

Portage County Traffic Safety Commission Meeting Minutes

10:00 a.m., Tuesday, June 6, 2017

Law Enforcement Center Conference Room, Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Members Present: Chief Deputy Daniel Kontos, County Highway Safety Coordinator
Joe Gemza, Assistant Chief of EMS, SPFD
Mark Krutza, County Executive Appointment – Education
Don Jankowski, Portage County Safety Officer
Tony Kemnitz, Dept. of Transportation Rep – Highways
Lacey Coonen, County Representative – Law
Lt. Ryan Fox, Plover Police Department
Bob Bott, Central Regional Program Manager, DOT BOTS
Scott Rifleman, Portage County Coroner
Sgt. Gina Boettcher, Traffic Safety Officer

Members Absent: Patty Dreier, County Executive
Jeffrey Schuler, Director, Portage County Planning & Zoning
Rhae Stertz, Secretary of Transportation Rep – Law Enforcement
Assistant Chief Thomas Zenner, Stevens Point Police Department
Joe Brandt, Portage County Emergency Management Director

Members Excused: O. Philip Idsvoog, County Board Chairman
Lt. Michael Morgan, President, Traffic Incident Committee Rep
Nathan Check, County Highway Commissioner
Lt. Stephen Retzki, Portage County Sheriff's Office

Others Present: Dan Bowers, Assistant Director, Portage County Planning & Zoning
Trace Frost, BOTS Law Enforcement Liaison
Bob Kussow, Stevens Point Police Department
Kim Delikowski, Portage County Sheriff's Office

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice President, Daniel Kontos at 10:00 a.m.

Quorum Call: Introductions as Needed

A quorum of the Traffic Safety Commission (TSC) was present.

Approval of March 7, 2017, Meeting Minutes

Motion/second Jankowski/Boettcher to approve the minutes of March 7, 2017, Traffic Safety Commission Meeting. Motion carried.

Public Notice

Vice President Daniel Kontos declared members of the public who wish to address the Committee on specific agenda items must register their request at this time, with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the Commission President as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Correspondence: None.

Status of Highway Construction and Safety Projects/Repair Proposals

State Projects: (Kemnitz)- see also Power Point slide presentation attached.

- **I39/US51 – Bridge Painting:** Painting bridge girders over Interstate for overpasses at Cty Hwy D, 3rd Ave., Cty Hwy W, Coddington Rd, and Birch Road. Have reduced speed to 55mph for workers' safety and will reduce lanes to single lane. WI State Patrol is also providing traffic mitigation. Contract started on April 10, 2017, and will be completed August 16, 2017. Once completed, NB lane will be resurfaced from Hwy O up to Hwy 54 – in September.
- **I39/US51 – Culvert Replacements:** Two culverts being replaced, WI 153 in Marathon County and Cty Hwy D in Portage County. Culverts will be dug out and replaced. Lanes to be reduced to single lane and WI State Patrol will be providing traffic mitigation. Speed has been reduced to 60mph. Contract started March 3, 2017, and will be completed September 11, 2017.
- **BUS 51/Post Road:** Had a ribbon cutting ceremony. Punch list items to clean up job will be completed. There will be some single lane closures starting next week running from Cty Hwy B up to Green Dr. continuing for a couple of weeks. Storm sewer and manhole cleaning and adjustments, as well as miscellaneous landscaping items will be completed.
- **Hwy 161:** Seal coat will be applied on Hwy 161 from Hwy 10 to Nelsonville to start after July 4, 2017, and will be completed in couple of weeks. There will be detours associated with this on Hwy 10 over A or B and back up to K.

Portage County Highway Department Projects

- No one was present from Highway Department to give update. Vice President Daniel Kontos stated biggest County project currently happening is reconstruction of Hwy. J between Hwy. 66 and Hwy. 10 and is restricted to local traffic. There have been issues with the traffic restriction as far as individuals obeying sign for local traffic only.

Municipal Projects

- No updates.

County Traffic Safety Coordinator Report:

Vice President Daniel Kontos stated he was unable to attend the last Safety Coordinator's meeting, but Mike Morgan did attend. However, Morgan was unable to attend today's meeting to give update. Kontos stated ATV concerns were brought up, where local roads are conformed into ATV routes. Residents have voiced concerns regarding these. Town of Grant is latest to go to township roads being open to ATVs. They will have an additional meeting this evening. The Highway Department and Highway Committee have stated they are not in favor of opening county roads to ATVs, even for short segments as connecting routes. As these become more popular, this will become more of an issue. Need to watch out for ATVs.

Crash Spot Map/Law Enforcement Agency Report

- **Portage County Sheriff's Office:** *Traffic Accident Summary Report for 01/012017 thru 03/31/2017.* Sgt. Gina Boettcher stated there were 172 reportable accidents during the first quarter of 2017. There were 39 personal injury accidents, 88 property damage accidents, 5 hit and run accidents, and 1 accident involving a fatality. The number of accidents involving alcohol is not being reported this quarter due to a software glitch which is currently being worked on. The fatal was on March 13, 2017, on I39 NB, by Janick Circle overpass. This was weather related as roads were slippery. Driver lost control of vehicle and hit trees, which caused driver fatality. Kontos showed photos of crash which Morgan prepared for Committee, and confirmed that this was driver/weather related, not engineering related. Kontos also confirmed this area is prevalent for crashes due to slippery conditions. There was a fatality in this area SB due to slippery conditions as well.

Kontos stated there was also a second fatality for the Sheriff's Office during this current quarter (happened 4/29/17 – 2nd quarter) on North Second Drive, near Jordan Road in Town of Hull. This will be reviewed more at the next meeting.

- **Stevens Point Police Department:** *Traffic Accident Summary Report for 01/012017 thru 03/31/2017.* Officer Bob Kussow stated there were 171 reportable accidents during the first quarter of 2017. There were 32 personal injury accidents, 22 property damage accidents, 36 hit and run accidents, and 1 fatality. The number of accidents involving alcohol is not being reported this quarter due to a software glitch which is currently being worked on. The fatality was on February 5, 2017, and appears to be alcohol related due to a blood alcohol .351 with THC being present. The crash reconstruction report has not come back yet.
- **Village of Plover Police Department:** *Traffic Accident Summary Report for 01/012017 thru 03/31/2017.* Lt. Fox stated there were 43 reportable accidents during the first quarter of 2017. There were 6 personal injury accidents, 9 property damage accidents, and 3 hit and run accidents. There were no fatalities during this quarter. The number of accidents involving alcohol is not being reported this quarter, due to a software glitch which is currently being worked on.
- Bott stated that on the Community Maps website, there are new guidelines for how to report about fatalities. Under "TSC Resources" tab from the Community Maps homepage, click on blue highlighted "TSC Guidelines" and the new "Wisconsin County/City Traffic Safety Commission Guidelines" will pop up in PDF format. The last three pages are guidelines (Addendum B-Fatality Review Coordinator Outline, Addendum C-Fatality Review Law Enforcement Outline, & Addendum D-Fatality Review Discussion Guide) are the new guidelines of how to report fatalities to the Traffic Safety Committee. Bott stated the Department of Transportation (DOT) is trying to establish consistency in reporting fatalities, however, this would require the agency that reported on the fatality be present at the TSC meeting.
- Kontos also stated there is a link to the Community Maps website from the Portage County Sheriff's Office website, under the "Traffic Safety Commission" tab located on the left side of screen. The Community Maps website can be navigated to by clicking the icon "UW-Madison TOPS Lab Community Maps."

Locations of Interest and Possible Countermeasures to Enhance Safety

Tony Kemnitz included in his report below.

Miscellaneous Traffic Hazards and Recommended Improvements

Kontos stated the intersection of Hwy HH and Nebel Street in the City will be brought to the attention of the new Public Works Director.

WisDOT Traffic Safety Engineer's Report (Kemnitz)

- **I39/US 51 Interchange at WI 54 Study Update:** The new Kwik Trip has generated more traffic in that area. There has been concern regarding number of crashes associated with visibility from the SB off-ramp, as the guardrail on the bridge occludes vision. Consultant study is still ongoing to develop options and costs to support safety funding application. Preliminary design was conducted of conventional roundabouts at those ramps which are approximately \$3 million each. These aren't viable options at this time due to cost. Consultant also looked at adjusting profile to match overpass grade and increase site distance from ramps. This option more expensive than conventional roundabouts. A roundabout conference was held earlier this month in Green Bay. Mini roundabouts were introduced, which are substantially less costly, use less right-of-way and have a traversable central island for oversized loads. These are being investigated as possible option. Upon completion of consultant study, DOT will develop a summary of alternatives and costs. Projects are being reprioritized at present time, so timeline is currently unavailable.
- **WI 13/34 at US 10 interchange:** Mr. John Becker of Becker Industries in Milladore, WI, contacted Kemnitz regarding significant number of crashes at this intersection. DOT is reviewing maintenance of grass in median area and in corners of interchange around Hwy P to assist with visibility. Another possibility is to remove grass out of median area and replace with gravel with oil emulsion which would prohibit growth of vegetation to also increase visibility. Additional law enforcement is also another option, as people tend to roll through this intersection. There have been illegal U-turns and speeding issues as well. Law enforcement has been out at intersection in the past. WI State Patrol has also increased enforcement out there. Kemnitz showed pictures of the intersections and discussed motorcycle crash that took place there.
- **WI 54 at McCains Foods Entrance:** McCain Foods Plant Safety Lead contacted Katrina Shankland's office and indicated concerns regarding safety of this intersection. DOT will install a portable camera to record driver behavior and then analyze video to determine what actions can be taken. Plant would like speed limit lowered, however, Kemnitz stated this has been studied before and is not a solution. Changing any physical features of this intersection would not help suppress the speed either and, therefore would not be recommended by DOT.
- **June Dairy Breakfast 6/17/17:** DOT gave permission for portable message boards to be used to announce event on Hwy 66 near Ellis Road.

Bureau of Transportation Safety Report (Bott) – see attached

- Bott introduced Trace Frost, as the new BOTS Law Enforcement Liaison in the state.
- Bott reviewed the *Year-to-Date Traffic Deaths and Fatal Crashes as of 6/5/17*. He noted there has been a 3% decrease in total fatalities between 2016 and 2017 for the period ending 06/05/2017. However, last year's fatalities were increased, therefore not an overall improvement. The 5-yr. AVG is still up at 1.11%. Portage County is already tied at number of total fatalities, three (3) this year, compared with 2016. Trends show lower gas prices, higher employment rate and healthier economy causes more individuals to travel, therefore, more accidents occur. Driver behavior still causes 86% – 90% of crashes, not infrastructure.
- Bott thanked those that participated in most recent Click-It-Or-Ticket and urged those agencies that did to get their reports in as soon as possible.
- Frost stated there were four regional meetings hosted statewide and were well attended. Items discussed were Community Maps, new Traffic Safety Commission Guidelines, and new guidelines to review fatalities in the Addendum of the guidelines. Even if municipality doesn't have fatalities, Frost suggested to start reviewing "Class A" injuries on crashes, as these will also provide valuable information about crashes.
- TRaCS Community Maps integration will be done for at least fatalities and serious injuries by 1st of the year. Bott stated a committee is being put together to decide what should be transferred to site, as the current Community Maps site isn't capturing all useful data at this time.

Traffic Safety Legislation

- Bott directed Commission Members' attention to the *Bills of Interest to the Wisconsin Traffic Safety Community 2017-2018 Legislative Session (Current as of June 1, 2017)*. See attached. Kontos stated there are current efforts to refine OWI laws. Powdered alcohol is being proposed as being treated as intoxicating beverage.

Emergency Medical Services Operations

Gemza reviewed his handout titled *3/1/17 to 5/31/17 SPFD Ambulance Request*. There were a total of 72 ambulance requests during this timeframe. Twenty-six (26) of the Traffic/Transportation Accidents had patients transported to a hospital; forty-eight (48) had no patients transported. Numbers haven't fluctuated very much.

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Operations

Kontos stated TIM Committee did meet for quarterly meeting. Currently spearheading requests to DOT during the re-pavement operations out on Interstate. This opens opportunity for request for Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) infrastructure. Last

project TIM Committee and Traffic Safety Committee partnered was for a request for ramp gates. This time asking for dynamic message boards (DMS) permanently installed on north and south end of Stevens Point as early warning of traffic incidents. From TIM perspective, back of traffic queue, as it starts to build, is obvious biggest concern regarding secondary crashes. Chasing back of queue is difficult, however, these signs will warn drivers about incident and warn them to start to slow down. Not sure if EMS boards are part of the project as cameras are. Between 54 and 66, traffic cameras are being installed. Will request if DOT will consider adding DMS boards. A request will be introduced next quarter from TIM Committee asking Traffic Safety Commission to join in efforts asking DOT to include these in their project on the Interstate. DOT receives a message (Milwaukee) from our Dispatch regarding incident, the DOT enters message on to DMS board. Messages can be a variety, such as safety message, incident alert messages, as permanent boards have more characters.

Upcoming Traffic Safety Training Opportunities

- 2017 Governor's Conference on Highway Safety: August 24, 2017 through August 25, 2017 at the Paper Valley Convention Center, Appleton, Wisconsin. August 24th is a FREE training day.

Public Education Programs and Opportunities:

- The Safety Fair was held at Mark Motors in Plover recently. Attendance was lower due to weather, but was successful.
- A car seat recycling event was held in April, 2017.

Traffic Safety Grants Update

None.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

None.

Adjournment

Motion by Kussow/Gemza to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m. Motion carried unanimously. The next meeting of the Traffic Safety Commission is Tuesday, September 5, 2017, at 10:00 AM in the Law Enforcement Center Training Room.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/

Kim Delikowski
Recording Secretary

Addendum A