

TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD MEETING

September 18, 2006 – 1:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Will Crandall, Saratoga Springs PD; Bob Murphy, STOP-DWI Coordinator; Karen Pettigrew, MADD-Capital Region; Michael Williams, NYSP-Wilton; Dennis Latham, Stillwater PD; Scott Westfall, Mechanicville PD; E. M. Rooney, Sheriff's Dept.; Judy Ekman, Prevention Council; Jen Hogan, Governor's Traffic Safety Committee; Charles Rutherford, GTSC/NYS Sheriff's Assoc.; James Davis, Assistant D.A.; Jack Ditch, Dave Mathis, Saratoga Town Court; Jack Murray, Co. Auditor

Chairman Crandall called the meeting to order.

Chairman Crandall stated there is an issue with the Step grants, as we will have to go for individual Step grants. He said he cannot maintain the grants for the agencies the way the GTSC needs them to be done.

Ms. Hogan said they want agency specific data, and they did not receive that when the application came in. She introduced Charlie Rutherford and said Charlie does all of the first reviews and will come to your agency and walk you through the process. We would hate to see anyone lose out on funding, she said. Charlie is here to offer assistance with anything you need if there is interest, she said. She mentioned they have already received an application from Mechanicville. Mr. Rutherford stated the process is easy. There is no reason why Saratoga County shouldn't get a piece of this, he said. He said the money is there, and he brought some forms with him. He said he does the first review, and Jen does the second review for Saratoga County, and we will go in and make suggestions with the powers that be about the monies you receive. Every time you fill up your gas tank, some of that money comes back to us, he said. We pay for overtime and limited equipment if it can be justified, he said. He stated once you are in the system, it is easy to get more money in future years.

Mr. Rutherford stated the fiscal year will be October 1. You probably wouldn't see a contract until mid-November. Most people do not use their Step money until the spring, he added.

Chairman Crandall said the issue with him doing this for the whole County is that he cannot get the data from all of the agencies. He said he is still waiting for individual department data for May, and he just can't be following people around. The data has to come from the individual agencies, so please take advantage of this, he urged.

Chairman Crandall mentioned October 12 is Operation Safe Stop. Ms. Hogan said if the agencies apply for Step funding, they will pay for overtime to participate in Operation Safe Stop in March.

Mr. Murphy stated there is money available for 16 hours per month for DWI patrols for September, October, November and December. Chairman Crandall asked everyone when would be a good time in October, and it was the consensus of the Board to do the 16 hours Halloween weekend, October 27 and 28. Mr. Murphy stated we have Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years for the rest of 2006. Chairman Crandall mentioned that he sees bad driving habits during the change of seasons.

Ms. Hogan requested vouchers to be in by October 31.

Ms. Hogan said they are looking at having their third bicycle/pedestrian conference April 17th in Corning.

Chairman Crandall said they have been having a lot of pedestrian accidents lately. He said he has seen demonstrations relative to new lighting reflecting off people's clothing which may be forthcoming in a couple of years. He mentioned almost all of the accidents are pedestrian error. He said some of the answers are pedestrian education and driver awareness. Ms. Hogan stated Cornell Cooperative Extension has submitted a grant to work with school districts on pedestrian/bicycle safety to provide outreach in schools. Chairman Crandall said they issue tickets to pedestrians who cause accidents. He stated bicyclists can get tickets (1110-A). Some officers have the mindset that you can't issue tickets to them, but you can. Mr. Rooney pointed out the problem with Broadway in Saratoga Springs is the four lanes. Chairman Crandall said after dark, it is hard to see pedestrians in dark clothing.

Ms. Pettigrew said a Victim Impact Panel was held last week. The next one will be October 10th in Clifton Park, she said.

Ms. Pettigrew said MADD/Capital Region is holding a death notification training, 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on October 26, and she distributed brochures regarding that training.

Ms. Pettigrew stated MADD will be holding a classic car show and safety fair on October 14th from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Crossgates Mall. If anyone would like to enter their vehicle, feel free, she said. She stated they can also use volunteers to help put this together. She distributed fliers about this event.

Ms. Pettigrew said instead of raising money to bring the Multi Media show into the area, they are trying to get a program called Alcohol EDU into the high schools which is an on line program for kids. She said they would like to get this into at least one high school in the County. This program would probably stick with the children more, she said. She said they are working to raise money for that now. She said the children would work on this program on line on a computer.

Chairman Crandall said DCJS has a grant program where you may get your own Plate Hunter. This program may be expanded to municipalities. He said when they were testing one out, they scanned 14,000 cars and had 20 – 30 arrests. We also got warrant arrests out of that, he said. It is a great thing, he added.

Mr. Davis stated there will be a 5K run/walk in memory of Melanie O'Donnell on Saturday, Sept. 23rd at 9:30 a.m. at the Spa State Park. He said Melanie was killed on Route 9 in Saratoga Springs in January by a person who was charged with DWAI. Melanie was the daughter of Vicki Merola, the Crime Victims' Advocate who had worked in the D.A.'s office. He mentioned the fellow who killed her is to be sentenced Thursday. He said they have seen a big jump in use of anti-depressants, hydrocodone and other drugs. There is a lot of doctor jumping going on also, he said. He stated this fellow was on three different medications.

Mr. Davis stated the fourth annual DWI training conference was held last week. There were about 22 officers from various departments, he said. He stated the only complaint was the need for more time. This should be a two-day course, he said. He said there is a lot of concern with some legislation being drafted. When I find out what the Governor is going to sign, our office will do a memo telling the police officers to hold off until some DWI

legislation is corrected. He stated refusals and penalties are going up. People are learning they are entitled to a DMV hearing for every refusal, and it becomes a great burden on the D.A.'s office. He said if any agency would like a brief couple hours of training, he will meet with the agency.

Judge Ditch said Judge Mathis and he run an intern program from six schools. I also include Skidmore and SCCC, he said. The interns contact the agencies and follows up on data collection. If you have research projects to be done, our interns will be happy to do it, he added. Chairman Crandall said in this County, we have a lot of repeat offenders.

**** NEXT MEETING – MONDAY, OCTOBER 16TH AT 1:00 P.M. ****

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann