

TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD MEETING

February 20, 2007 – 1:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Will Crandall, Saratoga Springs PD; John Tanchak, Waterford PD; Bob Murphy, STOP-DWI Coordinator; Jeff Trottier, Supervisor, Town of Hadley; Richard Devlin, State DRE Coordinator-GTSC; Jen Hogan, GTSC; Andrew Prestigiacomio, Chris Cole, Gary Forward, Saratoga Springs PD; E. M. Rooney, Sheriff's Office; Mickey Mahoney, Probation; John Perez, NYS Park Police; Cynthia Dort, Cornell Univ. Cooperative Ext.; Larry Whalen, Stillwater PD; Joe Waldron, Mechanicville PD; Fred Scheidt, NYSP; Jim Kinney, The Saratogian; Stephen Williams, The Daily Gazette

Chairman Crandall called the meeting to order.

Mr. Devlin distributed copies of information on "The Drug Evaluation Classification and Drug Recognition Expert Programs." He stated about six years ago, the State was going to do away with the Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) program. At that time, the GTSC said it was a good program, and they wanted to keep it. He said there were many DRE's out there who did not meet qualifications to maintain their certification. We appointed regional coordinators, and we have 11 of them throughout the State – that includes one for NYSP, Nassau, Suffolk and the rest are broken up in the rest of the State, he said. The job of the coordinator is to help me out, he said. He stated they have an application process for a DRE. The person must fill out the application, have it signed by their Chief or direct Supervisor and then it goes to the Regional Coordinator. Once it comes to me, I make the decision whether that person is accepted for the class, he stated. He said it is a great program, and he totally believes in it. He said it is a lot of work and commitment from the Chiefs. He said there are 35 to 40 in some final stage of being certified. The trainees must do 12 evaluations on drug impaired people. He stated here and downstate, we rely on New York City to get our evaluations, but after 9/11, that came to a halt. We did a small class in Schenectady County with the help of the Sheriff's Department and several larger departments in that County, he said. We are always looking for new places to do evaluations, he added. He mentioned that New York State Parole was suggested.

Mr. Devlin said once the classroom work is completed, they have six months to complete their certification. He said in Erie County, STOP-DWI pays for every call back for a DRE in that County, and Monroe County has a similar system. He said DRE's are needed, but not 100 of them. You need enough to share among yourselves, he said. You have to have an understanding that you will use these guys. You will have to come up with a procedure for when a DRE is called. DRE's can be used when there is an arrest being made that turns into a physical force situation, he said. He stated they also go into the schools and train nurses how to do a mini evaluation on students, and this is working great.

Mr. Devlin said at the beginning of the training, there is a two-day pre-school. In that, they must pass a Standardized Field Sobriety Test (SFST). If they do not pass that, they do not continue on to day two, he said. On the second day of completion, they have a 25-question exam, and they need an 85% or higher to go to the next phase. Phase 2 is for seven days, and there is homework and quizzes. At the end of the second phase, they take a 100-question test, and they must maintain 85% or higher to go on to Phase 3 which is the evaluation phase. There are 12 steps, and once the 12 steps are finished, there is a practical exam. He said it is an easy course and not one you want to send a guy to who is not very good in DWI enforcement. He said it's very involved, but it is worth it. There are more drugged drivers out there than ever before, he added. He mentioned New York State has 128 DRE's and 30 who are waiting to finish training and 16 instructors. We need a minimum of four instructors per day, he said. In New York State, you must be recertified. Every two years, they must take 8-hours of DRE education. They must complete four evaluations in a two-year period, he said. He mentioned they do a lot of evaluations at Darien Lake. Chairman Crandall said he would like to see the two-day training dovetail off of our annual DWI training.

Mr. Cole said if we want to do this in the County, should we coordinate this through one person? Chairman Crandall said we can do a lot of coordination right through here. Mr. Waldron asked what the minimum class size is. Mr. Devlin said he believes it could be done with 10 instead of 15. He said he can do whatever he has to do to help the County get the program running.

Ms. Hogan said they are on top of the 2008 grant planning. We are just waiting on educating new administrators, she said. Chairman Crandall said Saratoga County is looking at two corridor enforcements. Is there anything for this year, he asked. Mr. Devlin said it is by invitation only. If you have a Step grant, you can use some of that. Ms. Hogan said she would look into that.

Mr. Murphy stated each department can do 16 hours of DWI patrols for St. Patrick's Day weekend. At the next meeting, we can distribute the schedule of the upcoming proms and graduations. In March, we can talk about additional equipment on an as needed basis, he said. Chairman Crandall mentioned they will be getting their Plate Hunter from DCJS in April. He recommended that for those departments that get the Plate Hunter, they should buy the extended warranty that runs \$700 - \$800 per year. He said he has the Sheriff's Plate Hunter results for January that shows 71 hits. Mr. Rooney said they want to hit every town in the County.

Chairman Crandall said they are back in the Child Safety Seat business, and they hooked up with the Saratoga Springs F.D. He said they received 16 or 17 calls in two days. Mrs. Dort stated they did 18 at the Lake Avenue Firehouse. Mr. Waldron said in Mechanicville they had 157 car seat installations and issued 68 new car seats. Mrs. Dort said the Child Passenger Safety Conference will be in Buffalo June 12 - 14. You need to send your techs to this, she said. They will only have to pay for their dinner. Breakfast and lunch are provided, she said. She said there is an update class on April 27th at the

Clifton Park Rescue Squad. She said she is running CPS classes for parents every other Tuesday night.

Mrs. Dort said their teen driver program is taking a big leap. Sgt. Lupo and she are putting together a program for teens in Saratoga County. We also want to work with parents because they do not know what the law is for teen drivers, she said. She said Sgt. Larkin requested her to be at the Schuylerville High School to do a seat belt check on May 14. She mentioned Mechanicville and Cornell Cooperative Extension might try to team up for Operation Safe Stop.

Mrs. Dort pointed out that Saratoga County uses Stanski Transportation for transporting children with special needs. They are using outdated child safety seats that are inappropriate for the children. This really needs to be looked into, she said. It will only take one child to be in trouble, she stated. She said Saratoga County needs to come up with something with that bus company since the County hires them out. Chairman Crandall said this sounds like a job for the County's Public Safety Committee.

Mr. Murphy stated Safe Spring will be held March 15th at Skidmore which runs all day long. There will be about 400 students who will be in attendance from all of our County schools, he said.

**** NEXT MEETING – MONDAY, MARCH 19TH AT 1:00 P.M. ****

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann