LA CROSSE COUNTY HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES  

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

MEMBERS PRESENT:  
Bob Bott, Brad Byom, Gifford Collins, Jackie Eastwood,  
Matt Gallager, Tim Hammes, Ilona Hansen, Robert Koenen,  
Bill Lubinski, Craig Teff  

MEMBERS EXCUSED:  
Robert Solberg, Tim Berg  

MEMBERS ABSENT:  

OTHERS PRESENT:  
Jay Loeffler, Michael Thompson, Marilyn Pedretti, Rick Warren,  
Bob and Ruth Spacek, Kermit & Sandy Hanson, Mike Parker,  
Virginia Kreyer, Dick Swantz, Dale Peterson  

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES  

Motion by Ilona Hansen, seconded by Matt Gallager, to approve the August 14, 2013 Highway Safety Commission minutes as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.  

LA CROSSE COUNTY CRASH DATA FOR 3rd QUARTER OF 2013  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013</th>
<th>1st quarter</th>
<th>2nd quarter</th>
<th>3rd quarter</th>
<th>4th quarter</th>
<th>Yearly Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheriff Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit &amp; run</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car/deer</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property damage</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison of Prior Year Totals  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st quarter</th>
<th>2nd quarter</th>
<th>3rd quarter</th>
<th>4th quarter</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>295</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>234</td>
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<td>313</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>260</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The average of 3rd quarter accidents from 2003 to 2013 in La Crosse County is 152. This is below average. Of the crashes in the 3rd quarter, eight involved the use of alcohol. Of those eight alcohol related crashes; five were injury, two were hit and run (one of those involving drugs) and one was property damage. Of the 12 hit and run crashes, 11 were property damage and one was injury. For the 3rd quarter there were 91 reportable crashes with 175 occupants, 134 reported using seatbelts for a 76.5% compliance rate.

The Sheriff’s Department worked one fatality during the 3rd quarter, which occurred on August 23rd at 2:25 PM in the Town of Onalaska on Highway 35, just south of Holmen. There were two vehicles involved. The southbound vehicle jumped the grass covered median and struck a northbound vehicle, killing the driver of the northbound vehicle. Both vehicles airbags deployed and both occupants had their seatbelts on.

CAR/DEER CONTRACTOR UPDATE

Dale Peterson, private contractor, reported that his corporation has been in place for eight years. He currently covers 15 different counties (Sawyer, Washburn, Barron, Eau Claire, Chippewa, Pepin, Buffalo, Trempealeau, La Crosse, Vernon, Monroe, Juneau, Jackson, Marathon and Wood). Dale reports that the State is in the process of sending out questionnaires to any government identity that has anything to do with the car/deer kill situation (i.e. contractors, public safety, county landfills, etc.). They are gathering information to see what they can do in the future for deer disposal. Currently, the bids are awarded on an annual basis from July to July; on a county to county basis. A potential change being instead of doing county to county they will break it into regions (10-15 counties per region) and also possibly extending the contract out. When the information from the questionnaires is gathered they will need approximately a month to put it all together and then send the information out; holding meetings throughout the state to discuss a possible path to take in the future.

Dale reports that as far as notification goes for La Crosse County, all information he receives comes from the dispatchers. Dale is receptive to the idea of dispatchers giving his phone number out to the public to call him directly to report a car/deer hit for removal. Dale also reported that the State does have a guideline which he is to follow and his crew consistently takes care of the removals well within that timeframe. Dales also states that they have four trucks; three are out on any given day. The deer are taken to landfills. In addition, Monroe County has a Big Cat Sanctuary that tons of deer have been taken to; thus avoiding the landfill fee and providing free meat for the cats. There are also a couple of places where individuals are raising dogs for either federal or state drug dogs, security guards, etc. that take the deer. Ultimately, depending on where the deer are at dictates where they are disposed of on that given date.

Bill Lubinski asked if there is anything that can be done on behalf of law enforcement as well as the general public to streamline the process to ensure timely pickups, other than calling it in. On this same token, would it be beneficial to begin marking the deer with spray paint as was done in the past? The process was stopped as the last contractor was taking the deer to a facility that was selling the hides. Dale responds that it would be fine to begin that process again. A benefit to marking the deer is people will know that it has been called in and awaiting pickup, thus eliminating multiple calls to dispatch.

COMMUNITY MAPS PROGRAM

Bill Lubinski reported on the community mapping project that was discussed at the last highway safety meeting. By state statute each county highway safety committee is to have a
spot map of the crash data on hand and on file. If the DOT were to come in and ask to see crash data/spot map it has to be supplied to them. We have been without a spot map for quite a while now. We hoped to begin working with the Community Maps. Bill reports that he learned shortly after the August meeting that the DOT has pulled their funding on community maps.

Brad Byom reported that there is another application called the WISLR Map which is a little more in depth; you can actually click on an accident dot and download the accident report right from this WISLR map application. Brad feels that this application has more functionality than the community map does. A Tops Laboratory user name and password is necessary to access the system. Brad will contact the Tops Lab to see how they are coming on the actual plotting of the maps. In addition, Brad will check with Tops on the printing capability of the maps.

**WISDOT UPDATES & HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN SOLICITATION**

Bob Bott (Thomas Knoop’s replacement) reported that as of November 3rd La Crosse County had four fatalities which is down substantially from last year and half of what the five year average is.

**Legislative Update (Bills of Interest):**

**Enacted**
- Act 16, Off-Road Council: Effective June 23, 2013, creates state wide council advisory to DNR, DOT, the legislature and the Governor, and made up of persons representing the interests of off-road vehicle users.

**Passed**
- AB-389, Maximum Speed Limit: On interstate highways currently posted with a 65mph speed limit, this bill raises the speed limit to 70mph. This is currently on hold, but expected to go through next year.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION**

**Traffic/Safety Issue on Mormon Coulee Road/Hwy 14 @ 33rd Street:**

This location is not controlled by any signals and is a 5-lane section of Mormon Coulee Road (2 lanes northbound, 2 lanes southbound with a 2-way left turn lane in the center).

Citizens residing in this area were present to express their concerns about the traffic at this location. When traveling down off the overhead on Highway 14 headed south, the traffic speeds up to 50-55 mph. When turning in to Rivercrest Village; if there were to be a bicyclist or pedestrian at that location; it is believed that this is an accident waiting to happen. In addition, when coming out of the park at certain hours of the day (7:00 – 9:00 AM/3:00 – 6:00 PM), it is virtually impossible to get out with the traffic flow on Highway 14. Unfortunately, this is the only way in and out of the park.

Brad Byom reported this intersection has come up in the past. The most recent turning volume count study was done in September of 2012. Based on the very low volume on both of the side streets, we do not meet any of the signal warranting criteria, based on the data. A more recent volume count study is planned for this location to see if it does now meet the warrant criteria due to the fact that there has been some accident history since the 2012 study. The new study will not take place until the spring, as wintertime counts sometimes
don’t work very well due to icy weather conditions (tubes need to be placed across the roadway). The study will be put on the May Highway Safety Meeting agenda.

Brad Byom further explained what the signal warrants are. There are eight different factors that are looked at to determine whether or not signals are warranted at an intersection. These are federal guidelines developed by the Federal Highway Administration. They are nationwide standards so that every state has the same criteria for signals.

It was discussed by Brad Byom that some possible solutions to this area include street lighting that would help with nighttime awareness. The other option that could be looked at would be right turn lanes and maybe converting (if possible) the center lane to include a dedicated left turn lane being painted in it.

Jackie Eastwood commented about the possibility of a round-a-bout being put there. Brad agreed that this could be a possibility, and will look at it as part of the analysis when the volume count study is done. Brad also reported that in some cases it may be better to construct right turn lanes for both north and southbound traffic with dedicated left turn lanes. In addition, Brad will check on the speed limit signage in the area to see if there is adequate signage.

Highway 53 Concern:

Kermit Hanson brought reference to traveling north of Drugan’s, wanting to turn left on A Johnson Road (a two-lane highway with new shoulders); with no provision for passing on the right when cars are turning left.

Brad Byom reported that this location differs from other town roads as the other town roads are simple “T” intersections. This location happens to be somewhat of an offset 4-lane intersection. There is only 450 feet from County Road T to A Johnson Road. The root of the problem is that lack of separation (450 feet). If County Road T didn’t exist we could give a bypass lane with no questions asked. Because County Road T is there, we have to provide a right turn lane for County Road T. If there were more separation there, we could do a combination right turn/bypass lane. However, to do that, we would need 550 feet of separation. Brad also reported that as of January 1st 2010, it is legal to drive on a fully paved shoulder to drive around people that are turning left.

Brad also proposed a possible solution of if the town were to get a right of way permit to work on right of way from the department and relocate that intersection another 100 feet south (basically reconstructing the road), we would then have the spacing needed to provide bypass lanes in both directions. In addition, Brad will check on the speed limit signage in the area to see if there is adequate signage.

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Jackie Eastwood reported that she received a Power Point presentation from Tracy Herlitzke; director with CESA #4 (Cooperative Educational Service Agency). They did a survey of high schools in La Crosse County to assess risky behavior. The presentation contained some interesting points about texting and driving, drinking and driving, etc. Tracy is willing to come to the February 12th meeting to discuss her findings.

Tim Hammes reported on the OA projects. The DOT portion is done; the county portion will be surfaced next year. Bill Lubinski reported that he has received numerous complaints that
there is no street light at the intersection of County Road O and OA. Brad Byom will look into this situation and report back to the committee.

Ilona Hansen presented a magnetic “stop texting” sign that she obtained while visiting Pennsylvania. The signs were being handed out to place on cars. Ilona believes it would be beneficial to have something like this here in La Crosse County. Bob Bott will look into the possibility of producing a similar sign.

AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 12, 2014 MEETING

Items to be included on the February 12, 2014 agenda are La Crosse County crash data 4rd quarter, WisDOT Updates and Highway Safety Plan Solicitation, CESA #4 Risky Behavior Presentation, announcements/discussion and set agenda for the May 14, 2014 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Matt Gallager, seconded by Ilona Hansen, to adjourn the meeting at 3:32 P.M. Motion carried. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Approved 2/12/14, Lisa Bruring, Recorder
Amended 2/12/14, Lisa Bruring, Recorder