LA CROSSE COUNTY HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES

Wednesday, February 13, 2013
La Crosse County Administration Building Room B390
1:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:  Tim Berg, Brad Byom, Jackie Eastwood, Matt Gallager,
Tim Hammes, Ilona Hansen, Thomas Knoop, Robert Koenen,
Bill Lubinski, Evan Stone

MEMBERS EXCUSED:  Roland Solberg

MEMBERS ABSENT:  

OTHERS PRESENT:  Chris Hubbuch

CALL TO ORDER:
Sgt. Bill Lubinski, Committee Coordinator, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Ilona Hansen, seconded by Tim Berg, to approve the November 14, 2012 Highway
Safety Commission minutes as corrected.  Motion carried unanimously.

LA CROSSE COUNTY CRASH DATA FOR 4th QUARTER OF 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st quarter</th>
<th>2nd quarter</th>
<th>3rd quarter</th>
<th>4th quarter</th>
<th>Yearly Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sheriff Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hit &amp; run</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car/deer</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>291</td>
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<tr>
<td>Injury</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>124</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>739</td>
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Comparison of Prior Year Totals

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>3rd quarter</th>
<th>4th quarter</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>190</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>168</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>228</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>705</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>260</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>180</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>739</td>
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The average of 4th quarter accidents from 2003 to 2012 in La Crosse County is 269. This is
below average for the 4th quarter. The 10 year average is at 801 for the last 10 years; a little
below average. Of the 240 crashes in the 4th quarter, 11 involved the use of alcohol (4 of the 11 were injury accidents and 7 were property damage). In the 4th quarter there were 137 reportable crashes (not counting car/deer crashes) with 246 occupants, 208 reported using seatbelts for an 84% compliance rate. The car/deer crashes took a large jump in the 4th quarter (during the month of October). Included in the car/deer crash was one coyote crash. Sixteen crashes were hit and run and 15 of those were property damage, one was an injury crash.

Bill Lubinski reported that the number of crashes for the 1st quarter will be very high; Highway 53 has been especially bad, as well as the Interstate. It started out as a bad year.

Tim Berg reported that when the cable barriers went in many of the officer’s felt that the barriers would now account for crashes that would have been just slide-ins, creating more property damage. Since then, the opinion has changed greatly. The officers realize that the barriers have prevented head-on crashes and cross-over’s and there is now a lot of positive feedback regarding them. Tim Hammes reported that repairs on the barriers are actually faster than repairing a guardrail.

**WISDOT UPDATES & HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN SOLICITATION**

Thomas Knoop reported that 2012 finished out with 602 fatalities. Currently we started out this year running about half of what we were at last year for fatalities. However, in the last ten days or so, this has changed and we are now back up; basically running slightly behind last year. Today’s fatal report shows we had 55 at this time last year and we are at 53 for this year.

Pedestrian fatalities are up; at five this year.

La Crosse County finished up last year with nine fatalities, which was a little over half of what the previous year reported. It is believed that the extra seatbelt enforcement contributed to the 84% seatbelt use reported in crashes that the County responded to as well as the reduction in fatalities. The five year average is at eight. La Crosse County is viewed as a relatively safe county.

In reference to fatalities by month, November and December were back to back months among the safest on record; finishing with 33 fatalities.

**2012 Safety Report:**
- Regional fatalities – Across our region fatalities increased, there have preliminarily been 36 more fatalities in Wisconsin so far this year versus last year. All of the states had double digit increases. Nationally, fatalities were up more than 7% over the first nine months of this year compared to 2011.
- Motorcycle fatalities - Motorcycle fatalities increased; there were 114 motorcycle-related fatalities this year. This is the second highest total we have ever had. There is a 30% increase in motorcycle driver fatalities and a 75% increase in motorcycle passenger fatalities. In instances where helmet use is known, it is estimated that approximately 77% of all motorcycle fatalities in 2012 were not wearing helmets, down from approximately 92% last year.
- Multiple fatality crashes – There was a 34% increase in passenger fatalities this year versus 2011. More than 50% of fatalities are unbelted during the crash.
- Weather – It is thought that the unseasonably mild winter at the beginning of the year certainly helped drive the numbers up. Speed related fatalities make up around 29% of all Wisconsin fatalities (2011 statistic).
- Rural crashes/fatalities – 75% of Wisconsin’s traffic fatalities occur in the country.
- What was done differently in 2012 to try to make a difference – The Summer of Safety was implemented by the Secretary’s Office to use education, enforcement and engineering working together to make our roads safer. Air support was out at the Interstate working with patrol to try and keep speeds down. There were more grants targeted this last year than in previous years; with more for 2013. Seasonal enforcement began for areas that did not meet targeting for all year round funded enforcement grants, but had enough data-affirmed seasonal safety needs to allow for targeted grants just for those times of year.
- What can be done in 2013 to continue to make a difference – Another element was added to the click-it targeting; taking a look at counties that have a higher than average registration of pick-up trucks (if they have a higher than average registration of pick-up trucks the county sheriff’s departments were targeted to receive some money for seat belt enforcement). Where necessary, consider options to strengthen our laws (including increasing the seat belt fine and enhancing our current GDL laws).

In reference to the Wisconsin Motorcycle Data sheet, looking back through the years; the helmet law was repealed in either 1978 or 1979 and these are the two highest years for motorcycle fatalities.

Laws of the Month:
- January 2013: Move over law.
- February 2013: State law prohibits cell phone use while driving for many teens.
- March 2013: Drivers are responsible for all unbuckled passengers.

GUUNDERSEN LUTHERAN SIGNAGE UPDATE

Brad Byom reported that he has been told that a lot of the confusion is coming from the people that are actually sitting on the off ramp (stopped at the stop lights). Directly in line with the ramp is one of Gundersen Lutheran’s signs. It looks like the on ramp is actually a frontage road, causing confusion that the ramp leads back to the clinic. They are planning to remove that sign. There is another sign located near South Kinney Coulee Road that will be moved to the east so it is closer to the interchange. It will have a right arrow on it; which should direct at least the ramp traffic to turn right instead of going through and getting back on the Interstate. In addition, since the last meeting, the DOT has put a large green sign up that says "Freeway Entrance" at the on ramp. Hopefully this will help to clarify that this is not a frontage road, but in fact an entrance to the Interstate. Brad reported that Gundersen Lutheran will be doing their sign relocations and the status of the project is slated for sometime this next year; possibly this summer. Brad also commented that this only fixes the traffic that is at the off ramp; not fixing anything that is happening up on the Interstate. Brad reported that he learned that the reason they can’t put anything on the Interstate is due to Wisconsin Law’s on outdoor advertising.

Bill Lubinski reported that he and Roland Solberg met with Representative Steve Doyle on December 28th in regard to this matter. Unknown to Bill at that time, two days prior, Representative Doyle was put on the Transportation Committee down in Madison and he’s been in contact with Representative Schilling also. They are all aware of this situation and they were going to bring it while in Madison.

It was reported that Angela Adams has been spearheading this effort. Bill supplied her name to Representative Doyle and reports that it sounded very positive from what Representative Doyle relayed. He is going to look into east and westbound signs on the Interstate and signs at the bottom of the off ramps. He was going to find out why the Shrine has signs out there
and how they were able to get that through the budget process, etc.. Bill reports that he has not heard any further updates since that time.

Tim Berg reported that he spoke with Angela Adams back in December and she relayed that one of the considerations they were looking into was the idea of taking out the cross over at the 7-mile marker; eliminating it so people could not go through. Tim reports that he believes this would be bad for the Onalaska Police Department, as well as the fire fighters he spoke with, whom feel the same way. Tim Hammes comments that he is also in agreement about this not being a good idea. Tim Berg requests that it is relayed back that an “unofficial poll” was taken and this committee is not in favor of the cross over being eliminated. An example of this not being feasible is that if there is a crash at the 6-mile marker westbound and the Onalaska Fire Department and Police Department are trying to get to the scene, they would have to go to the 10-mile marker and come back, adding seven miles on to their response time.

Tim Hammes reports that his recommendation is to leave the cross over where it is, but widen it; to at least double the width. In addition, this would provide more safety for the county plow trucks.

Brad Byom reports that he will relay the concern that eliminating the cross over is not a viable option. Brad also comments that it may be appropriate to have Angela Adams at the next meeting to discuss these issues. Brad will send an email to Angela inviting her to attend the next Highway Safety meeting.

Bill Lubinski reported that he will try to get a hold of Representative Doyle to see if he would be willing to come in to attend a meeting.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION**

Bill Lubinski reported that Brad Byom provided information in reference to a party to contact about the car kill deer contractor update. There was a concern as to the lack of the deer being disposed of. Bill sent a letter to Mark Burmesch. Mark is the business service manager of the Bureau of Law Enforcement for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Mark advised that he would forward the letter he received to their purchasing agent in Madison who works with the contract renewals.

In reference to highway maintenance, Bill Lubinski reported that he contacted Joe Clements and learned that the area up on Highway 53 from County Road T to the county line is covered by Trempealeau County maintenance. The Sheriff’s Department had received a complaint from a citizen in that area about the lack of how snow is being moved off the roadway. Tim Hammes explained that the determination goes by lane miles. On the Interstate, La Crosse County goes to the 22 mile marker (which is in Monroe County). It goes by how much lane miles each truck has and the truck on the Highway 53 location does all of Highway 35 from Holmen, across Onalaska; splitting at the 4-lane, covering the 2-lane plus Highway 35 that goes to Trempealeau County. Bill reported that the Sheriff’s Department had a crash that occurred on Highway 53 just north of County Road T. Squads responded but could not pull over off to the shoulder because the snow was so heavy on the shoulder. The Squads were actually sitting in the lane of traffic in the snowstorm trying to slow cars down. A neighbor in the area came out and stressed their concern about the lack of snow removal. Tim Hammes reported that he has contacted Trempealeau County in reference to this problem and is waiting for a call back.
Bill Lubinski reported receiving a complaint that came into the Sheriff’s Department regarding the speed limit on a new road that is being built in the LB White area; wondering if there would be speed bumps on the road. Per Tim Berg, this road would be in the City of Onalaska and felt that there would not be speed bumps. Jackie Eastwood reported that this would most likely be more of a private road. Tim Berg will look into this and report back his findings.

Bill Lubinski reported on a concern received about paint markings on Interstate 90 at Highway 16; wondering why there are not markings on the pavement as you are coming off the Interstate eastbound. Evidently the caller was involved in a crash out there; apparently the other driver ran into him and was mixed up on which lane was the correct one to be in, ultimately causing the crash. Tim Hammes reported the Department of Transportation does not have a contract for special pavement markings. Brad Byom will look into what the standard marking policy is for this type of area.

Brad Byom reported that there is an Interstate project starting this summer; beginning at the Highway 16 interchange and going to the county line by West Salem. This will be an asphalt paving and resurfacing. Any pavement markings that are there now would need to be repainted. There will be single lane closures. Tim Hammes reported that this project will also include a 6’ chain link fence being put in from South Kinney to Farm and Fleet.

Brad Byom reported on the Farm and Fleet area project. When going westbound on Highway 16 (left turn lane to South Kinney); the left turn lane is being extended, eliminating the ability to make a left turn into Farm and Fleet. Farm and Fleet is working directly with the city to acquire access from the side road by Best Buy. The project is not scheduled for this year.

Brad Byom reported on the bridges on Highway 157 at Interstate 90. One bridge is getting redecked and one is getting overlays. This will involve closure of the loop ramps during construction.

Brad Byom reported on Highway 16 projects. Highway 157 to South Kinney Coulee will be detoured. Basically it will be closed Sunday evening to Friday morning for the first two weeks in May for concrete work. Then the 3rd and 4th week of May there will be single lane closures at night for paving. Also on Highway 16 from Gillette Street to Highway 157 they will be crossing traffic over to do more pavement repairs and overlay. This project is scheduled for August or September; to be complete by Oktoberfest.

Bill Lubinski reported on a situation concerning horses getting out on the Interstate near the 18 mile marker. There was an accident and the vehicle went through the fence. Tim Hammes reported that the fence has since been repaired.

Matt Gallager reported that sometime in the June to July period; Oak Street from Enterprise to Palace will be closed for reconstruction for approximately 6-8 weeks. Later in the season (September/October); 33rd Street from Bentwood to Solaris will be closed and detoured. This project will also last approximately 6-8 weeks.

Matt Gallager reported that the Hood Street bridge (Niedbalski) will be closed for three months; June through August, for redecking. Traffic will be detoured to the Cook Street bridge and temporary signals will be set-up.
AGENDA FOR MAY 8, 2013 MEETING

Items to be included on the May 8, 2013 agenda are La Crosse County crash data 1st quarter, WisDOT Updates and Highway Safety Plan Solicitation, Interstate signage update, announcements/discussion and set agenda for the August 14, 2013 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Tim Berg, seconded by Thomas Knoop, to adjourn the meeting at 2:59 P.M. Motion carried. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Approved 5/8/13, Lisa Bruring, Recorder