

**Pinellas Community Traffic Safety Team Meeting**  
**January 4, 2007**  
**Minutes**

Chair David Fechter called the general meeting to order and welcomed members present. Introductions were made. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

**Subcommittee Reports:**

**Education** – Kim discussed the Battle of the Belts status. They are modeling their program after a USAA Colorado Springs program. The February kick off including breakfast is being planned. The focus is to create resources and develop a model kit that the students will use to conduct and implement the program. The six-week campaign includes unannounced seat belt checks. Results and activities are documented and submitted independently. This approach does not limit school participation due to manpower issues. Bob Mitchell, AAA South, presented a donation for \$1000 to Kim to support the Battle of the Belts campaign.

Bruce reported on events with the CARS program, Toys for Tots and future activities, such as attending the Florida State Fair in February. In March they will be at the Quaker Steak and Lube car show. The Pinellas SO is working to create awareness of the Move Over Law. They will be at checkpoints with Largo and Pinellas PD's in January.

**Enforcement** –Ron McKenzie reported on the St. Pete PD who conducted five school zone operations, three red light ops and speeding operations that resulted in 163 citations. The Pinellas Park PD had a New Years Eve wolf pack that resulted in 2 DUI, 7 DWLSR, 53 citations, 1 felony and 1 drug. The Pinellas SO held an aircraft detail on the Bayside Bridge on New Years Eve that netted 20 speeding, 3 DWLSR, 4 moving, 3 nonmoving, 1 fleeing and eluding, 5 warnings, 31 citations and 2 arrests. Countywide wolf packs were held on New Years Eve and Day that resulted in 6 DUI, 7 DWLSR, 20 speeding, 18 moving, 4 nonmoving, 2 seatbelts, 1 exp. Tag, 1 viol. DL restriction, 1 reckless driving, 1 felony poss. controlled substance and 1 with intent to sell, 1 mis warrant, 12 arrests and 60 citations. December totals were 91 citations and 15 arrests. They will be doing a DUI Checkpoint on 1/19/07 in PP at Mainlands and US 19. It was noted that the overall DUI's were less for Pinellas than in previous years. Officers said they observed a great number of taxis that night which may have contributed to fewer impaired drivers. Train Safety Awareness Week is the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of April and there will be focus on that area during that time.

**Engineering** – Marc Hanger reported that Clearwater Fire and Rescue purchased 19 drive cams (Zone Defense) for their vehicles to help modify driving behavior and prevent accidents. Snell Isle Blvd. in St. Petersburg is soon getting bike lanes. Preliminary markings have been completed. Also, "side paths" – wider sidewalks for both cyclists and pedestrians are planned for 62 Ave. N. National Work Zone Awareness Week will

be campaigned from April 2- April 6, 2007. One slogan will be “Learn Sign Language: it Could Save a Life”. Also, FHWA said that work zone deaths increased 50% nationally between 1997 and 2004. Sate Representative Rick Kriseman of St. Petersburg and State Senator Mike Fasano of New Port Richey have signed on as sponsors and will write a bill aimed at clarifying who goes first at a crosswalk. The new lighted crosswalk (overhead strobe lights) safety system in St. Petersburg reported in November known as the enhancer system is getting 90 % compliance from drivers. Currently, 20 locations are pedestrian activated.

**TIM** – Jeanette reported that Terry was absent due to moving into their new facility and that updates will be provided later.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

A letter was sent from Dave on behalf of the CTST to note how valuable Officer Ron McKenzie has been with traffic safety issues in Pinellas Park. Ron appreciated the comments and hoped that through rotation he might be able to return in Sept. or Oct. His replacement, Officer Mike Piacenza, was introduced and welcomed.

**NEW BUSINESS** –Diane MacLennan from the local chapter of ABATE (American Bikers Aim Towards Education) presented the goals and objectives of the group which focus on public awareness, safety awareness and education. They are working on educational programs for the schools and legislation aimed on prevention and safety for bikes and drivers. Motorcycle crashes are increasing and ABATE does have 3 billboards at the state line and on benches to highlight safety. ABATE did receive a \$500,000 grant to put on statewide safety campaigns which is the funding for the school curriculum project. Diane explained current activity undertaken by Broward County regarding mounting signs that say “Check Twice for Motorcycles” under stop signs on local roads. It is hoped that Pinellas County will also want to erect permanent signs to remind motorists to look for bikes. The local chapter will assist with putting the signs up if this is accepted.

There was support for the concept but state roads are limited due to federal regulations. The team suggested that she approach county traffic administrators for input on adding signs. This would be the first step to accomplish this project.

**Announcements** –Jeanette announced that the Law Enforcement Challenge awards do include a CTST of the Year. Pinellas CTST did win the award twice in past years and members felt that we should apply again. The deadline is April 20, 2007 and covers our efforts in 2006. Dave requested a subcommittee of volunteers to help with the submittal. Kim and Kris volunteered to help.

The 402 Safety Grant Concept papers are due March 31. There is \$35 million this year. The application is online and can be found at [www.ctst.org](http://www.ctst.org).

Robert gave an update to the Safe Routes to School funding. It is a reimbursement program and \$825,000 is the District 7 allocation. Peter gave an update on the projects and referred all to [www.srtsfl.org](http://www.srtsfl.org) for further information. Feb. 28 is the 2007 deadline for project applications.

The Senate and the House have sponsorship for primary enforcement (seatbelt) legislation, House Bill 27 and Senate Bill 484. The bills are identical so this is encouraging and there is optimism that they may pass this year.

The Quarterly CTST Statewide meeting is on Monday, Jan 8 in Ybor City from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. The next statewide meeting will be held in Orlando on April 9 and will be a workshop format.

The LifeSavers Conference is March 25- 27 in Chicago. FDOT has an excellent booth that showcases our CTST programs. If interested in helping to man the booth, you can apply for sponsorship. The application is due Monday and can be turned in at the state meeting.

Our next CTST meeting is February 1, 2007.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,  
Thea Johnson, CTST Secretary

**Members Present:**

Lt. Phil Beahn	St. Petersburg PD	893-7157
Ron Bulen	Pinellas MPO	464-8200
Katherine Burbridge	Pinellas County	453-3457
Robert Davis	Pinellas County	464-8855
David Fechter	HNTB	813-884-7339
Mike Gust	City of Dunedin	298-3223
Marc Hanger	Pinellas MPO	464-8200
Terry Harding	AAA Auto Club South	448-2600
Peter Hsu	FDOT Safety	813-975-6251
Kim Jowell	Suncoast Safety Council	442-0233 x 328
Thea Johnson	Neighborly Care Network	571-4384
Ashley Marchese	Pinellas Park Fire Dept	541-0713
Ron McKenzie	Pinellas Park PD	541-0758
Mike Meehan	Traffic Pulse Network	813-637-0170
Robert Mitchell	AAA Auto Club South	448-2600
Elizabeth Monforti	Palm Harbor Fire Dept	
Bruce Murakami	Safe Teen Driver	420-7937
Renee Napier	Safe Teen Driver	850-393-7441
Tom Paul	Congressman Bilirakis	773-2871

Cpl Jim Piper	Pinellas County SO	582-6434
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT, Safety	813-975-6256
Kris Scholz	Palm Harbor Fire Rescue	787-5974
Bruce Shaw	CSX Railroad Police	813-664-6397
Bonnie Tarsitano	Pinellas Co Traffic	464-8926
Venkat Vattikuti	Tindale Oliver	813-224-8862
Jackie Zakrzewski	Pinellas Co MPO	464-8200
Michael Piacenza	Pinellas Park PD	541-7758
Suzanne Boisvert	Pinellas Park Fire Dept	541-0713
Steve Cook	FDOT	