

TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD MEETING

March 16, 2009 – 1:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Joseph Waldron, Mechanicville PD; E. M. Rooney, Sheriff's Office; Bob Murphy, STOP-DWI Coordinator; Tom Parks, Charlton PD; Dennis Latham, Stillwater PD; Geoffrey Bullock, Galway PD; Cynthia Dort, Cornell Univ.; Craig Masterson, Clifton Park Highway Safety Committee; Mickey Mahoney, Probation; James Davis, D.A.'s Office; Charles Fuller, Ballston Spa PD; Judy Ekman Prevention Council; Will Crandall, Wilton; Michael Williams, NYSP/Wilton; Tom Mitchell, Saratoga Springs PD; Daniel Larkin, NYSP; Steve Williams, The Daily Gazette

Chairman Waldron called the meeting to order.

Chairman Waldron said for the St. Patrick's law enforcement, hopefully everyone has been able to utilize the money and will continue to patrol tomorrow. Mr. Murphy said eight hours will be available for tomorrow night. Chairman Waldron said he likes to think of Bob Flanagan this time of year. People who go out and party tomorrow can rest assure they will have to party responsibly, he stated.

Chairman Waldron said applying for grants on line is required for this fiscal year. There was training for this on March 10, but he said he missed that training. Hopefully people had representatives there, and it seems pretty straight forward. Mrs. Dort said if you signed off on anybody's grant in the past, you still have to do that on a hard copy. Chairman Waldron said he would like to have the hard copies by May 4th. I will mail or hand deliver

them to the State, he said. Mrs. Dort said the training was fine. You have to go in and create profiles and set up administrators. There are some glitches in it still, she said. Your reporting will be on line, she added. She stated the April 15th and September 30th reports will still be done on paper. It is not part of the e-grant system until the next grant year, she said.

Chairman Waldron mentioned the Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Conference will be held May 5 & 6 in Syracuse. They have the latest and greatest things for the agencies, he said.

Chairman Waldron stated TRACS will have a new Incident Mapping Analysis Tool that will allow you to get data from the Sheriff's Dept. and State Police. He said he will be in Syracuse on June 5th to find out more about it.

Mrs. Ekman distributed a list of the County's prom and graduation dates and locations. She said they do not have a date for South High's Senior Dinner or where the Stillwater prom is going to be. She recommended the agencies keep this list in mind for the spring DWI patrols.

Mrs. Ekman stated they had a great Safe Spring Student Leadership Conference last week. Jim Davis held a DWI workshop with a 25-minute video, and it was a great workshop. Mr. Davis said actors recreate an actual crime, and it gets into the more recent abuse of pharmaceuticals. Mrs. Ekman said it was very specific about what stimulants and depressants do to your driving. I am sure Mr. Davis will be getting a lot of calls from schools around prom time. I recommend if you have the opportunity to see this video, it is great, and if you can influence your school district to bring Mr. Davis in, it is a good initiative, she said. She stated the rest of the conference was terrific, and this year, we had more at risk kids than before. We are doing a number of programs specifically dealing with at risk kids in the schools. These are the kids who need the information and need to be convinced they shouldn't be drinking and driving, she said.

Mrs. Ekman said the State is doing party patrol training on March 24 and 25, and there are well over 30 officers from Saratoga County who are going. She said the deadline for registration is March 18th. She requested those departments that have not done so to sign officers up in the next day, otherwise, all of the arrangements are solid. She stated the party patrol can use citizens to go around the perimeter of the party to get license plate

numbers. Letters will then go to the registered owners to let them know their car was at an underage drinking party, she said. She stated citizens can record those license plate numbers and do part of the load of calling parents once intervention has been done. If you know people who are interested in doing something like this, have them register for this training, she said.

Mrs. Ekman said the Victim Impact Panels are held the second Tuesday of the month. The next one will be April 14th in Clifton Park. We are getting low on the number of people who speak at these, she said. She stated law enforcement does a great job, but advocates, emergency corps people, etc., who have been at crashes and can talk about the affect on them and of witnessing and taking care of the victims. A lot of the people are testifying about crashes that happened a long time ago. We need to try to find more victims who are a little bit recent, she said. We can use perpetrators, or people who have had a long enough time between their DWI and now for us to know they really are sincerely repentant, she added. She said it is helpful and hard for the victim at the same time. We are overburdening the same people speaking month after month, she said. Chairman Waldron said hopefully, the word can get out.

Mr. Latham said their DWI's are slow. Their plate hunter is coming on March 25th, he said.

Mr. Mitchell stated the plate hunter representatives are coming up March 25th at 8:30 a.m. to do installations for Stillwater, Hudson Falls, Greenwich and Gloversville.

Mr. Rooney said he saw something about MPTC and Chairman Waldron. Chairman Waldron said he was appointed February 23rd to that State Board.

Mr. Mitchell stated they chose to use the first half of their seat belt grant this month because of the volume of traffic entering into Saratoga Springs in the spring. Hopefully, the follow up in May will get the message out for the summer, he said.

Mr. Mitchell said they are partnering up with State Farm and Mrs. Dort for Family Day, May 16th, and they will be hosting a car seat event at the Malta Community Center on Route 9, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mrs. Dort mentioned she will be one of the citizens attending the party patrol training for the Prevention Council.

Mrs. Dort stated on May 18 and May 25, the Prevention Council, along with the Ballston Spa Task Force, will do a two week program at the Ballston Spa High School for drinking and driving. The simulator from DMV will be there. Each class will be producing their own commercial hoping to get it to air on Channel 9. There will be activities every day, she said.

Mr. Dort said on April 26th at the West Crescent Fire Department, there will be a Health Fair that they will be at. She said there will be a full day Tech class on April 9th at the Niskayuna Fire Department on Rte. 7 for any expired tech to get recertified. She mentioned April 23rd is Take Your Child To Work Day, and she will be doing a DWI program for Saratoga County. On April 28 – May 1, there will be a Technician class in Queensbury, and June 9 – 12 there will be a class at the Latham Fire Department. She stated Saratoga County is hurting for Technicians.

Mrs. Dort suggested that possibly the Saratoga County Traffic Safety Board could come up with a traveling display. She said there is a retired State Trooper in Guilderland who has set up a display because of his deceased son, but it is stationary. There is another one that goes on tour, but that is booked out, she said. Chairman Waldron said some displays are mobile. He said Syracuse has a good display. The whole point is cost, and that is always a stumbling block, he said. He appointed a subcommittee of Cindy Dort, Judy Ekman and Jim Davis to come up with something value-wise to bring to each school district and to the County Fair.

Mr. Davis said Dennis Foley used to be the STOP-DWI Coordinator in Albany County. He works for New York state through the college system and has met with families of some victims of DWI's. He said the defendant in the accident in Malta is up for parole and has expressed an interest in speaking, and Ethan Lowess, brother of the victim, has also expressed interest.

Mr. Bullock said they had a DWI a week or so ago. We do need some also sensors, he stated. He pointed out the Village and Town of Galway are two different locations, and the town is getting a lot of tickets that are written in the village.

Mr. Davis said people should know if they don't have a valid license. If local agencies know they have a suspension, ask the defendant if they know they are suspended. He said they need admissions on many of the plate hunter stops. One defendant had five addresses in less than three years, and his defense was how could he receive a notice of suspension from DMV because he moved too many times, he said.

Mr. Masterson stated the Town of Clifton Park is engaging in the Rte. 146 corridor issue dealing with pedestrians, bicycles and non-motorized pedestrian safety. We are putting in for a grant through the local Town Safety Committee that has to do with traffic control device inventory, he said. He said this will also deal with the loss of reflectivity. By 2015, it will be a federal requirement for changing out the signs. He said this will be for their 125 miles of road. He mentioned the Supervisor and Town Board have been supportive of this.

Mr. Williams reported they had five DWI's Friday night in the Town of Wilton.

Mr. Crandall said there has been a study in the mid west on teenage driving. He said one conclusion was reached that if there is one person or several people in a car when the driver is driving recklessly, odds are 7 to 10 they will do something to correct the way they are driving if someone says something to the driver. Mrs. Dort stated one hospital's message in Pennsylvania was Ride Like A Friend. Mr. Crandall stated it may make a difference, and they will expand this to dealing with seniors. He said a lot of teenage kids think that because texting while driving isn't illegal, it is OK to do it. I told a girl it isn't illegal to drive with your eyes closed, he said. He said stick up for yourself if you are riding with someone driving like an idiot. Mr. Waldron said the power is in the passenger.

Mr. Crandall said there is a DWI Homicide one-day seminar that requires a minimum of 25 students, and the instructor charges \$2,000. I would be willing to help set this up, he said. Chairman Waldron said this body cannot say yes to \$2,000, and it would have to go through the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Larkin stated Troop G Headquarters will be sending 14 members to the party patrol training. We are participating in Operation Safe Stop coming up next month, he said. He stated in early May, they will be conducting a Traffic Safety Corridor Enforcement Program. One site is here in Saratoga

County, Route 9 from Malta south of the state Police barracks up to the City line, and we will be working with DOT and the Sheriff's Department, he said. We need to get people to understand they need to slow down, he said. He stated they are going to be implementing nighttime seat belt enforcement activities. It said this is new and may be hard to do, but we will try to do it in areas with ambient lighting. Mrs. Ekman said that will be important around prom time. Mr. Larkin said they may be asking to partner with local agencies. He said they will be conducting a motorcycle enforcement program again. He mentioned they will be partnering with the Schuylerville School District for a Friends Exhibit that is meant to be open to the community. It will be up for a number of weeks, and it will be there pre-prom. If you Google Friends Exhibit, you will find this, he said.

**** NEXT MEETING – MONDAY, APRIL 13TH AT 1:00 P.M. ****

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann