

**ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY
TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD**

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Michele James
Executive Secretary

Gary J. Jarvis
Chairman

MINUTES

January 21, 2009

PRESENT: M. James, M. Davison, G. Jarvis, R. McDougall, R. Folsom, Sheriff K. Wells, A. Peabody, Cpt. D. Chauvin, E. Olin, M. Bogart, Marty Percy, DOT (Guest), Charlotte Peabody (Guest)

ABSENT: C. Ballard, W. Dashnaw, Lt. D. Polniak

Gary Jarvis, Chair called the meeting to order and introductions around the room were made. A motion to approve the minutes of the October, 2008 meeting was made by Dick McDougall, seconded by Allan Peabody.

TRAFFIC SAFETY ACTIVITIES

Mary reported to the Board:

- starting projects under the new grant effective 10/01/08
- creating PSA's and teen driving programs
- published early fall Traffic Safety Newsletter (handouts provided)
- distributed a large amount of brochures (over 600 to WIC on car seat safety); also posters and brochures to Canton's Day Care Center
- provided 455 Teen Driver Packets to DMV Offices
- working on motorcycle safety project in cooperation with Dale Petry of SUNY Canton's Motorcycle Rider Training Course
- attended a meeting this week at Canton School regarding pedestrian safety (Mary is on a committee with students working on Safe Routes to School)
- sent out press releases to the media at Thanksgiving time regarding safe travel, pre-holiday one on DUI (two television interviews were done with Michele as a follow-up to this); submitted an article on drowsy driving for the Health Initiative Newsletter
- working on 'Save Your Friend's Life Over the Airwaves' with teens creating their own safety PSA's
- attended EAP Fairs for the County and Psych Center, and a Wellness Fair in Gouverneur
- continue promotion of our car seat program; a glitch in paperwork resulted in certification of our Ogdensburg Firemen not being renewed (Mary has been working with them to rectify this)
- Mary met with the new manager of Seaway Valley Ambulance in Massena (our CPS Grant partner)

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Sheriff Wells noted their grant has been approved for the purchase of one additional license plate reader for their department.

NEW YORK STATE POLICE

Captain Chauvin reported 2008 overall activity for the State Police increased from 2007. DWI arrests are almost double over previous years, especially in the Canton and Ogdensburg areas.

The department has two license plate readers, which are kept on the road 24 hours/day due to the valuable information they provide. They can pick up suspended registrations, scofflaws, failures to pay child support, outstanding warrants and more.

All other activity is status quo.

NYS DOT

Ernie informed Board members:

- *the DOT is now involved in their snow/ice season*
- *trying to keep plow trucks running at 35 mph or less (maximum speed with plows up at 40 mph); variable message signs are set up to note these speed regulations*
- *echelon plowing is being done statewide on interstates (two trucks plow side by side)*
- *held snow/ice meeting on 12/4 with Bill Dashnaw and contractors who plow state highways*
- *gave a presentation on 12/11 at St. Lawrence County Highway Superintendents' Meeting*
- *created a draft brochure regarding the public plowing/snowblowing across highways and will finalize it when highway superintendents review and approve it (the brochure will be handed out to individuals found plowing across roads)*
- *DOT must be cognizant of salt usage; salt has increased to \$86/ton this year from \$36/ton last year*
- *attended a meeting on the Madrid bridge; plans should be ready by 3/09 and hopefully the bridge will reopen by the end of the year*
- *Northern Tier Expressway meeting was held on 12/02 at Canton High School; there is a Citizens Coalition for Economic Infrastructure Development working on problems/issues regarding the expressway*
- *DOT is anticipating stimulus funds from the federal government for roadwork, and estimates are now being prepared if it comes through*
- *DOT is currently working with Lowes, who want to open their Potsdam store before the roadwork on Route 56 is completed*
- *speed zone on Route 11 will be reduced to 45 mph starting ½ mile south of Wal-Mart to Maple Street in Potsdam*
- *a shared services committee is working with the Village of Norwood and Norwood-Norfolk Central School; DOT is also working with a committee in Canton to set up shared fuel and salt storage facilities*
- *handed out DOT Safe Winter Driving Brochures*
- *introduced today's guest, Marty Percy, Regional Traffic Engineer from the Watertown Office*

Mr. Percy gave the Board an overview of his office, how they are structured, the types of issues/concerns they address, traffic engineering and safety studies they do, etc. They currently have 42 open studies they're working on in Clinton, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties (17 of them in St. Lawrence County). He explained how decisions are made regarding signage, signal requests, issuance of special hauling permits to name a few.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Mike Bogart reported for Tier I (Seaway Valley):

- *Winter's here. To date, 56" of snow has fallen in St. Lawrence County. The same issues crop up each winter.*
- *As mentioned earlier, people continue to plow/snowblow snow across the roadways in violation of the law; they also continue to violate 'no parking' ordinances in the villages during overnight and snowplowing hours*
- *Drivers need more education concerning safe speeds around snowplows. Mike can't stress enough the dangers raised by those drivers who are not afraid of snowplows and drive too fast when encountering them*
- *A few select highway superintendents will travel to Albany in March with lobbying efforts; also several superintendents from the County will be going to Ithaca early in June for more training and education*

Roger Folsom reported for Tier 2 (Adirondacks):

- snowplows have already made 90-100 trips over our roads this season
- requested more assistance from law enforcement regarding violators plowing/snowblowing snow across roads and leaving messes to be cleaned up by highway crews

STOP-DWI

Michele noted as of 12/31/08, we've had 572 DWI Arrests and 86 Felony Arrests in St. Lawrence County. As of 12/31/07, there were 554 DWI Arrests and 84 Felony Arrests.

In 2008, 26.5% of arrests had BAC's of .18 and above. Ten percent of the arrests were under the age of 21.

Enforcement

- 4th Quarter Arrest Reports for 2008 by Police Agencies and T-Sled Arrests as of 12/2008 were given to members
- Standardized Field Sobriety Testing will be hosted by the David Sullivan Law Enforcement Academy at SUNY Canton in March 2009

Public Information

- Radio spots were done. Michele did a radio interview with Scott Dosztan, WPDM and two television interviews with WWNY and News10Now
- Displays/Health Fair – materials provided for Clarkson University, St. Lawrence County EAP Health Fair and SUNY Potsdam
- Gave presentations to 7th and 8th graders at Canton School
- Provided two newspaper articles for New Year's Eve in the Ogdensburg Advance

Administration

- Working on 4th Quarter Revenue/Expenditure Report for GTSC. Our 2009 STOP-DWI Plan was submitted and tentatively approved.
- Two individuals completed our Victim Impact Panel Videos for court compliance
- Putting together a recidivism report on DWI and DDP for the past 15 years looking for any trends.
- Faxed/emailed lists to courts that have outstanding cases.
- A February meeting has been scheduled with the County Courts and Probation to discuss fine collection.
- Attending weekly Drug Court which has several DWI cases.
- Continue to serve on GTSC's Task Force on Impaired Driving for Assessment, Evaluation and Treatment

TRAFFIC SAFETY GRANT UPDATE

Michele informed the Board:

- There were 12 Traffic Safety Fatalities in 2008 (3-speed/weather, 2-alcohol, 1-pulled out in front of oncoming traffic, 2-crossed into opposite lane, 1-snowmobiler struck by hit and run driver, 1-driver rear-ended pushing car into oncoming traffic, 1-motorcycle failed to negotiate curve, 1-failed to negotiate curve a high rate of speed)
- 4th quarter claim voucher has been submitted to the state
- 253 Parent Packets provided to the DMV
- Currently preparing a mailing for the school districts for "Parents Who Host..."

OTHER CONCERNS

Mr. Percy mentioned he will be making a presentation to town highway superintendents in February talking about how we establish speed zones and get updates on signing for work zone traffic.

Mr. Percy will also be meeting next week with representatives of NYSP Troops B and D selecting traffic safety corridors for 2009 (to target aggressive driving behaviors including DWI and others).

Dick McDougall informed Board members of a new regulation for traffic safety vests to be worn by special emergency service providers, law enforcement, EMS and fire personnel effective in November, 2008. He's not sure all departments/agencies are in compliance but feels it's a good idea and hopes everyone will get on the band wagon to comply with the regulation.

Michele inquired about asking Dave Forsythe to attend our next meeting, and Gary replied yes, that Dave would be interested and to let him know when and where the April meeting would be held.

Michele mentioned that she is a member of the County's Adopt A Platoon Committee. Our adopted platoon left for Afghanistan on 01/06/09. We are requesting supplies or donations to purchase them and mailing packages to them at times throughout the year.

Mike Bogart noted the County Highway Superintendents' Association will hold their next meeting on 02/12/09 at McCarthy's in Canton at 9 a.m. with breakfast and meeting to follow. Any interested Board members are welcome to attend.

A motion to adjourn today's meeting was made by Kevin Wells, seconded by Dick McDougall. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 22, 2009 at 3 p.m. in Canton.

Respectfully Submitted,


Kim Hayes
Recording Secretary