

## **Pinellas County Community Traffic Safety Team Meeting Minutes of June 2, 2005**

Chair David Fechter called the general meeting to order and welcomed members present. Introductions were made. The minutes from the previous meeting of May 5, 2005 were approved as distributed.

### **Subcommittee Reports:**

**Engineering** – Marc Hanger reported that a few months ago we spoke of a need for a pedestrian bridge along Sunset Point Road, west of Betty Lane. Currently, the bridge is in place but closed from use. It will open after sidewalks and crosswalks are installed. Contracts have been mobilized for completion before school starts. A proposal for all red pedestrian phase signal control at Alt 19, Curlew Rd and the Pinellas Trail is being considered. This intersection has high pedestrian use. Due to pedestrian safety concerns, a resolution from the BIG-C (beach cities) calls for a uniform speed limit of 35 mph on Gulf Boulevard. **MOT’S** –as discussed last month, starting today, Belcher Road between NE Coachman Road and Sunset Point Road will be closed for railroad and other improvements for 3 weeks. Another issue discussed was the veto by Gov. Bush of the Road Rage Bill. The bill was designed to cut down on road rage forcing slower drivers out of fast lanes by prohibiting a motorist from occupying the left-hand lane unless overtaking and passing another vehicle. **Accident Data** –Jackie Zakrzewski distributed 2 reports, movement and contributing cause, from the new MPO data base. Many different types of reports are possible. This data base uses county wide stats. There was discussion on the catch-all category of citations under “careless driving” instead of excessive speed. Few officers do charge speeding in crashes although it can be determined by witnesses, skid marks, etc. It does skew the stats. There is a need for education for traffic officers to better identify traffic causes.

**Enforcement** – Ron McKenzie reported that the Pinellas Sheriff’s Office will be conducting a laser class on July 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> for Oldsmar at the Ulmerton Road office. On 5/20/05 from 8:00 to 11:00 pm, the PCSO conducted a Sobriety Checkpoint at the PTEC Clearwater campus. 27 PCSO members with equipment passed 105 vehicles through the checkpoint with 105 diverted for assessment. All drivers license and warrant status were checked with an average intrusion time of 1 min. 28 sec. 6 subjects were arrested with 14 charges- 4DWLSR, 2 probation violations, 2 marijuana possession, 1 fraud/fictitious ID card, 1 no valid DL and 4 DUI. There were 18 traffic citations and 5 vehicles impounded. On 5/21/05 from 12:30 am to 3:30 am, a Sobriety Checkpoint was held at Bally’s on Ulmerton Road in Clearwater. 25 PCSO members with equipment and 2 Post 900 Explorers worked this checkpoint. 660 vehicles passed through the checkpoint with 220 diverted for assessment. All drivers license and warrant status were checked with an average intrusion time of 1 min 9 sec. 13 Subjects were arrested with 15 charges—8 DUI, 2 DWLSR (1 felony), 1 Marijuana possession, 1 warrant, 2 no valid DL and 2 violation of probation. There were 14 traffic citations and 5 vehicles impounded. The activities for the Memorial Day Detail totals on 5/30/05 for Aircraft Detail-Bayside

Bridge 1300 – 1500 hrs—Traffic Detail US 19 N E of SR 688—1600 – 1800 hrs and Traffic Detail US 19 N of SR 580- 2000-2200 hrs were: 114 speeding, 13 seat belts, 3 DUI and 5 Move Over violations. The Pinellas Park PD is requesting money for their Aggressive Drivers program from grant money for vehicles and small purchases. The time frame would be next year as this year’s process has just been completed.

**Education**. – Jeanette Rouse, FDOT, reported that Diane Roffey, SCSC, has mailed letters to Pinellas banks and new car dealerships for sponsorship of the Recipes for the Road printing. Insurance companies are next. Any members can take blank letters and send out to any agency that they may know who may be interested in donations for the printing of these books for the upcoming holiday season.

**TIM** – Terry Hensley, FDOT, reported there was good attendance at the Traffic Incident Management meeting and they are concentrating on 2 projects. One will be a Public Information Campaign to inform people to move vehicles from the roadway if there are no serious injuries. There is reluctance on the part of those involved to move the vehicles until an officer has arrived because of insurance concerns. Insurance companies usually do not go by where vehicles are positioned when officers arrive. Second, there will be a Road Ranger Public Relations Campaign as motorists still are unfamiliar with who they are and what they do. There will be a Critical Incident Management school in Tampa next week at FDOT Headquarters.

**Updates**—Bruce Murakami reported on the Safe Teen Driver fundraiser held at Leverocks. It was a great event and a good turnout. Mike Alstott signed footballs and St.Pete Beach closed off the street for the event. It is growing every year and is very successful. A new Safe Teen member, Renee Napier, was introduced. She is moving to the area and has been active in the Pensacola Chapter. She lost her daughter in a crash and is anxious to help with our local program.

**New Business-** A motion was made and seconded to re-elect the current slate of officers. No nominations were made from the floor so the current officers were re-elected by unanimous vote. Congratulations to Dave, Ron and Thea! At the last meeting, Kevin Fannon presented the School Board’s “Be Cool Follow the Rules” program. Although not able to attend today’s meeting, he sent the video that targets elementary school age children about safe bus rules and it was shown.

**Announcements**—Dwayne Kile, FDOT Design Engineer, discussed the breaks in guardrails on the interstate system. The goal is to install guardrails along all of the interstate, as 80% of crossover accidents occur within 1 mile of an interchange. Fire Rescue/police would prefer gaps/openings to get to the other side more quickly. The FHWA will not approve a list of all openings requested, but will consider an opening on a case-by-case basis. The request must be supported by congestion at the intersection so that it is shown that time is lost in getting to the site of an accident. It is not known if the guardrails actually reduce the accident rate, but it expects to reduce the severity/fatalities. Other issues are that the turning radius of large rescue equipment presents challenges for

design of any openings. In this area, the heavier duty guardrail that deflects trucks and buses is being used because of high truck and bus traffic.

Bike Lanes Discussion—the manual says to consider bike lanes on all state roads. FDOT District 7 considers connectivity to existing facilities like the Pinellas Trail. FDOT was proactive in putting in bike lanes, because sometimes the lanes are not 12 ft to give bikes space. Municipalities need bike plans to assist the department in showing alternatives for that mode of transportation. In converting paved shoulders to bike lanes, the design is 4-5 ft to allow for peds/bikes. If it is being used as such, FDOT can go and mark the lane. PSTA has noticed an increased use of bikes on the buses. Riders will ride up to 2 miles to commute.

At I-275/34<sup>th</sup> St. S—the entrance/exit ramp is experiencing a high accident rate. The accidents are crashing into the Gibbs High School fencing. They would like traffic guardrails to keep vehicles on the roadway. FDOT is aware already and is investigating.

**Open Discussion** – Pinellas County’s MPO and the Sheriff’s Office are looking at weights for commercial vehicles. Under the current ordinance it is 8,000 lbs – 35,000 lbs is unrestricted. 35,000 lbs + is restricted. There is discussion to change the County Code to coincide with the State Statute which restricts vehicles greater than 10,000 lbs. Statutes enforcing No Trucks are difficult because of different definitions of what is a truck as well as confusion of signage.

Pinellas CTST has a 10 year anniversary in August, 2005. If you have ideas on how to acknowledge/celebrate, please forward them to Jeanette or Dave.

A discussion of a meeting date change for the July meeting due to conflicts determined that there was no need to change the dates as the missing members were about the same.

Ed Elster with You Drink & Drive, You Lose has money for the Aug 19 – Sept 5 Labor Day DUI Mobilization. Media kits are due the end of June. The minimum participation to be eligible is 4 events. The website is up and you can download forms. They also have the DUI trailer available for use. The web site is [www.fl-dui.com](http://www.fl-dui.com). Ed said Pinellas County is the best county out of the 17 for participation in the program.

AAA has Traffic Laws for law enforcement for distribution. Also, a cd on Crash Prevention for Teen Drivers is available.

No information is available on the Buckle Up luncheon yet. Any information received will be forwarded by email. The Sheriff’s Office and Pinellas Park PD will coordinate with the School Board to get stops with high incidents of traffic problems in advance to do enforcement.

On July 11, the CTST State Coalition Meeting will be held in Titusville.

FDOT has Stop Red Light Running magnets and I Buckle Up bracelets available for events. Let Jeanette know what you need.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Thea Johnson, Secretary  
Pinellas CTST

**Members Present:**

Ron Allen, Sr.	AAA Auto Club South	826-3686
Katherine Burbridge	Pinellas County	464-3721
James Byers	PSTA	533-4304
Robert Davis	Pinellas County	464-3885
David Fechter	HNTB	813-884-7339
Steve Field	Largo Police Department	587-6730
Michael Frederick	City of St. Petersburg	893-7843
Marc Hanger	Pinellas County MPO	464-8200
Terry Harding	AAA Auto Club South	448-2600
Terry Hensley	FDOT Traffic Incident Mgmt	813-975-6259
Thea Johnson	Neighborly Care Network	571-4384
Sandra Knoebel	Pinellas County MPO	464-8200
Glen J. Luben	Pinellas Sheriff's Office	582-5604
Kevin Matson	Kenneth City Police Dept	544-2564
Ric Cody	Largo Fire Rescue	587-6714
Ron McKenzie	Pinellas Park Police Dept	541-0758
Tom McMullian	VMS, Inc.	813-299-9379
Bruce Murakami	Safe Teen Driver	420-7937
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT Safety	813-975-6256
Frank Ruggiero	Tarpon Springs Police Dept	938-2849
Kris Scholz	Palm Harbor Fire Rescue	787-5974
Marian Scorza	FDOT Public Information	813-975-6038
Bill Sparrowhawk	Citizen, So Pasadena	360-9144
Bonnie Tarsitano	Pinellas County Traffic	464-8926
Robert Wierzba	Clearwater Police Dept	562-4338
Pete Yauch	Pinellas County DPW	464-3364
Steve Yeatman	Pinellas Signal Shop	464-8987
Jackie Zakrzewski	Pinellas Co MPO	464-8200
Ed Elster	IPTM, Jacksonville	904-620-4782
Renee Napier	Safe Teen Driver	850-393-7441
Steve Armstrong	Reynolds, Smith & Hills	
Dwayne Kile	FDOT Design	813-975-6030