. Schowalter, age 25, died as a result of a single vehicle accident that occurred on High Road at Pike Lake Road in the Town of Hartford. He was operating a motorcycle northbound on High Road at an excessive rate of speed when he lost control of the motorcycle and was ejected. It appears that alcohol was a contributing factor in the accident. He was not wearing a helmet. He was pronounced dead at Aurora Medical Center in Hartford at 8:50 p.m.

### **REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS PERTINENT TO THE COMMISSION**

Mike Panosh, WSP-BOTS, reported "Click It or Ticket" was May 22-June 3. This was the largest coordinated law enforcement ever here in Wisconsin. The seatbelt percentage use in 2006 was 75.4 percent; a new record for the state. The national average was 82 percent.

Mike Panosh advised of a television interview regarding deer hits. Although traditionally October and November are the highest months for injuries received in vehicle vs. deer crashes, in the last five years or so June has actually been the worst or second worst month. They are informing motorists to be on the look-out for deer and not to swerve.

In 2005 there were 12 fatalities resulting from motor vehicle/deer crashes, and all 12 were motorcyclists. In 2006 there were 7 fatalities. There were 17,500 reported deer crashes and 41,000 deer carcasses reported.

The Governor's Conference on Highway Safety will be August 22-23 in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. If interested in attending, contact Mike Panosh. He will supply you with the information.

Mike Panosh, WSP-BOTS, submitted a copy of the weekly fatality report. In 2006 the total fatalities at this time were 271. In 2005 the report was 290 fatalities. So far in 2007 there were 287 fatalities. 2006 was the safest year since 1998.

The biggest increase was pedestrians. In 2006 there were 15 and in 2007 there are 22.

There were 4 fatalities in Washington County this year. In 2006 there were 9 fatalities. In 2005 there were 17 fatalities. The five year average for Washington County is 13 fatalities.

Washington County Traffic Safety Commission Minutes

June 6, 2007

Page 5

Fatalities by role year to date:	2007	2006
Bicyclists	1	2
Drivers	168	168
Motorcycle-drivers	23	22
Motorcycle-passengers	0	3
Passengers	64	61
Pedestrians	22	15
Unknown	9	0
Total	287	271

\*2006 and 2007 data is preliminary

Mike Panosh advised the MV4000 (State crash report) will be revised due to the third digit in the year doesn't have a number one, right now it only goes to the year 2009.

Legislation:

This is the budget year and it dominates proceedings. If you would like more information on an issue you haven't heard anything about, contact Mike Panosh.

Bills awaiting Committee action:

AB-2: Leave the 8-year driver license renewal cycle impact, but shortens the re-test cycle for older drivers (i.e. requires a vision test every 3 years beginning at age 75, and a vision plus knowledge test every 2 years beginning at age 85) and making an appropriation. \*similar to AB-43 from 2005-2006 session

AB-113: Authorizes a law enforcement officer to stop or inspect a vehicle solely to determine compliance with safety belt use requirements, if the officer has probable cause to believe that a violation has occurred. Also increases the penalty for a safety belt violation from \$10 to \$25 for a first offense and \$50 to \$75 for a second and subsequent offense committed within three years. Companion bill to SB-120. \*similar to AB-215 from 2005-2006 session

AB-226: Vehicle registration plates for certain sex offenders and providing penalties.

AB-356: Requires D.O.T. to establish rules allowing living will and health care power of attorney information to be included on driver's licenses.

SB-27: Requires law enforcement agencies to: (1) obtain a signed release if/when releasing a person arrested for OWI to a responsible adult within 12 hours of the arrest and (2) seize or immobilize the arrested person's vehicle for 12 hours unless the vehicle is the only vehicle available to the household.

**SB-40: The Governor's Budget Bill**

SB-141: a single registration plate for motor vehicles registered with the Department of Transportation and transfers from the transportation fund to the general fund. This is part of the SB-40: The Governor's Budget Bill. The front license plate was passed by the Joint Finance Committee on May 17 to remove the requirement.

\*similar to SB0455 from 2005-2006 session

Ken Pesch asked for an update on an accident mapping system by D.O.T. and the progress. The Sheriff and Highway Department's have been working diligently to get their accident system tied into the GIS system to produce a map that will digitally display where all the accidents have occurred. Ken Pesch was advised TOPS would have the computer system up and running so the maps could be accessed by July 1.

**ADJOURN**

The Commission Meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m. upon motion by Captain Steve Gonwa, and seconded by Norbert Neuser. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be held on **September 5, 2007 at 9:00 a.m.** in a meeting room at the Washington County Sheriff's Department.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lt. John C. Peters, Coordinator