

## **Pinellas County Community Traffic Safety Team Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2005**

Dave Fechter called the meeting to order and welcomed all members. Introductions were made around the room and a few new faces were present. The minutes of the 4-7-05 meeting were approved as submitted.

### **Subcommittee Reports:**

**Education:** Jeanette Rouse reported we've just drafted a letter to go out to business leaders in Pinellas County asking for donations to help print the Recipes for the Road booklet this year. She also had a note from Thea Johnson reporting the Touch a Truck event in Dunedin was well attended. Kris Scholz reported on the Fire Department extrication event held March 19<sup>th</sup> in Palm Harbor. They had a great turnout for the Safety Day on Saturday with many vendors and car seat checks. Kris also announced that Kristy Patterson is back home recovering and hopes to be back at work in June.

**Engineering:** Marc Hanger reported that at Keene Road, north of East Bay Drive, right turns have been posted to be prohibited at the intersection due to fatalities in the area. Also planned are new pedestrian signals with countdown features and left turns will be limited at driveway entrances. The MPO board is examining the benefits and difficulties of creating a single name for multi-named roads. This project will be a driver navigation improvement, similar to the US 19 way-finding and Gulf Beach mile marker signs.

Major MOTs (Maintenance of Traffic) - Drew Street will be closed at US 19 from May 6 until May 9 and at Myrtle from May 9 until June 20. Belcher Road will be closed between NE Coachman and Sunset Point Road from May 31 until June 21, 2005.

New innovations – Safety Dynamics, an Illinois company, has developed a listening device that will automatically dial 911 when it hears vehicle crashes or gun fire. The City of Chicago is testing the device.

Peter Hsu reported FDOT has heard the request from locals that they want count down pedestrian signals and is in the process of buying them now. He said we should have a supply within six months and can provide them to the cities and counties. We do not have enough to cover the entire district. Send your priority location request to Pete Yauch and he can compile a priority list for Pinellas County.

**Enforcement:** Ron McKenzie reported Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, Pinellas Park Police Department, and the CSX Railroad Police conducted a railroad grade crossing enforcement detail on 4/20 and 4/21/05. This activity included 40 traffic citations. The Sheriff's Office conducted a saturation patrol on 4/21 in Oldsmar, which included 96 traffic citations. Clearwater PD conducted a red light detail on 4/29/05 at the four highest crash intersections in the city. They gave out 181 total citations, 122 were for red light running. On 5/3/05, a county-wide school bus stop enforcement detail was held. It included 33 officers from 6 agencies and netted 44 bus stop violations and a total of 143 violations. All local press agencies were on hand for this detail. St. Pete

Beach conducted a sobriety/safety checkpoint on 4/15/05 which netted 10 DUI arrests and 42 total citations. The Sheriff's Office conducted two sustained enforcement details on 4/8/05 in Tarpon Springs with 15 citations, and on 4/9/05 in Palm Harbor which netted 10 arrests, 3 of which were DUI.

Glen Luben reported on the recent Traffic Incident Management meeting. He said they are looking at moving the crashed vehicles from the roadway. Training will be held in Tampa with PB Faradyne experts on public safety. Peter said there was good dialogue on open roads and good attendance from enforcement.

**Old Business:** There was a brief discussion on Opticom, the traffic signal device that can preempt a signal when fire trucks and emergency vehicles are entering the intersection. It was explained how it takes three cycle lengths for the signal to re-synchronize. This is a concern of traffic engineers. A subcommittee of Butch Ward, Glen Luben, and Pete Yauch was formed to study the impact of Opticom on the area traffic signal systems. They need to meet with law enforcement, fire department and engineering representatives to discuss the issues of Opticom and traffic safety. Red light running was a concern.

Eileen Pearson reported she is working with the Health Department and is building SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) in Pinellas County.

**New Business:** There were three presentations. The first was Gary Tait with Hillsborough County Public Works Department, Traffic Services Division. Gary is the Manager of the Bicycle, Pedestrian and School Safety Programs. He also introduced his assistant Felix Bratslavsky, who along with Gary, is assigned full time to school safety. Gary showcased what they did in Hillsborough County to indicate their serious commitment. Hillsborough County is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the US and opens about 6 new schools each year. They currently have about 150 schools, including private schools. During their first phase, they hired consultants who plotted what is currently there, what are needed and made field notes. They replaced yellow markings with the fluorescent yellow/green and make their signs larger from 30" to 36". They tried not to clutter the area and placed the speed limit signs above the end school zone signs. All pavement markings were repainted and they changed them to ladder type marking for greater emphasis. They placed school flashers at every school including the entire school boundary. They completed 60 schools in Phase I. Phase 2 included design plans from the consultant and included most middle schools, all the high schools, private schools, and a few elementary schools. In the future, they are looking at doing a paddle yield to pedestrian in cross walk signs in yellow/green. They are looking at placing a white strobe on top of the school zone assembly to notify the driver you are in an active school zone. He said he was also involved in the review of the design of schools and has been successful in the last 3-4 years, with improved traffic flow at schools. Gary said the next concept is the total campus, like the one being built at Lutz/Lake Fern Road area, with an elementary, middle and high school in one area.

Kevin Fannon followed with a handout on the update of activities being carried out the Pinellas County schools. There is some reorganization going on in the Transportation Department and the Administration Department. They have a new video as part of the Pinellas County Schools safety awareness campaign that Kevin will show at our June CTST meeting. Another part of their initiative includes building partnerships and looking at what other counties are doing. He discussed a few areas of concern such as Gibbs High School, where a new school was built on an existing site, and Countryside High School, with an inflated population and a lot of drivers.

Our third presentation was given by Elizabeth McCrary, FDOT ITS Freeway Operations Manager. She mentioned the 511 system with signs along the highway. They are looking to expand to additional roadways. Phases are coming on line to install devices to gather real time data. Cameras will feed back to the center that will show traffic volumes, speed and will set off alarms to alert technicians to look at the cameras to see what's going on. Phase I mainly covered I-275 from ML King to Bearss Avenue and I-4 projects. This should be completed by the end of 2006. The Tampa Bay Sun Guide Center should be operational by the end of next year. FHP dispatch will also be moving into this building located behind the FDOT Headquarters in Tampa. The Emergency Operations Center will also be contained in this building. It will then operate on a 24 hours/7days a week basis. Until they are fully operational, they will set up monitors to be monitored during peak times. This will transition to 24/7 when the building is complete. Phase II continues I-275 and I-4 and Phase III will complete this. There are plans in the future to fill in all the gaps. Elizabeth had maps that showed the coverage areas. They are also looking at placing enhanced mile marker signs on I-275 where all the devices are located. These reference markers signs will be installed every ½ mile. They will be a white on green marker with the direction of travel and a shield. Dynamic message signs will show real time traffic time. These reference marker signs should help with incident management.

Dave discussed the recent ProWalk/Pro Bike Conference held in Tampa in April. About 200 people attended the conference put on by the Florida Bike Association. Pete Yauch, Dave and Jeanette all presented at the conference.

Finally, Peter Hsu introduced the VMS representative present at the meeting. VMS is contracted through FDOT to perform roadway maintenance services as Road Rangers, on I-275 to the Pasco County line, and from the downtown interchange with I-4 to the Polk County line.

**Members Present:**

G.J. Bickel	Clearwater Police Dept	562-4242x8000
David M. Chase	City of Pinellas Park	541-0773
Kevin Fannon	Pinellas County Schools	547-7536
David Fechter	HNTB	813-884-7339
Robert Fletcher	Pinellas Co Sheriff's Office	582-5602
Thomas Goldberg	Kenneth City Police Dept	544-2564
Mike Gust	City of Dunedin	298-3223
Marc Hanger	Pinellas MPO	464-8200
Peter Hsu	FDOT	813-975-6251
Sandra Knoebel	Pinellas Co MPO	464-8200
Ron McKenzie	Pinellas Park Police Dept	541-0758
Tom McMullian	VMS, Inc.	813-299-9379
Tom Paul	Congressman Bilirakis' Office	773-2871
Eileen Pearson	Pinellas Co Health Dept	547-7780x153
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT	813-975-6256
Susan Samson	Area Agency on Aging	570-9696x234
Kris Scholz	Palm Harbor Fire Rescue	787-5974
Marian Scorza	FDOT, Public Information	813-975-6038
Bruce Shaw	CSX Railroad Police Dept	813-664-6397
Bill Sparrowhawk	Citizen	360-9144
Scott Vaughn	St. Pete Beach Police Dept	363-9200
Sgt. Butch Ward	Largo Police Dept	586-7473
Pete Yauch	Pinellas Co Dept of Public Works	464-3364
Glenn J. Luben	Pinellas Co Sheriff's Office	582-5604
Felix Bratslavsky	Hillsborough County DPW	813-307-1799
Gary Tait	Hillsborough County Public Works	813-307-1871
Rick Eggers	Pinellas Park	
Terry Harding	AAA Auto Club	448-2600
Ron Allen, Sr.	AAA Auto Club	826-3686
K. Dodge	Gulfport Police Dept	853-1030
Della Jensen	State Attorney's Office	464-8730