

## **Pinellas County Community Traffic Safety Team Minutes from Meeting on 2/5/04**

The February meeting of the Pinellas County Community Traffic Safety Team was called to order at 10:01 am by Chairman Dave Fechter. Introductions were made around the room. Corrections for the December 2003 minutes were approved unanimously. The January 2004 minutes were approved unanimously with no corrections or amendments.

### **Subcommittee Reports:**

Engineering: Marc Hanger, Subcommittee Chair reported the following:

- Matthews Road in South Pasadena at the Palms of Pasadena Hospital has high pedestrian traffic between the two hospital buildings. Reportedly, many pedestrians are not using the existing cross walk, but take the shortest distance between two points. Traffic calming such as signage may be needed. An investigation will be conducted to determine the situation and needs. CTST members commented that there is a wide median, that the intersection is “awkward”, “hard to get across”, and that vehicles coming around the corner make it dangerous for pedestrians.
- I-375 in St. Petersburg at the exit to 8<sup>th</sup> & MLK St. N on left has signs saying, “Left Lane Ends” and “Merge” when reportedly the left lane does not end. Current construction prohibits use of left lane, but signage will be checked and corrected if needed.
- FDOT has been requested to do evaluations because of traffic safety concerns at SR 580 and Overcash area for east and west left turn arrows, and SR 580 & Virginia St./Sunlight for north and south phase split.
- Construction news: Blind Pass Road in St. Petersburg Beach will soon have street lights. The area has apparently been without lights for much of the past two years due to construction. Road lighting improvement was part of the project.
- Maintenance of Traffic Issues (MOT):
  1. Sunset Point Road will be closed at US 19 from February 11 through 15, 2004.
  2. Northeast Coachman Road will be closed at US 19 from February 17 through 21, 2004.
  3. Starkey Road is scheduled to reopen on February 11, 2004.
  4. Enterprise Road near 590 and McMullen Booth is scheduled to close February 9th for four weeks.
- Crash data for another twelve (12) accidents along the US19 “right turn lane” corridors was submitted by the Pinellas MPO to FDOT for inclusion in the ongoing crash analysis through the end date of December 31, 2003. All analyses will be done using the long form crash reports.
- CTST members asked for an update on progress of projects in several areas:
  1. Seminole Boulevard near 16<sup>th</sup> Ave
  2. Belcher Road and East Bay Drive
  3. Belcher Road railroad tracks work
  4. McMullen Booth Road railroad tracks work
- US 19 update: Peter Hsu of FDOT indicated that double white lines, in the areas where right turn lanes exist, are under consideration. An application study is underway. There is a concern that drivers may not understand the meaning of a double white line separating the through lanes and the right turn lane. Currently the area is being contrasted against two other corridors: SR 60 in Brandon and Fowler Avenue in Tampa.

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Accident analysis contrasting traffic flow volume and accident types before and after construction are underway to evaluate improvements and changes in trends. US 19 has the highest traffic volume of the three areas, yet the lowest crash rate. The evaluation is ongoing.

- FDOT has “fast tracked” US 19 right lane modification issues for overhead signage and possible construction of “turtle shells”, with the anticipated start date of March 25, 2005 at two major intersections. The US 19 intersections of Tampa Road and Curlew are scheduled to have additional raised islands. CTST members commented that there is still a concern about the right turn lane advance warning signs being ineffective, particularly during peak traffic times. CTST enforcement members commented that “turtle shells” may cause problems such as an increased number of crashes further from the intersection, more aggressive driving as motorists try to re-enter the through-lane traffic, problems for motorcycles, and increased severity of crashes with vehicles doing high speed at the corners. CTST members asked for the current design for the overhead signage and if it will be lighted. To the knowledge of those present, no overhead signs would be lighted. CTST member Mike Frederick suggested adding several sections of rumble strips in sets of 3 to the right turn lane areas to help reduce the speed of the traffic and the tendency for through-traffic to use the lanes. Several members agreed with the suggestion as an immediate alternative.

Education Subcommittee: Diane Roffey stated that no meeting was held, but reminded the group of the upcoming Bike Safety Day on February 7, 2004 from 10 am - 3 pm at 777 Alderman Road. Free bike helmets, a Bike Rodeo, Bike check, Car safety seat checks, fire safety, traffic safety, and other educational displays and various emergency equipment would be available for public viewing.

Enforcement subcommittee: Ron McKenzie, Subcommittee Chair reported the following items. The Clearwater Police Department conducted two details in January 2004.

- A “Click It or Ticket” detail held 1/6/04 resulted in 65 citations. Ten citations were seat belt related, with two misdemeanor arrests.
- A “Booze It & Lose It Friday” detail held 1/30/04 resulted in 39 citations, 2 DUIs, 1 drug arrest and 1 hit & run arrest.

Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office conducted two sobriety checkpoints during January.

- On Friday, 1/2/04 from 8:00 to 11:00 pm on Starkey Road north of 86<sup>th</sup> Avenue North near the Baptist Church, 30 PCSO members with equipment and three Explorers from Post 900 passed 940 vehicles, diverting 188 for assessment. All drivers license and warrant status were checked with an average intrusion time of 1 minute 31 seconds. Three subjects were arrested, 13 traffic citations were issued, four (4) vehicles were impounded. One (1) DUI, 5 Drug, 1 suspended DL, 1 arrest warrant resulted.
- On Saturday, 1/3/04 from 12:30 am – 3:30 am on Ulmerton Road at 62<sup>nd</sup> Street North near Bally’s Total Fitness, 30 PCSO members with equipment and three Explorers from Post 900 passed 585 vehicles, diverting 117 for assessment. All drivers license and warrant status were checked with an average intrusion time of 1 minute 30 seconds. Twelve (12) subjects were arrested, 15 traffic citations were issued, five (5) vehicles were impounded. Six (6) DUIs, 6 Drug, 3 suspended DL, 5 arrest warrant, 1 other felony, 1 other misdemeanor resulted.

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- Officer Scott Barnes distributed a brochure called, "Get Real Behind the Wheel: Teen Safety on the Road". The brochure explains how the tragic death of the wife and daughter of Bruce Murakami, a local Gulfport resident, has developed into a means to reach teens with a safety presentation. Instead of sending the 19-year-old to prison, Mr. Murakami asked the court that he be allowed to participate in a program designed to teach teens about road safety. Officer Barnes recommended that groups contact Mr. Murakami to coordinate speaking engagements for any and all groups of teens in the county. Presentations have been made nationally through many avenues using the one-hour program. Fee (if any) was uncertain, but Kristy Patterson reminded CTST members that Great Bay Distributors has offered to help fund speakers for safety programs if groups need financial assistance.

Al Roop from IPTM was present to discuss the Law Enforcement Challenge. Applications are also being accepted for the 2003 Community Traffic Safety Team of the Year Award through March 15, 2004. The awards are sponsored by Buckle Up Florida. Winners will be announced on June 18<sup>th</sup> at an awards banquet for Traffic Safety in Jacksonville. Pinellas County CTST will prepare a submission, coordinated by Dave Fechter, Jeanette Rouse, Alison Weber, and Subcommittee Chairs Marc Hanger, Ron McKenzie and Kristy Patterson. The new application focuses on five major areas: Goals and Objectives, Public Information and Education, Enforcement, Innovative Approaches and Effectiveness. Submissions are limited to a single one-inch binder or special presentation packet to present the CTST's accomplishments. Members are requested to review activities for the year and provide Alison Weber with hardcopies of activities, photos, posters and all materials created and used by CTST members during the year for inclusion into the submission package.

Peter Hsu from FDOT reminded CTST members about the pending deadline for 402 safety grant applications for traffic safety issues and encouraged groups to apply.

Dave reviewed a presentation made to the Pinellas School Transportation Safety Committee on 2/4/04 to inform members of the CTST, functions and accomplishments. Committee members consist primarily of Pinellas County Commissioners, local area officials, and School Board Members who are tasked to review "big picture" issues of transportation safety.

PSTA employee Jim Byers followed up on his presentation of development of a county-wide Total Incident Management (TIM) Program by moving that the CTST draft a letter to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to consider establishing a program, determine where the program would be managed and how to coordinate the various elements. CTST members agreed to support the premise of the initiative, but requested formal approval of the text of the letter at the next meeting.

The group briefly discussed funding issues in congress and the current status of transportation funding. Tom Paul, a representative from Congressman Bilirakis' office, keeps the congressman abreast of concerns in the Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas County areas. Tom agreed to bring a list of special dollars funded to enforcement during 2003 to the next meeting.

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Upcoming enforcement waves will be held over the Memorial Day weekend (May 24- June 6, 2004) and Labor Day (August 22-September 12, 2004). CTST members were asked to provide feedback to Terry Hensley to help improve the success of the Memorial Day Wave.

Dave advised the group that on Wednesday, February 11, 2004, WFLA-TV will be presenting their media safety campaign proposal to the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Office for consideration of their support for funding for the project. The estimated grant request is expected to be approximately \$2.8 million dollars.

The meeting was dismissed at approximately 11:12 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Weber, MS, CSP  
Secretary

### **Members Present:**

Jim Bordner	Pinellas County Sheriff's Office	582-6439
James Byers	PSTA	533-4304
David M. Chase	City of Pinellas Park	541-0773
Charles Cronin	Clearwater Police Department	562-4162
Robert Daugherty	City of South Pasadena	347-4171
David Fechter	TEI Engineers and Planners	813-884-739
George Francey	Pinellas Co School Board	507-4450x1024
Thomas Goldberg	Kenneth City Police Department	544-2564
Mike Gust	City of Dunedin	727-298-3223
Marc Hanger	Pinellas MPO	464-8200
Jim Hartwell	City of Largo	587-6730
Terry Hensley	Law Enforcement Liaison – IPTM	367-9633
Chief Erv Hill	Belleair Police Department	588-3769
Peter Hsu	FDOT, Safety	813-975-6251
Sandra Knoebel	Pinellas County MPO	727-464-8200
Ron McKenzie	Pinellas Park PD	541-0758
Lynda Meyer	Pinellas Traffic Engineering	464-8907
Joseph Pratt	St. Pete Police Department	893-4883
Diane Roffey	Suncoast Safety Council	442-0233x328
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT, Safety	813-975-6256
Bill Sparrowhawk	Citizen	360-9144
Scott Vaughn	St. Pete Beach Police Dept	363-9200
Bill Walker, RN	East Lake Fire Rescue	784-8668
Lydia Wardell	State Attorney	464-6786
Alison Weber	Pinellas County Schools	588-6151
Steve Yeatman	Pinellas Signal Shop	464-8987
Tom Paul	Congressman Bilirakis' Office	773-2871
Doug Pasley	Indian Shores Police Dept	595-5414
Kevin Fannon	Pinellas County Schools	547-7536
Kevin Mason	Kenneth City Police Dept	599-2564
Harriet Burns	RID	797-4623