

MINUTES
WASHINGTON COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

PRESENT: Jack Peters, Coordinator; Norbert Neuser, Chairman; Sheriff Dale Schmidt, Washington County Sheriff's Department; Captain Steve Gonwa, Washington County Sheriff's Department; Chief Dean Schmidt, Slinger Police Department; Sgt. Tim Huibregtse, WI State Patrol-District 2; Mike Panosh, D.O.T.-W.S.P.-BOTS; Ken Pesch, Washington County Highway Commissioner; Tom Heydel, WI D.O.T.

GUEST: Chief Peter Hoell, Germantown Police Department; Lt. Todd Grenier, Germantown Police Department; Captain Toby Netko, West Bend Police Department

EXCUSED: Pam Monroe, R.N.; Todd Martens, District Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

The Washington County Traffic Safety Commission meeting of **December 3, 2008** was held at the Washington County Sheriff's Department, and was called to order by Chairman Norbert Neuser at 9:02 a.m.

The Traffic Safety Commission Meeting Minutes of **September 3, 2008** were approved as presented on the motion of Ken Pesch, and seconded by Dean Schmidt. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Possible changes to intersection of CTH G with CTH NN at Jackson Drive.

Jack Peters submitted to the Commission a memo of the crashes from 2003 through 2007. There were no fatalities.

In 2003 there were six crashes, all with significant driver's errors. Three of the accidents could have possibly been lessened or eliminated by a four-way stop sign.

In 2004 there were three crashes, all with significant driver's errors. One crash could possibly have been eliminated or lessened by a four-way stop sign

In 2005 there were four crashes, all with significant driver's errors. None of the crashes had other vehicles blocking visions. Two of the crashes could possibly have been lessened or eliminated by a four-way stop sign.

In 2006 there were four crashes, all with significant driver's errors. There was no vision blockage. A four-way stop sign could possibly have lessened or eliminated three of the crashes.

In 2007 there were three crashes. One crash could possibly have been lessened or eliminated by a four-way stop sign. No vehicles were blocking vision in any of the crashes.

A synopsis of the five years of accident reports shows that there is a slight possibility that a four-way stop sign would either eliminate or rate some of the accidents less severe. However, in several of the cases drivers were purposely going through stop signs, and a four-way stop sign would certainly make more drivers do these very reckless type actions and possibly make accidents more severe. Also in several of the accidents both vehicles failed to yield.

There are no sight distance problems of any kind at this intersection with the exception of possible vehicle(s) in the right turn lanes blocking visions of other vehicles on CTH NN. Only one crash in the past five years had this type of a vision blocking occur.

There are no plans by the Highway Shop for any improvements. The southbound lane still has rumble strips. There will be no action by the Commission.

All Traffic Safety Commission members please read and prepare to comment on the March 2008 meeting handout entitled "Improved Traffic Safety Culture in the United States."

There was a discussion on how to instill the same safety culture for highway systems as we do for commercial air systems. Ken Pesch asked if the committee would be interested in taking a more proactive stance, and if so, how do we do it. Ken Pesch indicated the need for law enforcement. Enforcement and engineering cannot do it without the education. Law enforcement needs the court system to be more aggressive with the laws in making this a success.

There was a request to have legal counsel from an insurance company attend the next meeting. Sheriff Schmidt will contact an insurance company to see if the legal counsel could attend the next meeting. There was also a request to have Judges and the District Attorney attend the next meeting. Ken Pesch will write another letter with more specifics on what the Commission wants of them. The item has been tabled.

REVIEW OF FATAL ACCIDENTS

Sheriff Dale Schmidt reported as of today's date there were seven fatal accidents in Washington County for the year; two since the last meeting. In 2008 there were no alcohol related crashes. There were only three with seatbelt use, four without seatbelt use.

Jeffrey Kubeck, age 44, died as a result of a head-on collision that occurred on STH 164 .2 miles south of CTH E in the Town of Polk. The accident occurred on 09/05/08, and he was transported to Froedtert Hospital via Flight for Life. He was succumbed by his injuries on 09/25/08. Jeffrey was not wearing his seatbelt.

On 11/14/08 Timothy Mckee, age 25, died at the scene as a result of a two car accident in the Town of Farmington. A vehicle was traveling southbound on Orchard Valley Road and failed to stop for a stop sign located on Orchard Valley and CTH H. This vehicle entered the intersection striking Tim's car. Tim was traveling eastbound on CTH H. The impact forced both cars south of the intersection with Tim's vehicle coming to rest in a field just southeast of the intersection. Tim was not wearing his seatbelt. There was no alcohol detected. Drug test is pending.

REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS PERTINENT TO THE COMMISSION

Tom Heydel reported blinker LED lights will be installed at STH 60 and CTH G on the two-way stop signs. The purchase order has been ordered. No installation date has been set.

Mike Panosh reported as of December 1, 2008 there were 541 fatalities in 2008. There were 695 in 2007. This year is the safest so far since 1943 (417) and 1992 (645).

On January 5, 2009 there will be a kick-off of another new program. Watch for it.

Wisconsin will not lose \$17.3 million dollars; Wisconsin has the opportunity to gain \$17.3 million dollars from the Federal government if the Primary Seatbelt Law is passed by July 1, 2009. This money has been available for some time. It can be used for any Federal aid eligible project, which includes highway construction. One million needs to be earmarked for Public Information and Education. This is NITSA estimates. NITSA estimates that if Wisconsin enacted Primary Seatbelt before now, for the calendar year 2007 the belt use would have been 85 percent, 44 fewer fatalities, 650 fewer serious injuries, and the State would have avoided \$147 million in losses.

Twenty-six states have Primary Seatbelt law enforcement, 23 states have secondary, and one has none (New Hampshire). Wisconsin ranks the bottom 10 for seatbelt use. In 2007 it was 74.2 percent. The national average is 82 percent. All the other Great Lakes States (Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan) all have significantly higher seatbelt use rates that range anywhere from 82 to 92. Why is Wisconsin so low? Wisconsin is largely two things, a rural state and also an agricultural state. Seatbelt use rates are always lowest in rural states, based on observation studies, and pickup trucks are always the lowest use rates of any type of motor vehicle. Urban areas have the highest seatbelt use rate.

Sheriff Schmidt advised the Commission Pam Monroe, R.N., has moved to South Dakota. The Commission needs a replacement in the Medical field as a member. Sheriff Schmidt reported he would speak with the Medical Examiner to see if someone could attend meetings as a member.

Ken Pesch advised of his retirement on January 5, 2009. The Commission wants Ken to stay on as a member. Ken has expressed his interest of staying on as a member, not just a citizen. The County Board Chair would have to re-appoint Ken as a member.

COMMENDATIONS

The Washington County Traffic Safety Commission would like to commend Pam Monroe for her years of service with the Commission. The Commission thanks you, Pam, for all your knowledge and the contributions you have given. You will be deeply missed. Best of luck in the future.

The Washington County Traffic Safety Commission would like to commend Ken Pesch for his many years of service with the Commission. Ken leaves in January. The Commission thanks you, Ken, for all your knowledge and the contributions you have given. You will be deeply missed. Best of luck on your retirement.

ADJOURN

The Commission Meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m. upon motion by Ken Pesch, and seconded by Norbert Neuser. Motion carried.

The 2009 schedule for the Traffic Safety Commission meetings is as follows:

March 4, 2009

June 3, 2009

September 2, 2009

December 2, 2009

The next meeting will be held on **March 4, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.** in a meeting room at the Washington County Sheriff's Department.

Respectfully submitted,
Lt. John C. Peters, Coordinator