

LA CROSSE COUNTY HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 10, 2010
 La Crosse County Administration Building room B390
 1:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Allison, Tim Berg, Al Blencoe, John Flynn, Matt Gallagher, Tim Hammes, Ilona Hansen, Mike Horstman, Dennis Johnson, Bill Lubinski, Roland Solberg, Evan Stone, Reiny Yahnke

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

CALL TO ORDER

Sgt. Bill Lubinski, Committee Coordinator, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mike Allison, seconded by Al Blencoe, to approve the November 11, 2009 Highway Safety Commission minutes as printed. Motion carried unanimously.

LA CROSSE COUNTY CRASH DATA FOR 4th QUARTER OF 2009

2009	1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter	Yearly Total
Sheriff Department					
Hit & run	11	3	11	13	38
Car/deer	54	62	44	105	265
Injury	38	32	30	29	129
Property damage	74	40	59	97	270
Fatalities	1	0	0	2	3
Sub-total	178	137	144	246	705
Comparison of Prior Year Totals	1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter	Total
2003	214	190	186	317	907
2004	199	195	162	295	851
2005	224	234	147	313	918
2006	215	192	150	251	808
2007	245	168	182	280	875
2008	228	150	158	284	820
2009	178	137	144	246	705

2009 had the lowest number of accidents in La Crosse County in six years. The average number of crashes in the 4th quarter for the last six years is 283 with a yearly average of 841.

Three of the 13 hit & run crashes involved injuries. Of 253 individuals involved in 4th quarter crashes, 227 reported wearing seatbelts for a 90% compliance rate. Of eight alcohol-related crashes, three involved injuries.

The two fatalities in the 4th quarter were on October 8 and December 31. As a result of working the December 31st fatality, deputies asked that there be a better way to set up a mile marker system on Highway 53 from Highway 157 to the Trempealeau County line, as this may have delayed them in finding the crash site. The calls coming in were not clear in reporting the exact location. Reiny Yahnke will investigate DOT policies and bring his findings back to a future Highway Safety Commission meeting.

Nancy in dispatch is processing a layer of computer reporting to show mile markers. An intern in dispatch is working on alternate route to be used in emergency plans. Nancy may be able to incorporate this data in the computer layering also.

WISDOT UPDATES & HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN SOLICITATION

Dennis Johnson reported that as of today, February 10, 2010, there have been 28 fatalities in the State of Wisconsin compared to 49 on the same date in 2009. The preliminary total number for 2009 is 544 fatalities, which would be the lowest since 1944. January 2010 is on track for the safest on record. There were six fatalities in La Crosse County in 2009. Seven is the 5-year average.

The OWI reform Act 100 passed.

Act 28 is a law mandating the owner/operator of a vehicle to carry proof of insurance coverage. A question was raised if a driver could be cited for not having this proof and then be allowed to drive after receiving the citation. Dennis Johnson will research if it is possible to stamp a person's driver's license showing proof of insurance. There is a possibility that insurance companies can notify the State if a policy is canceled.

The texting while driving law was passed by the assembly. The senate has a different version which has not passed yet. The federal government has imposed an immediate ban on texting while driving for all commercial drivers.

Act 97 provides that U-turns be legal at signals.

It is legal to pass on the right as long as it is paved and the tires stay on the paved area.

The December 2009 law of the month is 'December is national drunk and drugged driving prevention month – drugged drivers in Wisconsin face severe punishment'. The January 2010 law of the month is 'Tailgating causes countless crashes'. The February 2010 law of the month is 'Driving too fast for conditions causes many wintertime troubles'.

A 'Teaching Safe Bicycling 2010' brochure was distributed. Dennis Johnson also distributed a revised schedule of Highway Safety Commission meetings he attends. There were no changes to the La Crosse County meeting times.

Highway Safety Plan ideas should be forwarded to Dennis Johnson. He is also asking for suggestions of new safety projects at roadways/intersections which had had a fatality. The area has to be identified as a safety concern in the years 2004 – 2008 and show that funding would improve the conditions. Federal transportation budget funding may be available for new safety projects. Highway 53 has had improvements, but more needs to be done.

Reiny Yahnke of the WISDOT was introduced as a new member of this committee replacing Andy Winga.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION

Bill Lubinski was contacted by the YMCA for a triathlon to be held June 13. There are also three other events scheduled for June. The Metro Planning Organization has bike route maps which may be useful for the Highway Safety Commission.

The regional Traffic Management Enforcement meeting was held at the La Crosse DOT on January 27. Bill Lubinski and others attended.

The Dresbach I-90 bridge over the Mississippi River is to be replaced. A conference will be held in September in Wisconsin Dells.

There was discussion about towing. New constructions zones will have a tow vehicle standing by during construction work hours.

There is a citizen concern about Buhl Road/County Road C westbound in the West Salem Village limits. A suggestion had been made to have a 'no passing on right' sign where the speed limit changes from 35 to 55 mph. Joggers often use that route and many close calls have been observed there. The County Board would have to act on this issue.

The County has a good supply of road salt. It was reported that Madison has restricted its use of salt because of ground water runoff. For now, salt is considered one of the best methods of snow removal, but other methods may be developed in the future. La Crosse County uses a salt brine made by La Crosse County.

Concern was voiced about the slippery areas on I-90 between West Salem and the Monroe County line.

John Flynn suggested some type of heating or other method be implemented for allowing snow to slide off LED signal lights. Snow accumulates on the lights making it difficult to see the lights.

AGENDA FOR MAY 12, 2010 MEETING

Items to be included on the May 12, 2010 agenda include La Crosse County crash data for the 1st quarter of 2010, WisDOT Updates and Highway Safety Plan Solicitation, and announcements/discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mike Allison, seconded by Al Blencoe, to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:38 P.M.

Approved 05/12/10.

Roxanne Felde, Recorder