

## WINNEBAGO COUNTY SAFETY COMMISSION Meeting

Minutes – January 31, 2018

### Members Present:

Kevin Wilkinson-Neenah PD

Lori Seiler – Winnebago County Sheriff's Office

Lara Vendola-Messer - Winnebago County Sheriff's Office

Tim McGrath – Wisconsin State Patrol

Rick Olig-WIS DOT-BOTS

Scott Nelson-WIS DOT-NE Region

Hank Mitchell-Winnebago County Highway Dept.

Chris Gorte-Oshkosh Police Department

Chris Bordeaux – NM Transfer

Mike Panosh – WIS DOT – BOTS

Matt Albrecht – Menasha PD

Scott Morrison – Oshkosh Area School District

Karolina Baca – Winnebago Co. Health Dept

Emily Dieringer – Winnebago Co. Health Dept.

### Attendance and introductions

Meeting called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Kevin Wilkinson. Members were recorded and collected. MM/S to approve the minutes from October 11th meeting. Motion carried.

### Public Comment

None

### Review of county-wide fatal/serious traffic accidents

The Commission reviewed five crashes. Four were fatalities and one was very serious. The three occurring in Oshkosh were reviewed first, followed by two investigated by the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office.

#1 OPD: 10-13-17 at 7:05 a.m. Crash occurred between a motorcycle with two riders heading southbound on Ohio, and a vehicle that pulled out in front of the motorcycle from 6<sup>th</sup>. The driver of the at-fault vehicle fled the scene and was later apprehended and found to be under the influence of alcohol. The motorcycle occupants were seriously injured but not killed. This was a daylight crash with no weather factors. The driver of the at-fault vehicle has been criminally charged and the case is pending.

#2 OPD: 10-18-17 at 4:23 p.m. An elderly driver failed to stop for a stop sign e/b New York at Hazel and was fatally struck by a southbound bus. The woman may have been suffering a medical problem at the time of the crash. She lived in the area and was familiar with the route. This was daytime crash with no weather factors.

#3 OPD: 12-22-17 at 11:19 p.m. An eastbound vehicle on Waugoo was trying to beat a northbound train. The vehicle sped north along the tracks on Broad St, then tried to cross the tracks ahead of the train on Washington. The train struck the rear of the vehicle, killing two backseat passengers. The driver and a front seat passenger then fled the scene. This case is believe to involve alcohol and drugs. The driver has been charged and the matter is pending in court. There was no video camera operating on the train. This was a night time crash with no weather factors.

#4 WISO: 11-10-17 at 5:20 a.m. A westbound vehicle on STH 44 crossed the centerline and collided head-on with an eastbound semi near CTH FF. The driver of the w/b vehicle was killed. Toxicology reports are pending, but there is a possibility of alcohol as a factor. This crash occurred in the darkness of early morning with no weather factors.

#5 WISO: 10-31-17 at 6:33 p.m. Deputies were on the scene of a vehicle rollover on I41 s/b at Black Wolf. As s/b traffic was slowing/stopping for that accident, a vehicle failed to slow and struck the rear of a stopped or nearly-stopped semi trailer at highway speed. The driver was killed. Drug influence is suspected but not confirmed at this time. The semi was operating emergency flashers at the time, and marked squads had emergency lighting activated at the scene of the other crash.

The commission discussed commonalities in the crashes, most notably alcohol and drug influence. This led to a discussion of the importance of DREs (Drug Recognition Experts) and ARIDE training (roadside sobriety testing that assesses drug influence. Matt Albrecht stated that Menasha PD mandates the ARIDE training for all of their patrol officers. The group was advised of some training opportunities coming up in the area for both ARIDE and DRE.

Scott Nelson pointed out that the location of the STH 44 crash has shoulder rumble strips, but not center-line rumble strips. Warrants for those are based on roadway and paved shoulder widths. He advised that studies have shown an 18-22% reduction in head-on and off-roadway crashes when those strips are emplaced.

## **Pending and Potential legislation affecting highway safety**

Rick Olig reported on several recently enacted laws and some pending legislation including:

- Act 87 allows municipalities to designate ATV routes on their streets that have 35 mph or lower speed limits, including county and state highways. This may have an impact on the western part of Winnebago County.
- Ignition Interlock Devices are no longer tied to the drivers license. Instead, violations are enforced as a violation of a court order
- Act 126 has changed some definitions to prior law to allow social host ordinances to again be valid.
- Act 127 changed language to allow drivers to be charged with Operating After Revocation regardless of whether or not they knew they were revoked.
- AB678 proposes to change the term “marked police vehicle” to “authorized emergency vehicle” in the eluding statute, so that a person who knowingly flees from an unmarked vehicle can still be charged with a violation of the statute.

## **Review of dangerous section of CTH G near US 41**

Chris Bordeaux reviewed experiences with crashes and near misses on CTH G at the I41 frontage roads (Dixie Road, Bergstrom Road, Green Valley Road). Chris would like to see the speed on G reduced to 35 mph in that stretch. One of the problems he noted was the inability to see rapidly approaching traffic due to the elevation of the bridge. Much discussion followed. Scott Nelson informed the commission that the speed limits on those rural roads is set by statute at 55 mph, unless certain thresholds (such as number of intersecting driveways) is met. Generally, a municipality has the authority to lower the speed by only 10 mpy, which has apparently already been done on this stretch.

Scott Nelson pointed out there have been 14 crashes in 6 years. An advisory speed of 35 mph has been posted as the bridge is approached e/b. Scott and Emily also noted CTH G is tentatively targeted for resurfacing in 2019. Enforcement options were also discussed. With no further recommendations or action items, this matter was closed.

## **Round Table Discussion**

**Emily Dieringer** reported that paved shoulder is tentatively included in the county’s capital improvements budget for CTH G and CTH GG. She is also working on a master map of Winnebago County’s pedestrian and bicycle routes.

**Scott Nelson** gave an update on projects, including STH 116 north of Omro, the Winneconne bridge, and the 41/441 interchange. All movements on that interchange are expected to be opened this fall. The diverging diamonds intersection project at 441 and Oneida St. in Appleton is also scheduled to begin this fall.

Scott also gave a report on wrong-way drivers. These were being reported by Brown, Outagamie and Winnebago Counties and now are being reported statewide. In that limited window of reporting, there were 65 incidents. None of them were for repeat sites. The 65 incidents included 4 crashes, one of which included a triple fatality. The state has an interest in continuing to monitor these dangerous incidents and installing, where practical, devices to help prevent/deter wrong way drivers from entering the highway.

**Tim McGrath** reported that the Statewide Traffic Operations Center (STOC) has been re-named the Traffic Management Center (TMC). It is operated by Wisconsin State Patrol. WSP is also closing dispatch centers in favor of a centralized dispatch center included in the TMC.

**Mike Panosh** reminded the group that the seat belt task force is still in operation. Statewide, seatbelt use is now at 89.3%, which is the highest it has ever been – but still leaves considerable room for improvement. He also noted that for those involved in fatal crashes, seatbelt use is closer to 50%.

**Rick Olig** advised that TRACS updates are now fully under the control of the Wisconsin State Patrol, as is crash data. Rick also noted that while many more agencies are routinely using the GPS feature to identify coordinates of crashes so they can be mapped on the state system, there are still a number missing. Some in the group stated that the GPS feature doesn't work properly in parking lots. Rick advised a work-around for those cases, which will still generate the GPS coordinates.

**Chris Bordeaux** said his organization and the trucking industry in general is adapting to the new electronic log requirements. There are times that a driver is close to the terminal but can't complete his/her transport because of the limits in the log. The company then sends another driver to get the truck and driver from wherever they have stopped. This is made more challenging by the extreme shortage of drivers in the industry. Chris also briefly discussed autonomous trucks and platooning, both of which are designed, in part, to alleviate the acute shortage of drivers.

**Next meeting** scheduled for 04-11-18 at 09:00 a.m. at the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office.

Motion made to adjourn. Motion carried.