

Executive Committee for Highway Safety
Meeting Minutes; Mtg. #10
October 12, 2005

Location:

Chief Engineer's Conference Room, Beryl Drive @ 9:30 a.m.

Committee Members in Attendance:

David King	Susan Coward	Terry Hopkins	Darrell Jernigan
Kevin Lacy	Doug Robertson	John Sullivan	Steve Varnedoe
Mike Yaniero			

Guests in Attendance:

Jessica Jones	Katy Jones	John Stokes	Brian Mayhew	Catherine McLaurin
Brad Hibbs	David Harkey	Major Munday	Chris Hartley	Missy Dickens
Max Tate	Suzanne Black	Cliff Braam		

Scribe:

Cliff Braam

Minutes:

- The meeting began at approximately 9:30 a.m.

Task I – Welcome

David opened the meeting and everyone introduced themselves for the benefit of new members and guest that were present.

Doug made the announcement to the group that he is retiring at the end of December 2005 and that David Harkey (who was present) will be acting as the interim director of the center until a replacement is named. Doug thanked the group for all of their efforts.

Task II – Fatal Trends Update

Kevin gave an update on the fatal trends so far for this year. As of October 11, 2005, fatal crashes are down 6% and overall fatalities are down by approximately 8%.

Task III – Implementation Guide

Cliff distributed printed hardcopies of the initial Implementation Guide for the ECHS to the Committee members. It was noted that in general hard copies of this will not be mass printed and distributed, but rather that the document will be available in an electronic format on line on the ECHS web site in the near future. It was stated that this document was originally quite a bit larger with additional background information in it, but after a preliminary review by select members and others, a decision was made not to include information in this document that was

or could be found on the ECHS web site. This decision was made in an effort to keep the size of the document to a minimum to facilitate printing if desired. Committee members were asked that if they noted changes, additions or other modifications that are needed to the document, to please let Cliff know.

Task IV – Future Presentation of Working Group Strategies

With the recent expansion of active Working Groups (presently at nine) and the possibility of adding additional ones in the near future, there was discussion of how strategies should be presented to the Committee. It was finally decided that the Chairs of the Working Groups should submit copies of any strategy they plan to present to the Committee at least two weeks prior to the Committee meeting. This will allow Committee members an opportunity to review the strategy prior to the meeting so that they can be prepared to ask questions if needed at the meeting.

Working Group chairs will need to include information on items such as 1) cost of implementation, 2) public acceptance 3) ease of implementation and 4) legislation issues.

David noted that if it appears that there are a lot of strategies to be presented at a meeting, then the Committee may need to begin the meeting earlier to allow more time for discussion. David said that he did not want the Committee to be the reason strategies were held up and not moved forward in a timely manner.

To simplify this process, Working Group chairs may send in their strategies to Cliff and he will distribute the strategies to the Committee members. Cliff will send out a reminder notice to the Working Group Chairs and Co-Chairs three weeks prior to the Committee meeting and then a final call for strategies two weeks prior to the meeting.

Task V – Working Groups; Updates and Strategies

INTERSECTION SAFETY WORKING GROUP

This is a new working group that has only met one time to date. The group has had many good discussions at its initial meeting and a presentation by Stan Polanis from the City of Winston-Salem on low cost intersection improvements. The group is working on several initial strategies and discussing many other issues.

There will likely be a separate web page (within the ECHS web site) for this group so that they plan on using as a resource web page.

OLDER DRIVERS

The Senior Driver Coalition met on September 27 at the AARP offices in Raleigh. At that meeting Cliff gave the group an overview of the Executive Committee for Highway Safety and asked that the group consider becoming part of the ECHS serving in the capacity of examining older driver issues. The group agreed to function as a working group under the guidance of the ECHS. The rest of the meeting was spent brainstorming ideas and there will likely be many

strategies forthcoming out of this experienced working group. Both AARP and AAA of the Carolinas are participants in this group. The next meeting of this group is scheduled for November 28, 2005.

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY WORKING GROUP

The working group met on September 28 and John Stokes, Chair, distributed the minutes from that meeting to the Committee members. Presently in North Carolina, motorcycles only comprise about 2% of all registered vehicles, but they account for 9% of the fatalities. Several issues seem to be very prevalent; 1) 20 year old riders are highly visible in speed related crashes (mostly riding sport bikes) 2) 40-50 year old riders are highly visible in alcohol related collisions (mostly riding cruiser style bikes) and 3) the riding environment has changed dramatically from what it was just a few years ago.

The next meeting of this working group is scheduled for November 3, 2005.

LANE DEPARTURE WORKING GROUP

The group still has several strategies on draft mode and are working to finalize one for presentation to the Committee at the next meeting. The group continues to explore the issue of driver's education looking at the content of the program and adding to it, accountability and consistency across the state and even looking internationally at various programs in other countries to see what could be applied here.

Another strategy under consideration is piloting/testing a concept known as the safety edge. The safety edge essentially consist of beveling the edge of pavement at a 30-45 degree angle when paving or resurfacing instead of leaving the edge with a vertical face. The idea is that by proving this slope, it helps errant vehicles recover in a more controlled fashion when they leave the pavement surface.

ENSURING DRIVERS ARE LICENSED WORKING GROUP

The strategy, "Impoundment of License Plates" has been reviewed and reworked and the group is waiting to meet with Commissioner Tatum for final approval on this strategy. Essentially, this strategy was modified so that it only applies to individuals who are revoked due to repeated DWI offenses.

INCREASING SAFETY BELT USAGE WORKING GROUP

This group has not met since the last Committee meeting due to the fact that they have legislation pending and are waiting the outcome of the legislation before deciding what to do next. Current legislation (SB 774) overwhelmingly passed the Senate and was scheduled on the House Calendar for consideration. However, the bill was pulled from the House calendar when it was discovered that the House planned on amending the bill to remove the requirement of rear seat occupants to be belted. The group will continue to pursue this in the future.

Safety belt usage rate for the state has been certified this year at 86.7%. This is up 0.5% from last year.

Darrell has started the R U Buckled campaign and it is active in 55 high schools this fall. This program essentially ties safety belt compliance to on campus parking privileges. The first time a student is found not wearing their safety belt, a warning is received, the second time, they lose their parking for one week, the third time, parking privileges are lost for 2 weeks and this continues until they potentially lose privileges for the entire year.

KEEPING DRIVERS ALERT WORKING GROUP

The education and awareness campaign targeting young distracted drivers continues to move forward. The focus groups with the Governor's pages are complete and the final report has been finished. The group is now working with a public campaigns class comprised of juniors and seniors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to develop potential campaigns. The class has been divided into five "agencies" and final presentations will be given on December 1 and December 6. Committee members are invited to attend and more information will be provided as the dates get closer.

The group is also working on a strategy focusing on drowsy drivers and monitoring other topics such as other state's ban on cell phone use, which to date has shown no positive effect in the crash data.

SPEED WORKING GROUP

The group now has five different strategies on draft mode:

- Safe Speed Act
- Legislation for Compliance Dismissal
- Photo Enforcement for Speed (expanding this to School Zones, Work Zones, Safety Zones, etc)
- Design Speed for Signalized Intersections and
- Statewide Pacecar Program.

The group should have a strategy ready for presentation to the Committee at the next meeting.

Task VII – Next Meeting Date

The next meeting for the Executive Committee has been scheduled for January 18, 2006; 9:30 – 11:30 in the Chief Engineer's Conference Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.