

## **TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD MEETING**

**October 6, 2008 – 1:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Waldron, Mechanicville PD; E. M. Rooney, Sheriff's Office; Tim Williams, Waterford PD; Tom Mitchell, Saratoga Springs PD; Bob Murphy, STOP-DWI Coordinator; Mickey Mahoney, Probation; Judy Ekman, Prevention Council; Christina Hall, NYS Park Police; Jim Murphy, D.A.; Joe Burke, Leon Nielsen, OASAS; Press

Chairman Waldron called the meeting to order.

Mr. B. Murphy introduced Joseph Burke and Leon Neilsen of the State DWI Committee. They are going around to different counties to see what's going on, he said. Mr. Burke stated they work very closely with DMV on the drinking and driving program. He said they identify the great work law enforcement does removing drunk drivers from the road. We feel getting to the local counties is a great opportunity for us to listen and learn, he stated.

Chairman Waldron said hopefully in September, everybody was able to spend their money allocated by the County. He mentioned Chuck DeWeis, Assistant Commissioner of GTSC, put out information that there were fewer motor vehicle fatalities and injuries in New York State in 2007 compared to 2006. He said the seat belt usage compliance rate is great. We jumped a total of four percentage points in New York State, he said. He mentioned the Federal government sends out a team of people throughout the State who do an assessment on roadways. When you see an 89% compliance rate, that is a true and accurate figure.

Chairman Waldron stated ARIDE training will be held in Colonie tomorrow and on the 8<sup>th</sup> at the Crossings. You can probably get someone in the class tomorrow if you try, he said.

Mr. B. Murphy said for October, November and December, agencies can have 16 additional hours for each month. We are getting word from the schools it would be good to keep an eye on the Friday night football games. We can also concentrate on Thanksgiving and Christmas, he said. Our budget will be completed at the end of this month, he said. He stated our STOP-DWI Advisory Board will be meeting, and we will come back to this Board, he said. Mrs. Ekman encouraged the agencies to also have DWI patrols out on Halloween because more kids try alcohol for the first time on Halloween than any other date during the year. Mr. B. Murphy said it would be alright if agencies need additional time.

Chairman Waldron stated the 2008 Highway Safety Conference will be held October 19 – 22 in Syracuse.

Chairman Waldron said grants are coming in as we speak. Those who applied through GTSC will be receiving all grants as they come forward, so check your mail, he said. He said he does not think the prices of Wall Street will have an affect on our grants. He said seat belts is a Federal government project. I do not believe any funding will be cut, he said. If anybody has an issue, give me a call, he said. GTSC is working very hard to get this money out, he added.

Chairman Waldron stated seat belt enforcement begins November 1<sup>st</sup>. Instead of having two organized events, we said we would get a better count if chiefs and sheriffs were allowed to go out when they deem appropriate, he said. With a big announcement, you see a great compliance. We fought long and hard, because it dries up after the first two days of the wave, he stated. The expanded use allows us to post details between now and May, 2009, he said. He stated a big problem is agencies were not reporting, so please report.

Chairman Waldron stated there is a job opportunity for a Highway Safety Program Representative. See me afterwards if anybody is interested, he said.

Chairman Waldron said \$300,000 is left in the Operation Impact grants, and it goes to the counties that do not have Operation Impact. Most agencies get their Plate Reader through this, he said. He said they received brand new dusting kits through this. If there is something to reduce Part 1 crimes, get it early, he said. Mr. J. Murphy stated they target Part 1 crime. We have money reimbursed to the County for Assistant D.A's to prosecute these crimes. TCI money used to take those cases to trial or get pleas to charge. We are looking at these cases differently because we have the resources, he added.

Mr. B. Murphy said we have close to 700 to 800 people going to the Victim Impact Panels. We are one of the only counties that do not charge admission, as other counties around us charge for this. This is a financial responsibility from anywhere between \$15 to \$25, he said. We are considering a proposal to go before the Board of Supervisors to see what we can do to initiate this admission fee for 2009, he stated. He said this revenue would be DWI related. Mrs. Ekman said we discovered over the last couple of years that because we are the only county in the immediate Capital Region, we are getting people coming here to fulfill their sentence because they do not have to pay. We believe that people take things a little more seriously when they have to pay for them, she said. She stated some speakers come to the panels repeatedly, and we would like to pay mileage for them. We would like to use that money not for the benefit of any specific agency or provider, but to help reduce DWI and help care for victims of the crime, she said. Mr. J. Murphy said monies we get for this will be treated like DWI revenues, and will not go into the General Fund. There is a provision for indigent individuals; if they cannot pay, their fee will be waived, he said. Mr. B. Murphy said back in 1995/96, we only had two Victim Impact Panels per year. Our population has grown, so we are up to 11 panels per year. So many more people are involved, and that is why this initiative is being taken on, he said.

Mrs. Ekman said she didn't bring the schedule for homecomings, but she assumes local departments know what they are. She said we made it through Saratoga Springs' homecoming.

Mrs. Ekman said they are doing more work in Clifton Park and Mechanicville with the Community Coalition Grant that they had that came from OASAS where they gave departments more time to do compliance checks. She said they were able to buy intoximeters (breathalyzers), and

they were able to give those to a couple departments in the County and one to Shenendehowa High School. She mentioned two representatives from the Elks are in the Clifton Park Coalition. They have funds available if there are school districts or departments that are unable to purchase these pieces of equipment that is used to do drug prevention for young people. Mr. J. Murphy asked if it were true that most of the schools at their homecomings were breathalyzing kids before they go in. Mrs. Ekman said most of them are looking at probable cause. Chairman Waldron said in Mechanicville, the kids blow into a cup (a type of breathalyzer) before they go into the prom, otherwise, they cannot go. He said this actually works well. We use it whenever we deem fit, he said. Mrs. Ekman said it is a great message in the community. We expect kids to come to the events sober, she added. Chairman Waldron said it is good to get to the kids early enough to get them appropriate help. Mr. J. Murphy said they refer young kids to the Prevention Council's programs. Mrs. Ekman said they have a single night program, Risk & Responsibility, and an alcohol and substance education program. She said virtually, kids 15 years old and younger get sent to Youth Court.

**\*\* NEXT MEETING – MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup> AT 1:00 P.M. \*\***

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann