

Pinellas County Community Traffic Safety Team Minutes from March 4, 2004 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 am by Dave Fechter, Chair. A group photo was taken for inclusion in the CTST of the Year Award Application. Introductions were made around the room.

Minutes from the previous meeting 2/5/04 were noted to require a name correction on the second to last page: Officer Scott Vaughan. Minutes were then accepted without additional change or comment.

Subcommittee reports and discussions were brief due to planned presentations.

Engineering, Marc Hanger Chair, reporting.

Old Business:

- Approximately two years ago, the MPO requested funding for 54th Avenue North & 28th Street North improvements through Public Works and FDOT. Funds were not available, but the intersection will now be improved as part of the Haines Road project. Improvements to 62nd Avenue North & 28th Street North will also be included. Construction completion date is 2007.

New Business:

- The merge right sign at 8th Street North & Martin Luther King has been removed since no merge is needed.
- Mathews Road at South Pasadena was investigated. Pedestrian concerns were noted; however, this is a private entrance to a parking lot and therefore the owner, the hospital, must address the concerns.
- US 19 concern about overhead signs not being lit at night (return lane approaching termination) were evaluated at both Tampa Road and Curlew Road. The signs were not lit, but area lighting was determined as adequate.
- Railroad Crossings: No firm date has been set for McMullen Booth Road improvements, but it is not expected to be this year. A railroad rebuild is expected at Belcher Road this summer. It is uncertain if there will be a complete closure during construction. Enterprise Road is closed for improvements.
- FDOT and the City of Pinellas Park are working together on the intersection of Park Boulevard & 40th Street due to safety concerns. Improvements will include traffic signal timing and full pedestrian features.

Maintenance of Traffic:

- MPO is investigating development of a central website to make all MOTs county wide, accessible to everyone.
- Due to bridge deterioration, the Treasure Island Bridge is expected to limit vehicle weight to only two axles, four tire vehicles. The new span is expected to be completed in 2007.

Education, Diane Roffey reporting

- Palm Harbor Safety Day was held on February 7. Over 500 bike helmets were distributed to the community. Activities included a Bike Rodeo, car seat safety checks, bicycle maintenance check, traffic and fire safety educational materials, emergency vehicles, face painting and the electric boaters club. Attendance was excellent for the 4th annual event. Many volunteers from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, CTST, and other agencies were on hand.

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- Participation in next year's National Alcohol Screening Day on April 18 is being considered.

Enforcement, Corporal James Bordner reporting

- Clearwater Police Department held a Click It or Ticket Wave on 3/3/04 resulting in 87 citations (4 school buses, 22 red lights, 4 DWLSR civil, 1 DWLSR criminal, 1 NVDL, 4 seatbelt, 4 insurance, 47 other).
- Officer Greg Bickel reported a total of 87 car seat checks thus far in 2004. Five (5) new technicians were trained.
- Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) received a complaint about the intersection of SR 688 and Audrey Lane on 1/30/04. Enforcement details targeting motorists passing school buses stopped to load or off-load students were conducted on nine (9) dates between 2/2/04 and 2/20/04 involving between one and five deputies in unmarked cars or trucks. On three dates, no violations were observed. On six dates, a total of 20 passing violations were observed with 17 citations issued.

PCSO conducted two Sobriety Checkpoints during February.

- 2/27/04 from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm in Dunedin at County Road 1 & Michigan Boulevard (1595 Michigan Boulevard-North Dunedin Baptist Church). 30 PCSO members with equipment and 4 Post 900 Explorers passed 604 vehicles and diverted 250 for assessment. All drivers' licenses and warrant status were checked with an average intrusion time of 1 minute 43 seconds. 3 arrests were made, 5 charges (1 DUI, 2 DWLSR, 1 no valid driver license, 1 possession of marijuana), 15 traffic citations, 3 vehicles impounded.
- 2/28/04 from 12:30 am to 3:30 am in Dunedin at State Road 580 (Main Street) and U.S. Highway 19 North (26996 Big Kmart #3140). 30 PCSO members with equipment and 3 Post 900 Explorers passed 327 vehicles and diverted 109 for assessment. All drivers' licenses and warrant status were checked with an average intrusion time of 1 minute 43 seconds. 11 arrests were made, 13 charges (10 DUI, 1 DWLSR, 1 no valid driver license, 1 reckless driving), 27 traffic citations, 10 vehicles impounded.
- To request reports regarding school bus passing, Pinellas County Schools employee Polly Frush can be reached at 547-7100 x 4660
- Federal training money will be used to conduct two classes on how to run Sobriety Checkpoints.

Presentations

Safe Teen Driver Program. - Mr. Bruce Murakami has been presenting to schools, drivers' education classes and groups to bring the message of consequences to youthful drivers. He is becoming nationally recognized and would like to speak at schools and more groups in Pinellas County. Mr. Murakami started the Safe Teen Driver program after the death of his wife and daughter. The young man who hit their vehicle was convicted of vehicular homicide. As part of sentence, Mr. Murakami requested that instead of sending the young man to prison, that the judge order his participation in a program to educate teenage drivers. The judge agreed. CTST members were advised that there are "Drank, Drove, We Lost" banners available and many will be placed at various locations around the county during Spring break and prom season. Efforts are underway to be permitted to speak in Pinellas County Schools. Alison Weber indicated she would try to facilitate getting Mr. Murakami approved as a speaker for the district. Brochures

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were distributed. More information is available at the website, www.safeteedriver.org. There is no cost for the program.

Effects of aging on drivers. Susan Samson, from the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, provided several documents and spoke to the group about the concerns over the effects of aging on drivers and the driving population. Ms. Samson has consulted on several important projects because of her extensive knowledge of the topic. She provided many facts and statistics for CTST members to consider related to Pinellas County and the high number of elderly in the community. For more information, Susan can be reached at (727) 570-9696 ext. 234.

New Business

CTST member Bill Sparrowhawk commented that he believed the community needs an active walking educational program.

A lengthy discussion was held concerning the Madeira Beach School crossing area, a situation that was said to be under consideration since 1989. PCSO received a letter from the Madeira Beach City Manager stating that as of March 15, 2004, the crossing guard would be relocated from the current location on the approved "safe route" to the main intersection at Duhme Road and the causeway immediately in front of the school, where children tend to actually cross. A pedestrian crosswalk exists at the intersection. The majority of middle school students are said to cross there instead of walking to the pedestrian bridge (approved safe route) located a few hundred yards down the street. Elementary school students reportedly use the bridge to cross. Parents use the parking lot across the street as a drop-off and pick-up point for their children. Officer Jim Bordner and Sharon Lough, School Crossing Guard coordinator for PCSO, requested that the CTST support sending a letter in response requesting that the relocation be postponed until the start of the new school year. Madeira Beach funds the crossing guard position. FDOT has reviewed the situation and determined student pedestrian accidents have not been a problem near the schools. Pinellas County Schools has tried many different efforts over the years to get students to use the bridge, yet students still most frequently cross at the legal crosswalk. The request to send a letter to the Madeira Beach City Manager, asking that a change in the designated school crossing not take place this school year, and until an agreement could be reached, was endorsed by the Team.

Peter Hsu reminded the CTST that the deadline for 402 safety grants is March 31st. Information on some grant money distributed is available at www.taxpayer.net.

The Pinellas County CTST was awarded a Gold Community Traffic Safety Award by AAA for activities during 2003.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:48.

Alison Weber
Pinellas CTST Secretary

**Pinellas County Community Traffic Safety Team
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Members Present:

Claila Restall	State Attorney's Office	464-8730
EJ Bickel	Clearwater –Traffic Ops	562-4242x8000
Jim Bordner	Pinellas County Sheriff's Office	582-6439
Katherine Burbridge	Pinellas County	
James Byers	PSTA	533-4304
David M. Chase	City of Pinellas Park	541-0773
Robert Davis	Pinellas County	464-3885
Robert Daugherty	City of So Pasadena	347-4171
Kevin Fannon	Pinellas Co Schools	547-7536
David Fechter	TEI Engineers & Planners	813-884-7339
Ofc. Steve Field	Largo Police Department	587-6730
Vicki Gilbert	RID of Tampa Bay	545-1260
Mike Gust	City of Dunedin	727-298-3223
Marc Hanger	Pinellas MPO	464-8200
Terry Hensley	Law Enforcement Liaison	367-9633
Chief Erv Hill	Belleair Police Dept	588-3769
Sandra Knoebel	Pinellas Co MPO	464-8200
Nancy Kelly	Tarpon Springs PD	938-2849
Felicia Leonard	Clearwater Bike/Ped	562-4852
Lynda Meyer	Pinellas Traffic Eng	464-8907
Chuck Mura	City of Largo – Eng	587-6713
Joseph Pratt	St. Pete Police Dept	893-4883
Diane Roffey	Suncoast Safety Council	442-0233x328
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT Safety	813-975-6256
Susan Samson	Area Agency on Aging	570-9696x234
Kris Scholz	Palm Harbor Fire Rescue	787-5974
Bill Sparrowhawk	Citizen – So. Pasadena	360-9144
Scott Vaughan	St. Pete Police Dept	363-9200
Alison Weber	Pinellas Co Schools	588-6151
Bruce Murakami	Guest- Safe Teen Driver	420-7937
Mike Meehan	Traffic Pulse Networks	813-637-0170
Sharon Lough	Guest – Pinellas Co SO	582-6475
Sgt Kevin Matson	Guest – Kenneth City PD	564-2864
Jackie Zakrezewski	Pinellas Co MPO	464-8200
Laura Wojcicki	FDOT- Traffic Ops	813-975-6246