

County of



Saratoga

## Board of Supervisors

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### SARATOGA COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD MEETING

**December 7, 2015 – 1:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Chairman Andrew Prestigiacomio, Saratoga Springs PD; Wes Carr, Youth Bureau/STOP-DWI; Leonard Fornabia, NYS Police; Frank McGarity, NYS Park Police; Brent Dupras, Sheriff's Office; Thomas Parks, Charlton Police; Janine Stuchin, Prevention Council; Patrick Champion, D.A.'s Office; Mickey Mahoney, Probation; Cynthia Dort, Cornell Ext. of Saratoga; Craig Hayner, County Clerk

Chairman Prestigiacomio called the meeting to order.

Chairman Prestigiacomio introduced Wes Carr, the newly appointed Coordinator for the STOP-DWI program who will take over in January. He said Mr. Carr and he met in his office last week and touched upon the STOP-DWI Program and what we are all about.

Mr. Carr stated he is currently the Director of the Saratoga County Youth Bureau and has been for the past 20 years. He said his appointment as Coordinator is effective January 1<sup>st</sup>. He said one of the things they do in the Youth Bureau is coordinate the Victim Impact Panels, and there are 11 of these per year. There will be one tomorrow night in Clifton Park. He said Ms. Stuchin and her staff and Mrs. Dort work together with him. He stated Kelly Cook has been helpful in walking him through the STOP-DWI process. He said everything will be done out of the Youth Bureau. He said if anyone has any questions, please contact him.

Chairman Prestigiacomio said everyone should have received their allotment from Kelly Cook for the holiday crackdown December 18, 2015 – January 3, 2016k.

Chairman Prestigiacomio reported on the following:

SSPD DWI Activity – SSPD made 24 DWI arrests since the last meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Eight DWI arrests were made during the Thanksgiving Crackdown period (November 25 –

29). SSPD has conducted two more DWI Sobriety Checkpoints since the last meeting. Between both checkpoints, officers yielded 3 DWI arrests, 3 Aggravated Unlicensed Operation arrests and 2 Narcotic Violation arrests. Three dozen tickets were issued, and nearly two dozen drivers were detained and administered Standardized Field Sobriety Tests.

The Christopher Daley Turkey Trot 5K was held on November 26<sup>th</sup> (Thanksgiving), and was a success. Nearly 3800 runners participated in the event. The Victorian Street Walk was held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, and it was also a success. Crowds were estimated to have reached 10,000 on Broadway.

Mr. Champion said he wanted to commend the efforts of his colleague, Matt Coseo, in securing a felony DWI conviction last week in County Court jury trial. He worked very hard on the case in trial preparation and in the trial itself. He thanked the Saratoga Springs Police Department for making the arrest.

Mr. Champion said on behalf of the D.A.'s office, he congratulated Mr. Carr in his new position. They are excited to work with him on future initiatives.

Mr. Champion said business has been steady. He said recently, he has not seen many ignition interlock violations in his DWI courts. Since 2010 in our County, 33% have actually installed the device which is better than other counties. 1500 people were subject to the conditions, and 500 people have actually installed it. He said 1000 people since then maintain they do not own a vehicle. He requested the agencies to keep an eye out for this.

Mr. Dupras welcomed Mr. Carr on behalf of the Sheriff's Dept. He said since the last meeting, they had nine DWI's. On Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, the Sheriff had his Toys for Tots convoy with over 200 vehicles and raised over 4500 toys. He thanked the Park Police, State Police and other police agencies for their help with this. He said they will continue to do the Alive at 25 and Victim Impact Panels. He has assigned a Deputy as much as he can. He mentioned they were in Edinburg for a car seat check last week, and they did have a few participants. He said they will continue to move this around the County. He stated they are gearing up for the holiday season with regard to enforcement. The Sheriff is going to put extra people on in the malls, etc. They are looking forward to a safe holiday season.

Ms. Stuchin also welcomed Mr. Carr. She said their STOP-DWI designated prevention educator is busy working with the SADD chapters around the County. They have set up the annual youth conference, Safe Spring, which will be held on Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at Skidmore College, and everyone is invited. She said she will bring in a flyer on this in January. She mentioned this will start at 8:30 a.m. and finish up about 1:00 p.m. The training, breakout workshops and showcasing of what students have done throughout the year are primarily in the morning.



Ms. Stuchin said her colleague who works as the prevention educator around STOP-DWI has been designing a billboard and poster campaign for parents to prevent underage drinking. This is a three-phased campaign that starts in the winter and will go through the Spring. Phase I will be through billboards and posters at the high schools on the risk of underage drinking; Phase II will let parents know where kids obtain and consume alcohol; Phase III will provide action steps parents can take to reduce the likelihood that teens will drink alcohol. For many young people, parents are still tremendously influential. Getting parents to have those on-going conversations with young people is key. Research continues to show it does have an impact on young people and the decisions they make.

Ms. Stuchin said they recently held a training, Training and Intervention Procedures (TIPS). They do this once a year. With the D.A.'s office, they sent out 600 letters to all of the alcohol retailers, servers, restaurants, stores, and they held that training just before Thanksgiving. They are continuing to do their NARCAN training which is held on an on-going basis at the Saratoga Springs Public Library the second Monday of every month at 3:00 p.m. in the Sussman Room. The Catholic Charities out of Albany brings in the facilitator.

Ms. Stuchin stated they purchased an Rx drop box for the Saratoga County Sheriff's Office. It was installed as part of their overall effort to keep opioid pain killers from being diverted to teens or others for misuse. Saratoga Springs has an Rx drop box that is open 24 hours a day. Mr. Hayner stated they are considering one. She said that anyone who wants one can contact the Prevention Council, and they can help with obtaining that. They have a grant that they can use to obtain these boxes and also do the marketing on where these boxes are located.

Mr. Fornabia welcomed Mr. Carr. He invited Mr. Carr to accompany him to other STOP-DWI meetings in other counties. He stated that Albany County is a role model in the area. He encouraged Mr. Carr to reach out to them or accompany him to one of their meetings.

Mr. Fornabia stated they have had 28 DWI arrests since the last meeting; 8 from a checkpoint. He said they are getting a new Troop Commander. For Troop G, that will have a positive impact on their traffic enforcement efforts. Major Keeler is coming in this month, and he is very proactive with regard to highway safety. He used to be out of the Albany/Rensselaer area and has always been active in traffic enforcement. The previous Troop Commander was from the BCI. He said in Saratoga County, he recently met with Captain McCarthy to discuss our efforts on the Interstate. We are requiring our troopers to put more effort forward. The net result should be more tickets and DWI arrests. Chairman Prestigiacommo said if the State Police would like to do anything on the Interstate with the SSPD, they would be happy to.

Mr. Mahoney welcomed Mr. Carr.



Mr. Hayner congratulated Mr. Carr. He said they will be holding a joint press conference along with Board of Supervisors Chairman Matthew Veitch on December 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. at the Wilton DMV raising awareness for organ donations for Donate Life.

Mr. Hayner said if anyone would like anything to do with messaging, they have their monitors in the DMV offices. He said to just contact him. They generally change their messages once a month.

Mr. McGarity welcomed Mr. Carr.

Mrs. Dort stated Ryan Mahem from the Sheriff's Dept. and she will be taking a Defensive Driving Course to become instructors in January. Their hope is to meet with the magistrates in hopes that they will be as enthusiastic as they have been with the other courses in sending people to the course. She said she met with Mr. Hayner last week, and they will be working on a few new projects hopefully to get something going in Shen or Saratoga with regard to teen driver initiatives.

Mrs. Dort said Stony Brook Hospital and she submitted a grant to bring a new teen driver program to the area. It's a one hour program that will be taken into the schools. Sometimes that is easier than a three-day program. She said they took the training in Suffolk County and it would be a good program for schools. She said she likes the message that it gives out.

Mrs. Dort said she will be offering a CPS Tech class in February or March. She said money is getting tighter in trying to offer these classes. For anyone in the County that has techs, the conference is in May, and she will need to know by January 15<sup>th</sup> how many will be going from the agencies. The State will pay for the hotel, and Cornell will pay for the registration.

Mrs. Dort stated the Alive at 25 and Distracted Driving classes are going well. The numbers were dwindling in the amount of people attending Alive at 25, and she didn't know why, but they are back up this month. She said last month, they taught a really strange crowd. In the first evaluation they read, one young man wrote that he came in expecting nothing but left with a different attitude that he came in with. She said that was a kid that they thought they couldn't reach at all. She said she does believe they make a difference. The dates are out for 2016 for both classes.

Mrs. Dort said her new assistant, Colleen, worked on changing the survey that is used for the Victim Impact Panels. It will be unveiled tomorrow night. She said last month, she had Colleen take down the data from the old form, and she distributed copies of it. She said last month, 80 people filled out paperwork. What we found most astonishing was that one question was *what was your age at the time of your first full drink*, and overwhelmingly it was 14 – 16 years of age. For the question *have you ever been arrested before*, 18 were there for a second time, and one person was there for a fourth time. She said they still have work to do. She stated the reason they changed to a new form was that some victims were



concerned about the panel being for most those who were arrested for drinking and driving. People are coming for drug offenses as well. They want this broken up to find out how many people are coming for drinking and how many for drug offenses and should there be a speaker from a drugged driving point of view as well.

Mrs. Dort stated Linda Campion, Patti Donovan and she have toured all of the areas Victim Impact Panels and started to collect materials from them that they may want to make available for our program. Some of the information is good, and some may be overkill. Albany County has things that we could benefit from. Saratoga County's is a good one also. Mr. Fornabia stated Albany County does a fantastic job in coordinating their police agencies. Mrs. Dort stated that Mr. Carr's staff does a book mark with support services. She said that Mrs. Donovan is meeting with Skidmore again to talk about doing a movie with some of the victims who cannot be at the panels all of the time. Not every person can speak every month. Emotionally, they cannot do it. They could do their story in a movie. Mrs. Donovan is working to get this done for free.

Mr. Parks stated one of their officers pulled a vehicle over for speeding and they had tampered with their inspection. He also did not have a license. The officer was concerned that he was being taped. This person was issued tickets, and he handed the officer a piece of paper with pieces from the Supreme Court about your rights driving on the highway. Mr. Parks stated there will be a trial. Scotia police has also issued him several tickets. Chairman Prestigiacommo said with their last checkpoint, three people refused to cooperate, but they did not show a card. Usually they have no issues with their checkpoints. Mr. Fornabia said they had a similar situation in the Town of Wilton, and he was found guilty of all charges. He mentioned if a person refuses to open their window, their DWI checkpoint manual states they are allowed to break the window. They have a small tool that breaks the window. Chairman Prestigiacommo said with one driver, they opened up the passenger door.

Chairman Prestigiacommo advised Ms. Stuchin that he will be out of town for the Safe Spring program in March.

In looking at the survey that Mrs. Dort distributed, Chairman Prestigiacommo stated 12 DWI convictions out of Malta seems high. Mr. Carr suggested that the heading on that survey that reads "Other" for the courts, should read "Out of County" on the new form. He said some of the statistics have been done in house since November of 1995. Mrs. Dort said it took Colleen about two hours to do this survey. She said we need to do something with the information we are getting. Ms. Stuchin stated this data is 100% consistent with people who start drinking early subsequently have consequences and complications and interactions with the law around alcohol. That is why they do the school-based and parent programs and the community messaging. With the national data, the earlier you start drinking, the more you will have consequences. She said she has seen that when you drink under the age



of 16, you are in families who are still serving alcohol to minors. There are many families that do not agree with waiting until you are 21 to drink. A number of these people are alcoholic. They are noticing that a few of these people were drinking the day of or a couple hours before the Victim Impact Panel. If you put together a profile of who is a problem drinker as an adult, this is it. She stated they give out material that lists the AA groups. She stated heavy alcohol is a family illness. It goes down generation through generation with a lot of people. She said they are getting ready to do the prom brochure to remind parents that it's not safe to serve at proms and graduations.

Mrs. Dort stated Mr. Hayner and she have talked about getting to the parent. How do we get them to come to a program? She said we need to get to parents and not just the young drinker. She mentioned Saratoga County is no. 2 in the State for DWI's.

Mr. Fornabia stated they have a last drink report. When one of their troopers makes an arrest, they are asked where they had their last drink, and then they compile a report on that. In looking at the 12 convictions in Malta, where are they drinking in Malta? He suggested adding that question on the survey. Mrs. Dort said she will bring this up to the victims. Mr. Fornabia said it's just another tool that helps them. Chairman Prestigiacomo stated they are probably drinking in Saratoga Springs. Mr. Fornabia said maybe we could get together and have checkpoints outside of the City. Mr. Fornabia said they do enforcement around the problem areas. Mrs. Dort said it's interesting how many adults are OK with underage drinking. A lot of kids won't go to a party unless alcohol is being served. Mr. Parks said he knows of three fatalities who left the Charlton House.

Mr. Fornabia said once a month they do ABC checks and undercover operatives. They take two volunteers under 21 years of age to into various establishments to attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages. He said if anyone knows of any establishment that sells to underage kids, just let them know.

Mrs. Dort stated maybe we need to start doing training in Middle School. She said too many lives are being lost that are preventable, and that is what we have to stop.

**\*\* NEXT MEETING – MONDAY JANUARY 11, 2016 AT 1:00 P.M. \*\***

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann