

RACINE COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION
February 9, 2017 - Summary Minutes

Public Works & Development Services Conference Room
 Ives Grove Office Complex
 14200 Washington Avenue,
 Sturtevant, WI 53177

Members Present:

Julie Anderson - Racine County Public Works & Development Services Director
 Capt. Thomas Lamke - Racine County Highway Safety Coordinator
 David Maack - Racine County Emergency Management (*arrived at 2:11*)
 Tom Knitter – TRIAD
 Michael Payne - Racine County Medical Examiner
 State Trooper Matt Barlar - Wisconsin State Patrol
 Sgt. Wendy Younglove - Wisconsin State Patrol
 Sgt. Tim Koetter - Racine Police Department
 Lt. Gary Larsen - Caledonia Police Department
 Sgt. David Stroupe – Mount Pleasant Police Department
 Joe Davis, Sr., Bureau of Transportation Safety Regional Program Manager
 Allison Blackwood – WisDOT, DTSD

Members Excused:

Pat Starcken - Racine Unified School District Transportation
 Chief Sean Marschke - Sturtevant Police Department

Members Not Present:

Erin Donaldson - Safe Kids Coordinator
 Michael White - District Attorney's Office
 John Barnes - Retired Caledonia Police Department

Others Present:

Jacqueline Bratz – Racine County Communications Director
 State Trooper Daniel Mittelstadt – Wisconsin State Patrol
 Rick Olig – WisDOT, BOTS/LEL

1. Call to Order

02:01

Vice-Chairman Michael Payne called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. Commission members introduced themselves and the meeting began.

2. Minutes of the November 10, 2016, meeting

02:02

KNITTER MOVED, seconded by Capt. Lamke, to approve the November 10, 2016, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Fatalities since the last meeting

2:02

Medical Examiner Payne provided an update concerning the November 1, 2016, motorcyclist fatality in the Town of Raymond (108th Street/ CTH "K") and reported that the cause of death was blood force trauma to the body. He also noted a fatality on STH 32, north of KR that may be discussed at the next meeting.

Capt. Lamke, Racine County Sheriff's Office, reported two fatalities.

- (1) 12/5/2016, STH 20/53rd Dr./Town of Yorkville
 - Pedestrian/vehicle accident – pedestrian fatality
 - Pedestrian walked away from a group home and darted into the path of oncoming vehicle traveling westbound on STH 20
 - No road factors; no speed factors; no weather factors; no driver OWI factors (still waiting for toxicology report on pedestrian)
- (2) 1/13/2017 CTH "G"/ 43rd intersection, Town of Raymond
 - One-unit accident
 - While traveling westbound on CTH "G", operator of pick-up truck lost control and failed to negotiate a curve and then struck a utility pole. Driver was ejected from vehicle and pronounced dead at the scene
 - Speed was a factor - driving at 90 mph
 - Not wearing a seatbelt
 - Toxicology report is pending

Lt. Larson, Village of Caledonia P.D., reported one fatality.

11/25/2016, Four Mile Rd./Old Farm Road

- Two-unit accident
- Vehicle rear-ended by truck; driver and one of passengers in the back seat of the struck vehicle suffered fatal injuries.
- BAC of operator of truck was 0.26 or 0.27 when tested hours after the accident; awaiting trial
- Road conditions not a factor

Sgt. Koetting, City of Racine P.D., reported two fatalities.

- (1) 12/14/2016, 9:45 a.m., STH 20/Oregon St.
 - High-speed vehicle rear-ended a garbage truck, killing the DPW truck driver
 - Cause of death: multiple blunt-force injuries to head and body
 - No road factors. Visibility not a factor-truck equipped with amber lighting
 - Speed was a factor; driver was going app. 60 mph in a 30-mph speed zone
 - Doesn't appear that alcohol was a factor
- (2) 01/30/2017, 16th St./Taylor Ave
 - Pedestrian/vehicle accident – 87-year old pedestrian will be taken off life support today
 - Pedestrian factor-individual was dressed in black; in middle of night, entered the roadway
 - Investigation still ongoing

NOTE: Chairman David Maack arrived at 2:11. By mutual agreement, Vice-Chairman Payne continued to chair the meeting.

4. Upcoming construction projects

2:13

Allison Blackwood noted the following State projects.

- USH 45/Colony Ave., 7th Avenue to STH 20 (recondition)

RACINE COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

February 9, 2017 – Summary Minutes

Page 3 of 5

- STH 31/Green Bay Rd., STH 20 to CTH "MM" (resurface)
- N-S Freeway, CTH "K" Interchange (reconstruct with additional lanes)
- STH 36, CTH "Y" intersection (traffic signal upgrades)

- STH 36, from CTH “Y”, north into Milwaukee County (resurface)

In response to a question raised by Knitter, Allison stated that improvements in the area of STH 31/32 and Six Mile Road have been placed on hold and, more than likely, it will be several years before addressed again.

Julie Anderson stated that no major County road projects will be undertaken in 2017. She noted the following projects that are scheduled in 2017:

- Resurfacing of CTH “X” to Bankers Road, where the last phase ended
- Culvert project on CTH “A” in the Town of Yorkville
- Resurfacing of some county highways

5. Review of Monthly Safety Campaign

2:16

Assignments and topics scheduled for the next few months, until the next TSC meeting date, were confirmed.

The Commission discussed the radio host’s tendency to deviate from the topic at hand and not discuss the scheduled safety issues. Anderson noted that it’s a waste of staff’s time and efforts to prepare for the radio spots if the topics aren’t adequately addressed. Maack stated that TSC members should feel free to redirect the host to the topic under discussion at any given broadcast. He indicated he will contact Mark Eickhorst and Glenn Klein at WRJN about remaining focused on the subject under discussion.

Maack noted that he is now posting the monthly safety posters on the Racine County website (Government/Ready Racine/Staying Safe).

<http://racinecounty.com/government/ready-racine-countystaying-safe>)

Blackwood mentioned that she has spoken favorable about the Racine County TSC’s safety poster program at WisDOT meetings with DOT staff who visit other TSCs in the SE Wisconsin seven-county region and another TSC in the region has expressed interest in starting a similar project.

5. Around the Table

2:23

Payne indicated that there is a backlog for toxicology reports and he will update the Commission with completed reports at the next TSC meeting.

Blackwood shared a WisDOT brochure, *Setting Appropriate Speed Limits*, with the Commission. The brochure provides general information and outlines factors considered when setting speed limits. Maack commented that he believes the 35-mph speed limit on Green Bay Road should be raised, given the fact that there are 2 ½ lanes with a median in the middle and an average traveling speed of 45 mph. Blackwood stated that a speed study could be done at this location and noted that it’s not unheard of to raise speed limits.

Blackwood inquired about the status of a citizen complaint about some curves on CTH “KR” that was received by WisDOT in early January of this year that she believes was forwarded to the County, either by the State or by the citizen. Anderson indicated that she is not familiar with, nor has received, any such complaint. No further action was taken on this matter.

Anderson informed Commission members that she has been contacted again by the resident who lives on Seven Mile Road who had expressed concerns last year about excessive speeding in this location, just east of CTH "G" in the Wind Lake area. The resident indicated that drivers are still not slowing down, in spite of recent measures taken by the County, and she still has concerns about safety and traffic enforcement. The county ordinance was amended in August of 2016 to reduce the speed limit on the related CTH "G" road segment from 45 to 35 mph and the County installed chevrons, high-visibility school bus warning signs, and extra signs to slow down traffic. The resident thanked the County for the measures taken to help reduce speed, but asked that the matter be brought before the Committee again to consider possible further remedies. Captain Lamke stated that enforcement is being done at this location by the Sheriff's Office and Norway. Anderson suggested that County staff will contact the company located in the Norway Industrial Park to make them aware of the citizen complaint alleging that their trucks are speeding on this road segment.

Joe Davis reviewed the Racine profile and data contained in the *Anatomy of Traffic Safety*.

- 2016 statewide year-end totals: approximately 590 fatalities, with 521 crashes
- Thus far, fewer fatalities/crashes this year than last year (39 crashes and 49 fatalities this year versus 43 crashes and 47 fatalities last year at this time)
- Page 12 of the report illustrated that failure-to-yield is the top contributing factor in Racine County compared to inattentive driving in the State

Davis then reviewed task forces and enforcement dollars. The State has been approached by some of the smaller police departments, such as the Waterford PD, asking to be included in task forces. Davis has been in discussion with the City of Racine Police Department about managing an OWI grant, with a task force including Burlington, Sturtevant, and Waterford PDs. He added that OWI and seat belt grants are year-round grants and speed grants are seasonal, usually starting between June and August.

Davis introduced Rick Olig, a retired officer from the Fond du Lac Sheriff's Office, who is now acting in the capacity of BOTS consultant and law enforcement liaison. Olig observed that there have been a number of recent pedestrian fatalities in Racine County and suggested possibly focusing on this factor when applying for grants and developing task forces. The Commission noted the proven successful placement of signs in the center of the road to slow or stop traffic at pedestrian crossings.

Maack suggested that review and discussion of the *Anatomy of Traffic Safety - Racine County* be placed on the May 18 TSC agenda as a separate agenda item.

Anderson commented on the County's "successful" snow season thus far, with there being only a few minor incidents involving County snow plows, all without injury. The accidents that did occur were the result of public driver error, either driving too fast for conditions, inattentive driving, or following too closely behind snow plows.

Anderson noted that appointments to the TSC by the County Executive will be required to fill forthcoming vacancies that will result from the retirement of Captain Lamke and Pat Starcken. She then thanked Captain Lamke for his years of service to the TSC and to the community, followed by recognition and congratulatory wishes from the rest of the Commission members.

11. Adjournment

2:55

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Payne adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m.