

## **Pinellas County Community Traffic Safety Team Meeting Minutes of April 6, 2006**

Prior to the start of our meeting, Wendy Vernon announced the Battle of the Badges Chili and Rib Cook off to be held in Largo Central Park on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. The meat will be provided to each team. There will be four winning teams. This is a fund raising effort with all proceeds going to the Foundation Against Drunk Driving to help RID and MADD. You may check the website at [www.chiliandribs.com](http://www.chiliandribs.com) for more details.

Our general meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dave Fechter at the Suncoast Safety Council and introductions were given by all members. The minutes of the previous meeting in March were approved. Our recording secretary, Thea Johnson, was absent today.

### **Subcommittee Reports:**

**Engineering:** Marc Hanger reported on several items. He advised that the Pinellas MPO agreed to appoint a task force to address the concerns of pedestrians crossing US 19. The team is expected to be comprised of multi-disciplined members and the tasking will be modeled similar to the US 19 task force formed several years ago. SR 580 is closed for the next three (3) days between Countryside Boulevard and Landmark Drive. This closure is due to a broken sewer line. A recent pedestrian workshop was held in St. Petersburg at Sunken Gardens. Both 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street North at Sunken Gardens were chosen as project sites for pedestrian improvement case studies. A Top 100 Vehicle Crash Report for Pinellas County was completed for 2004. Copies were distributed to the team. US 19 had seven intersections listed in the top ten most crash-prone intersections. The top 5 crash vs. volumes intersections were:

- 1) Cleveland Street at Osceola Avenue
- 2) US 19 at Drew Street
- 3) Drew Street at Garden Avenue
- 4) 31<sup>st</sup> Street S at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S
- 5) 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue No at 28<sup>th</sup> Street N

**Education:** Bruce Murakami reported on the Street Nights April 1<sup>st</sup> event at Sunshine Speedway. Approximately 550 kids participated. He feels they are succeeding in pulling the kids off the street. The track was recently resurfaced. Bruce said over 100 cars raced all night long. He also reported that on Gandy Boulevard after the race there were about a dozen cars versus the usual 100 cars. His goal is to have a race every other week. He said the kids come to hang out and show off their cars. The Toyota Drive Team is also coming to Tampa the first weekend in June. They will be hosting a free event for teens and bringing in their Toyota cars for them to drive at Tampa Bay Downs.

Dave noted that the FDOT State Safety Office is notifying the CTST Chairs of the **Buckle Up in Your Truck** media effort from April 30- May 13. **Click it or Ticket** which usually takes place around the Memorial Day weekend will run from mid-May through early June.

**Enforcement:** The Sheriff's Office conducted a pedestrian detail along the Gulf beaches on March 2 and issued 31 citations. A DUI wolf pack was held on March 17 at Berea Baptist Church which resulted in 4 DUI, 10 citations and 8 arrests. A DUI wolf pack was also held on March 18<sup>th</sup> with 4 DUI, 18 citations, and 6 arrests. A north county wolf pack was held on March 22 with 63 speeding citations given, 7 seatbelts, 1 arrest and a total of 117 citations. The Sheriff's Office reported a total of 182 citations and 19 arrests made during the month of March, 2006.

Work Zone Safety Week is this week, April 3rd to April 8th. Law Enforcement personnel will participate in the Click it or Ticket and Buckle Up in Your Truck waves. The IACP Challenge books are due by May 5<sup>th</sup>. Nothing has been planned yet for the Memorial Day wave as far as the Press Conference. Citations went up \$3.00 because of the Dori Slosberg Act. This additional money is to go to driver's education classes to purchase driving simulators.

**New Business:** Dave mentioned Melissa's effort on Red Light Running which is tied into the camera photo enforcement. Melissa said when she first met with Allen Bense he said the bill is "dead on arrival". But he did say he would not block it. They are putting test cameras on roadsides. Melissa, along with the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, has formed a Coalition to Stop Red Light Running in SW Florida. She reported 70% of the legislators were in favor of taking repeat red light running offenders off the roadway. She said we need to educate on the use of the cameras and lobby for the law. In every state it is used differently. In the northern states, they photo from the front. In Florida, the photo would only be of the back of the vehicle. With this law, if the tires are over the line, the camera snaps a photo, as you are crossing the line and going through the intersection. The recorder comes on only if there is a crash. The penalty would be a \$65 fine and no points. If you do not live in Florida you are exempt with this law. Melissa also explained that you can sign an affidavit saying you were not driving the car. She said she did not have the exact language for the repeat offender legislation yet. She did say it would include 6 points. If you are caught three times and ticketed three times via the cameras, on the fourth time, you will be issued fines. Of those, \$60 will go to trauma centers and \$5 to the community. The cameras cost \$50,000 and will be maintained by the county. One officer reported he recently visited the Scottsdale, Phoenix, AZ area that has photo enforcement. He stated everyone was driving no more than 3 mph over the posted speed zone. They have cameras mounted in the medians. He said there was resentment in the area but it did modify their driving behavior. He said 3-5 years ago, Arizona was number one for speeding. You can change the mind set of drivers with cameras. You can do a few test spots and compile the data and make it available on a website. At Jacaranda Boulevard in Venice, Bradenton area they had 19 violations a day, and now a year later, they are down to less than one. They are just getting warning letters.

Jim said the PRSA wanted to get tag scanners. This was rejected by the board because of the Big Brother influence, even though they were only gathering zip code information and no photos were being taken.

Melissa said they are taking their first steps. She suggested we look at the website on cameras at [www.orgsites.com/fl/floridastops](http://www.orgsites.com/fl/floridastops). She said we were 3<sup>rd</sup> in the United States for intersection crashes.

Dave brought up the flash mode at intersections. Ron McKenzie was not present today, but at a past meeting had discussed this situation he observed at Park Boulevard and 49<sup>th</sup> Street. It was stated the minor street gets the red, and the major roadway would get the yellow. Ron had discussed all red to create a four way stop. Tom Washburn said the MUTCD said it can be decided on a case by case basis. You can do all red at major intersections, or where there is a sight distance problem. This can create major delays. The state law says if the signals go out, it is a four way stop.

We had a brief discussion about the Lifesaver's Conference to be held in Austin, TX on April 9-11. Our CTST Best Practices booklet will be distributed at Lifesavers. The CTST Coalition will be meeting on Monday, April 24 in Jacksonville. The Safe Routes to School Workshop will be held on Tuesday, April 18 in St. Augustine, just prior to the Pro Bike/Pro Walk Conference which will follow on April 19-21, 2006.

**Members Present:**

Ron Bulen	Pinellas MPO	464-8200
Katherine Burbridge	Pinellas County	453-3457
James Byers	PSTA	533-4304
Robert Davis	Pinellas County	464-3885
Kevin Fannon	Pinellas Co Schools	547-7536
David Fechter	HNTB	813-884-7339
Mike Gust	City of Dunedin	298-3223
Marc Hanger	Pinellas MPO	464-8200
Mike Zazouris	Tarpon Springs Police	938-2840
Tom McMullian	VMS, Inc.	813-299-9379
Bruce Murakami	Safe Teen Driver	420-7937
Tom Paul	Congressman Bilirakis	773-2871
Eileen Pearson	Pinellas Co Health Dept	547-7780x153
Jeanette Rouse	FDOT Safety	813-975-6256
Greg Schwemly	St. Petersburg Police Dept	893-7157
Charles Skipper	Pinellas Co Sheriff's Office	582-6439
Bonnie Tarsitano	Pinellas Co Traffic	464-8926
Venkat Vattikuti	Tindale Oliver	813-224-8862
Scott Vaughan	St. Pete Beach PD	363-9300
Melissa Wandall	Mark Wandall Foundation	941-751-9277
Tom Washburn	Pinellas County	
Pete Yauch	Pinellas County- DPW	464-3364
Steve Yeatman	Pinellas Signal Shop	464-8987
Jackie Zakrzewski	Pinellas Co MPO	464-8200