

County of Saratoga

Board of Supervisors

40 MCMASTER STREET
BALLSTON SPA, NEW YORK 12020

Phone: (518) 885-2240

Fax: (518) 884-4771

MATTHEW E. VEITCH
Chairman

PAMELA A. WRIGHT
Clerk

SARATOGA COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD

April 13, 2015 – 1:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Andrew Prestigiaco, Saratoga Springs PD; Lenny Fornabia, NYSP; Frank McGarity, NYS Park Police; Tim Williams, Waterford PD; Thomas Parks, Charlton Police; Ray Cordani, Michael Sheradin, Stillwater PD; Todd Moulthrop, So. Glens Falls PD; Janine Stuchin, Prevention Council; Patrick Campion, D.A.'s Office; Mickey Mahoney, Probation; Cynthia Dort, Cornell Ext. of Saratoga; Rich Schoonmaker, Galway PD; Patti Donovan, DWI Impact Panel; Stephen Williams, Daily Gazette

Chairman Prestigiaco called the meeting to order.

Chairman Prestigiaco said he met with Bob Murphy, prior to this meeting, who has had significant surgery and is recouping in his office catching up on things. He said that the Memorial Day Crackdown is May 22-26, and Mr. Murphy's secretary, Kelly Cook, will be calling or e-mailing the agencies with their allotments for that crackdown.

Chairman Prestigiaco stated the following:

SSPD made 40 DWI arrests since the last meeting. Four arrests were during the Crackdown period (March 13 – 18). Notable, they had eight DWI arrests this past weekend, and they have had two Vince's Law arrests within the past week.

SSPD partnered with the Sheriff's Office and Cindy Dort on March 20th to conduct a car seat detail at the Malta EMS station.

The national enforcement initiative U Text. U Drive. U Pay is underway April 10 – 15. (covered by PTS grant)

“Empty Chair” Teen Initiative is April 20 – 24.

To complement the ongoing teen driver educational efforts, GTSC is encouraging law enforcement to participate in a new “Empty Chair” teen initiative. A key element to keeping teens safe is education. Law enforcement agencies that have School Resource Officers (SRO’s) or a presence at high schools within your jurisdiction are also encouraged to conduct outreach this week and throughout the prom and graduation season. Educational materials are available at the GTSC Young Driver Toolkit using the link <http://www.safety.ny.gov/SRO-Toolkit/default.html>. Posters for schools, police departments and other areas that teens frequent are also available.

Please consider assigning patrols to focus on a different traffic safety threat each day of the week. Dedicated overtime enforcement to address this initiative is reimbursable under your 2015 Police Traffic Services (PTS) grant. These details should be conducted in the vicinity of high schools whenever possible.

- Monday, April 20, 2015 – Speeding in School Zones
- Tuesday, April 21, 2015 – Seatbelts and Child Restraints
- Wednesday, April 22, 2015 – Cell Phone Use and Texting
- Thursday, April 23, 2015 – Graduated Driver License Provisions
- Friday, April 24, 2015 – Underage Drinking and Impaired Driving

Operation Safe Stop is Thursday, April 16th. A press conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Express in Latham at 10:00 a.m. The Operation Safe Stop Reporting Form for April 16th enforcement activities is available. The due date for agencies to submit the form is ON or BEFORE April 30, 2015. Forms can either be faxed to the GTSC at 518-473-6946 or e-mailed to the GTSC at Paul.Overbaugh@dmv.ny.gov. (covered by PTS grant).

PTS, Child Passenger Safety and Highway Improvement grants have been announced are available. Grant applications submitted through E-Grants (SAFENY website) are due May 15th. Semi-annual progress reports for 2014/2015 grants are due April 15th.

Ballston Avenue and the Exit 15 bridge projects are underway.

SSPD is partnering with the State Police, Sheriff’s Office, the Goldwing Riders’ Association and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation to host a Motorcycle Safety Awareness event in Congress Park on May 2nd from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation will have their riding simulator there that was funded by GTSC, and there will be some giveaways, law

enforcement will be in attendance along with some motorcycles to look at and hopefully a State Police motorcycle to look at. This was successful last year. In previous years, it was held at the Wilton Mall, but they did not get the crowds that they received locally in downtown Congress Park.

Mr. Murphy gave him registration forms for a training course that is being offered in Albany County on "Conducting Complete Traffic Stops", to be held May 19-20, at the SEFCU Arena on Washington Ave. in Albany. The course instructor is Sheriff Mike Lewis of Wicomico County, MD. He has spoken at two of the ESLETS conferences. He is outstanding. The registration cost is \$20 for out of county participants. Mr. Fornabia said he highly recommends this training for those who like to patrol looking for drugs.

Mr. Champion stated they continue to be busy with DWI prosecutions. They expect this to continue especially now that the weather is getting nicer. He said he has read an interesting study by the Institute for Traffic Safety Management about recidivism rates with convicted DWI offenders. In 2012, across New York State, the recidivism rate was 21% which was down 1% from 2009. The highest rate of recidivism by geographic location of drivers convicted of DWI is the Upstate region which is 23% which is higher than average in New York, and the next highest rate was in Long Island which is 21%. He said that is consistent with what they are seeing with lack of slowing down. He stated the highest age group for recidivism was 30 – 39.

Mr. Champion mentioned the Crime Victim Candlelight Vigil will be held Sunday, April 19th at 4:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian New England Congressional Church in Saratoga Springs.

Mr. Schoonmaker said since the last meeting, they issued 143 traffic tickets and two DWI drug arrests.

Mr. Moulthrop stated they had multiple UTT's since the last meeting and a DWI in which the operator had 15 packets of heroin on him. That has become a bad epidemic up in that area (Glens Falls/Hudson Falls/South Glens Falls)

Mr. Cordani said they did not have any DWI's during the crackdown, however, they had a couple leading up to it including one under Leandra's Law. They had a couple UPM's during the crackdown and a dozen tickets issued during that period. He said they are moving from the current station to the old Town Hall in the Riverside section, and that has been quite a task. They have been invited to do a prom mock crash on May 15th at the Stillwater Central School. He said this is definitely an eye opener. He said they are looking for contacts for defibrillators, and they are looking to see if there are any grants out there. Mrs. Dort stated the Sheriff has a grant, and she suggested they contact him.

Mr. Fornabia said the nice weather is bringing out motorcycles. They are in the final stages of setting up a motorcycle training in May. He is going to try to schedule two of them for each platoon. This takes the average law enforcement officer and gives them the knowledge that they need to stop and issue traffic tickets to these motorcycles. In addition to just recreational riders, there is an increase in the outlaw motorcycle clubs statewide, and they are dangerous. He said when they have the dates for the training, they will open it up to everybody, and there will be limited seating. Chairman Prestigiacomio stated he stopped two Hell's Angels on Broadway a couple of summers ago who resided in the Glens Falls area. Mr. Fornabia said the Angels have a name for themselves. It's the affiliate groups trying to prove something.

Mr. Williams stated they had one DWI during the St. Patrick's Day crackdown. They will be taking part in the upcoming crackdown and Operation Safe Stop. He was informed by the Waterford High School Principal that during the week of May 27th, the crash simulator will be at the high school along with Mrs. Dort, Mrs. Donovan, members of the State Police, the County and the Waterford PD.

Mr. McGarity said they had one DWI to report. He distributed a list of SPAC Concerts for 2015. He said he found some money in his agency, and they will be attending the Car Seat Tech class.

Ms. Stuchin said since last month, they held their annual Safe Spring event with about 280 high school students along with SADD clubs and advisors, and Mr. Campion and Mr. Murphy were also there. She said they receive very good feedback that the youth program they brought in from New Hampshire got the students and advisors excited about bringing the programs back to their high schools and continuing that education, and they would like to bring that group back next year. She said they put together a whole kit for the SADD advisors which was all put on to a flash drive, as they are trying to get those groups energized again. She distributed copies of the list of school proms and graduations.

Ms. Stuchin said they have applied for a federal grant with their group out of South Glens Falls the South Glens Falls Community Coalition for Family Wellness who has reached out to the village police for some data. It is a grant from the Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) looking a prescription, opiate and heroin abuse, dealing with overdoses and community outreach. She said they will find out in a couple of weeks whether they receive that grant. They want to receive some trends, and get information on arrests and hospitalizations. Mr. Moulthrop said he was on vacation, and he has not had that communication with his boss because he is now on vacation. Ms. Stuchen said in about a month, they will be doing a training to target teachers, social workers, folks working with families in the region who would do well to better understand how addiction, particularly heroin and opiate addiction, impacts families and how they can better work with them, not only from law enforcement, but from a human service perspective. This full day training is going to be held at the Empire State College.

Ms. Stuchin said with regard to the heroin epidemic, at the Saratoga Springs High School, they are working with the school district doing a Parent University Program on Tuesday, April 28th. Everyone is welcome to attend. Parent University is something that South Glens Falls School District has been doing, and they did it with Stillwater and is on-going with Saratoga Springs. She said they are trying to keep parents in the loop and to keep them connected with issues the Council is working with during the day with young people to help them understand where they can play a role.

Ms. Stuchin said years ago, their agency put out a prom brochure for parents. They have renewed that this year with support from the STOP-DWI Program. She said they printed 5,500 of these, and it's what every parent should know about prom night and after. They took the information from another STOP-DWI program in Westchester, revised it to reflect our local information, and she distributed copies of the brochure to the meeting attendees. She said they received good feedback on this brochure. She said this was printed in conjunction with every high school in the County and got the high schools to put their logo on it. They printed 500 copies for the Sheriff's Department, and she will be dropping them off to the Department. She stated that they are open to feedback, and they will revise it next year. It is also on their website.

Mrs. Dort said for this week's No Texting campaign, WRGB did a story on it. In seeing the comments, she said she does not believe we are doing the best job of educating on what the law is. There are very conflicting messages being given by the police officers when they are stopping people for this. She said the conflicting views are causing a lot of problems. She suggested a group be put together to decipher this and to a media campaign. She said we owe it to the public to give them the right information. Mr. Fornabia said they refer people to the GTSB website which spells it out pretty clear when they can be on a cell phone. He said people may tell you that they received a ticket at a red light, but they may be leaving part of the story out. Mrs. Dort said she just believes we have not done a great job. We have done a great job with DWI and other things, but not with texting.

Mrs. Dort said they participated in Hockey Across America at the Glens Falls Civic Center and were joined by the State Police. They did awareness for drinking and driving. She said the Flames invited them. It was a really good event. She said Linda Campion went with her and brought out her key tags for people committed to not drinking and driving. She displayed this tag that has Mrs. Campion's daughter's signature on the back of it. This wasn't something that she gave out to everyone. You had to have a conversation with her. Mr. Fornabia brought a breathalyzer for people to see. Mr. Fornabia said they wanted to engage people in conversation. He said they also want to bring an interlock system to some of these events. He thought it was a great event.

Mrs. Dort said she will be doing a CPS class in Clifton Park May 19 – 21. The two State Park Police will be attending on their car seat grant. She said if any agency has anyone they want trained, they have two seats open. She said she just received the new 2015 CEU course, so they can run this again.

Mrs. Dort said she received a shipment of bike helmets, and she will be at the Navy on April 23rd doing Operation Military Kids, a bike helmet giveaway.

Mrs. Dort stated they will be at Mechanicville/Stillwater/Waterford High Schools the week of April 27 – May 5. This is their first three school event for teen driver safety. State Police will be there, and Patti Donovan will be speaking to all three schools on Monday, April 27th. Brad Swartz will be there with the motorcycle simulator. WRGB's Finklestein and Partners No Text Zone will also be there. She stated their theme this year is Got Skin in the Game. There is a steering wheel made up of family, friends and community, school, and on the center of the steering wheel it says I Do. We want students to take ownership that they do have skin in the game when they are behind the wheel. We will be in Ballston Spa in June.

Mrs. Dort said the new set of the Broken Heart panels is delayed. We had hoped to have them for the Crime Victim Vigil, but that can't happen. She said maybe they will be done in time for the three school event at the end of the month. They have a family that is having a personal crisis.

Mrs. Dort said at the Alive at 25 class last month, they had quite the crew. They are not getting just the speeding drivers. These are kids up to 25 years old. There were some drug issues. Chairman Prestigiacommo stated there were some terrible attitudes. He said some of these kids do not have good home lives. He stated it is a tough class, but it is worthwhile. Mrs. Dort encouraged everyone to go to a class and sit in. She said the next class will be April 28th, 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. over at Cornell.

Ms. Donovan said she is here about the Victim Impact Panels. She said one victim drives up here from Albany to attend these panels, and one is from Warrensburg who has to pay someone to drive her down because she only has one eye and cannot drive at night because she has disfiguring injuries from her crash. She said they have been talking among themselves over the past few months about professionalizing the Impact Panels. They have been having some meetings with the Prevention Council. She said she has been asking what can they accomplish, because the core issue is money. For at least the past five years, the Impact Panels have been charging \$25 per person for those who have to attend. She said she is curious as to where this money is going. She said she knows some of the money goes to the Prevention Council, etc., but as an outsider looking it, she is wondering why the Youth Bureau is responsible for the DWI impact money. She said she would like an accounting of where the

money has gone for the last five years and how much is available for the Impact Panel to professionalize. She said Mark Gauthier has no legs, and he is a very impactful speaker, and his injuries occurred when he was 11 years old. He talks about his life and how it has been having no legs all this while because of a drunk driver. If Mark doesn't show up, the people sitting at that panel do not hear Mark's message. She said if Linda Campion or she are not there, they are not getting a consistent message. She said they have talked to the Prevention Council about making videos, because these are local faces that have been affected by DWI. We are in negotiations with the Prevention Council on how to go about doing that. She asked how much money is available that would be available for the Impact Panel. She said she wants people coming in and being blown away right off the bat and knowing we mean business. This is serious business why people have been sent to this Panel. The victims on this Panel are all volunteers; nobody is paying them to speak at these Panels. That is why Brenda does not always attend these, because she don't always have the money for someone to drive her down from Warrensburg. She stated there has to be money available to these volunteers and to help Mark Gauthier be able to appear 11 times per year to rehash his accident.

Ms. Donovan said these volunteers come back month after month. She said she wants to know how this money is being spent, how much is available to the Prevention Council and how much more is available to the Impact Panel to professionalize. She said every group coming in should receive the same message. Ms. Stuchin said they receive \$5,000, and they have to send in an itemized bill. Wes Carr has some of his staff there also. She said she does not know where the remaining money goes. Ms. Donovan said they were told it is none of their business where the money is, but it is public money. She said let's professionalize this so that every person walking into the Impact Panel receives the same message. She said a lot of people do not want to get up in front of people and tear their heart out. If these volunteers want to keep doing this, let's find out where there is money to do it. Mr. Fornabia said he likes the idea of videotaping the victims. Ms. Stuchin said we should request Chairman Prestigiacomio to reach out to Wes Car. Mrs. Dort said and also to Bob Murphy. Mrs. Donovan stated in the evaluation forms, people are attending from other counties just to pay the \$25.00, as other counties are charging \$50.00. Ms. Stuchin said the lady from Warrensburg who comes down should at least be given a gas card. She said we need to have procedures set up. Chairman Prestigiacomio said he will certainly ask on behalf of the Traffic Safety Board.

**** NEXT MEETING – MONDAY, MAY 18, 2015 AT 1:00 P.M. ****

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann