

RACINE COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

DRAFT Summary Minutes – February 8, 2018

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

Members Present:

David Maack - Racine County Emergency Management
Michael Payne - Racine County Medical Examiner
Lt. Scott Litwin – Racine County Sheriff’s Office
Sgt. Tim Koetting – Racine Police Department
Lt. David Stroupe - Mount Pleasant Police Department
Lt. Gary Larsen - Caledonia Police Department
Sgt. Bill Jeschke- Town of Waterford Police Department
Allison Blackwood - WisDOT, DTSD (*arrived at 2:09 p.m.*)
Tom Knitter – TRIAD

Members Excused:

Julie Anderson - Racine County Public Works & Development Services Director
Chief Sean Marschke - Sturtevant Police Department
John Barnes - Retired Caledonia Police Department
Capt. James Weidner - Racine County Highway Safety Coordinator (Lt. Scott Litwin)
Chief Matt Johnson – Town of Waterford Police Department

Members Not Present:

Michael White - District Attorney’s Office
Sgt. Wendy Younglove - Wisconsin State Patrol
Erin Donaldson - Safe Kids Coordinator
Lt. Dan Adams – Racine County Sheriff’s Office
Sgt. John Schneider - Racine Police Department
Lt. Dan Klatt – Racine County Sheriff’s Office

Also Present:

David Prott – Racine County Superintendent of Highways and Parks
Jacqueline Bratz – Racine County Communications Director
Rick Olig - WisDOT, BOTS

1. Call to Order

David Maack called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Maack briefly commented on the approaching snowstorm system.

2. Minutes of the November 9, 2017, meeting

2:01

MICHAEL PAYNE MOVED, seconded by Tom Knitter, to approve the November 9, 2017, minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Fatalities since the last meeting

2:04

(a) Sgt. Tim Koetting, City of Racine PD, reported two fatalities.

12/11//2017, 07:47 p.m. / STH 31 NB

- One-unit accident
- Driver of a pick-up truck in the curb lane, northbound on STH 31 in the vicinity of “Toys R Us”, left the roadway, struck a traffic signal post and wood traffic sign post and drove northeast into a pond and was completely submerged.
- Witnesses observed reckless driving behavior.
- Autopsy and toxicology reports are pending; medical condition suspected; road conditions not a factor.

1/22/2018, 07:55 p.m. / Charles Street, south of Jones Avenue

- Two-unit accident: one vehicle and one pedestrian
- Operating northbound on Charles Street at a high speed, Unit 1 left the roadway to the east and struck a utility pole, a fire hydrant, and then crashed into a house. Speed was estimated at 80 mph upon impact.
- Pedestrian (Unit 2) fell inside the house and sustained injury as a result of the vehicle hitting the residence (pedestrian wasn’t struck by the vehicle itself).
- Factors: speeding, failure to control, operating vehicle in aggressive, reckless manner. Road conditions not a factor. Preceding the accident, the driver had a dispute with his girlfriend; officers were in pursuit of speeding vehicle.
- Cause of death: massive head injuries.
- Autopsy and toxicology reports are pending. Suicide is suspected.

(b) Lt. Gary Larsen , Village of Caledonia PD, reported one fatality.

01/09/2018, 11:34 a.m. / STH 38-CTH “H” intersection

- A vehicle traveling southbound on STH 38, approaching curve on CTH “H” was struck by a driver of a vehicle who failed to yield the right-of-way when pulling out from CTH “H” to continue north on STH 38.
- One of the two passengers in the rear died. The two passengers in the rear had been drinking. The toxicology report for the driver is pending, but it’s not anticipated that there will be any positive findings. Payne noted that the passenger died of multiple blunt force injuries to the head and torso as a result of being unrestrained; decedent’s BAC was .169 (other passenger was.005).
- Law enforcement had some difficulty understanding the driver and passengers due to their Tibetan dialect.
- No weather or road factors. Driver’s unfamiliarity with the area may have been a factor.

(b) Lt. Scott Litwin, Racine County Sheriff’s Office, reported two fatalities.

11/26/2017 / STH 11, just east of I-94

- A car traveling eastbound on STH 11 went under a semi-tractor trailer that was turning left from the STH 11 westbound lane to enter the I-94 northbound onramp.
- Driver of the car died from head injuries.
- Speed was a contributing factor. The estimated speed of the car was 75-80 mph in a 45-mph zone. Inattentive driving may also have been a factor, as the driver was late in relieving her sister from work.
- No road or traffic conditions were factors.

01/25/2018 / 7 Mile Road and Raynor Avenue (USH 45)

- Vehicle traveling westbound on 7 Mile Road failed to yield the right-of-way to a truck.

- Decedent resided in Milwaukee and may not have been familiar with the area.
- Toxicology report still pending.

Prott commented that numerous citizen concerns about safety at this intersection have been expressed in the recent past. He noted that there is a clear line of sight at this location. Signage may be an issue that needs to be addressed. There may have been consideration in the past about the Town of Raymond installing flashing stop signs at this intersection. Lt. Litwin suggested that perhaps posting signs on 7 Mile Road indicating that traffic on USH 45 doesn't stop would be helpful. Prott commented that the addition of flags on stop signs have been somewhat successful in some problem areas within the county. He noted that years ago, rumble strips were installed at this intersection but were later removed after numerous complaints about noise were received from residents. Knitter observed that inattentive driving or other circumstantial factors, versus problems with visibility, are two different issues and would require different corrective measures. Prott will consult with County Engineering staff about past concerns and possible future action related the safety at this intersection. If need be, this matter may be placed as a topic of discussion on the May 10 TSC agenda.

4. Upcoming construction projects

2:16

Allison Blackwood noted the following 2018 projects:

- Continuation of USH 45 reconstruction
- Construction on the interstate will begin around April of this year: northbound lanes, between Kenosha County and STH 20, will be first, then will continue north to CTH "G"
- Frontage roads are currently under construction between CTH "KR" and STH 20
- Braun Road
- Extension of International from STH 20 to STH 11
- CTH "KR"

Prott stated that the WisDOT does a good job in keeping the public informed of ongoing construction projects through media releases. In answer to an inquiry from Maack about the onset of the STH 20/CTH "C" roundabout project, Prott stated that he believes construction is scheduled to begin this year.

5. Review of Monthly Safety Campaign

2:18

Maack reminded Commission members to pick up the monthly posters. Captain Weidner will deliver posters that haven't been picked up. Knitter asked if there is an electronic version of the "Too Old to Drive" poster available. Maack stated that posters may be viewed on the facebook page @ readyracineco, and posters, from 2016 to present, may be found on the County website: www.racinecounty.com / Emergency Management / Staying Safe

6. Review and discussion of the Racine County Anatomy of Traffic Safety Report

This item was deferred to the May 10, 2018, TSC meeting.

7. Presentation of the Wisconsin Highway Safety Plan by Rick Olig, BOTS Law Enforcement Liaison/Consultant

2:21

Rick Olig provided the Commission with an overview of the Wisconsin Strategic Highway Safety Plan as follows. Although the plan was developed by the State, it needs to be

implemented at the local level, primarily carried out through traffic safety commissions. A major role of traffic safety commissions is to review crashes and since 85% - 95% of crashes are behavior related, the plan stresses the importance of changing driver behavior. The goal is to start becoming more proactive than reactive. Olig noted that features in Community Maps now allow looking at what has happened in the past to determine what is likely to happen in the future in an effort to help reduce the number of crashes. Predictable enforcement is emphasized.

The Strategic Highway Safety Plan is a three-year plan that examines various issue areas that affect highway safety in the State of Wisconsin. The plan identifies ten priority issues, including aggressive driving, impaired driving, distractive driving, motorcycle crashes, driver performance, and non-motorist safety. An annual plan specifically addresses goals for the year. Funding is a component of the plan and it's how money is obtained for task forces, speed grants, Occupant Protection Program, highway funding for projects, etc. Olig stated that \$11.6 million goes toward the behavioral aspect and \$31 million is allocated for Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HISP) funding, which is data and crash driven. An active statewide work group meets to identify problems within the ten Highway Safety Plan issue areas and to suggest ways to solve or mitigate existing problems. New groups will also be developed.

Olig stated that traCS, the software used by law enforcement, is now under the auspice of the State Patrol. He stressed the importance of law enforcement using the traCS location tool. Olig then highlighted a number of features now available on the new version of Community Maps. The new crash database makes data available in real time. Reported crash reports may be downloaded. The search query may be used to pinpoint specific types of crashes, timeframes, or locations.

Olig concluded noting that the ultimate goal is to have no traffic-related injuries or fatalities in any given county. Consideration should be given to identify local problems and trends (Community Maps can be helpful in this regard), involve local stakeholders (i.e., schools, senior citizens, etc.), and recognize the time limitations of traffic safety commissions: consider forming a subcommittee or using other resources to aid in addressing issues.

Olig will e-mail Maack the link to obtain access to Community Maps (community-maps@topslab.wisc.edu) and Maack, in turn, will provide the information to TSC members and local law enforcement agencies.

8. **Demonstration of the new version of Community Maps portal by Rick Olig**
Demonstrated and discussed in conjunction with Agenda Item No. 7 above.

9. **Around the Table**
2:57

Maack commented that he has noticed what appears to be a higher incident of drivers running red lights and people not using turn signals. This could possibly be an enforcement issue or education issue; however, no action is required at this time.

10. **Next TSC meeting: May 10, 2018**

11. Adjournment

2:59

There being no further business, Chairman Maack adjourned the meeting at 2:59.