

Executive Committee for Highway Safety (ECHS)

Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2020

Location:

Chief Engineer's Conference Room, Beryl Drive @ 10:00 a.m.

In Attendance: Tracy Anderson, Isaac Avery, Brad Bradford, Stacy Deans, Alan Dellapenna, Anne Dickerson, Kimberly Eccles, Mark Ezzell, Greg Ferrara, Daniel Findley, Arthur Goodwin, Ian Hamilton, Tony Hayes, Brad Hibbs, Torre Jessup, Miracle King, Kevin Lacy, Cheryl Leonard, Brian Mayhew, Lydia McIntyre, Glenn McNeill, Todd Messer, Teresa Murray, Chris Oliver, Kara Peach, Randa Radwan, Johanna Reese, Tammy Richards, Lisa Riegel, Warren Smith, John Sullivan, Aaron Williams, Jackie Wilson

Call to Order and Introductions

Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update

Mr. Brian Mayhew provided an update on our state's fatal and serious injury trends (*pdf attachment Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update*). Mr. Mayhew noted that our 2019 fatalities are currently slightly lower than the 2018 fatalities, but the numbers will further increase over the next few months as data is entered into the North Carolina Crash Database. Because of the current downward trend in our state's alcohol fatality numbers, Mr. Mayhew provided additional statewide alcohol/drug related fatal crash facts. From 2018 to 2019, there was a 22% decrease in our state's alcohol/drug related fatal crashes. However, our decrease in alcohol related fatal crashes is likely due to a shift in coding rather than an actual decrease (i.e. simultaneous increase in the percentage of alcohol/drug coded as "Unknown").

2019 Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Ms. Kara Peach presented information on the North Carolina Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) 2019 Update (*pdf attachment 2019 Strategic Highway Safety Plan*). Using the 2014 SHSP as a starting point, the 2019 SHSP represents the first 5-year update as required by recent federal regulations. The ECHS approved the revised goal for the 2019 SHSP and safety partners throughout the state have shaped the strategies and supporting actions found within the Plan's 11 emphasis areas. Ms. Peach also discussed the general layout of the draft 2019 SHSP document and the Plan's website/data dashboard. Once the ECHS has approved the draft 2019 SHSP document, our state's Federal Highway Administration will review the document and provide input on any necessary changes prior to the final approval of the Plan.

FY 2020 GHSP Grants

Mr. Mark Ezzell provided an overview of the Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Grants (*pdf attachment FY 2020 GHSP Grants*). With the mission of promoting traffic safety awareness and working to reduce crashes in our state, this is accomplished through grant funding and annual highway safety initiatives. Mr. Ezzell discussed the timeline that GHSP uses to review the applications and obtain approval for grants each FY. Grants for over \$16 million dollars for 93 communities were awarded for FY 2020. Examples of new grants for FY 2020 include the "Click It or Ticket" reboot, a Driving While Impaired (DWI) Court in Robeson County, and the North Carolina Office of State Human Resources' Pedestrian Safety Initiative.

Upcoming Legislative Session Timelines

Ms. Johanna Reese provided an update on some of the budgetary items, bills and general timelines for the inclusion of proposed legislation for the 2020 General Assembly Short Session.

- The North Carolina Department of Transportation budget passed in October 2019
- House Bill 205 (Various Transportation Changes) Section 5.(a) gives the department authorization for public-private partnerships for department-owned communications infrastructure within highway right-of-way
- House Bill 144 (Hand Free NC) passed in the House but not the Senate and is eligible for further review during the short session
- Any potential policy change items should be submitted by the end of February if they would like to be considered for the short session

Major Safety Topic Strategies to Move Forward

Mr. Kevin Lacy spent time discussing safety strategies that are being considered for the upcoming General Assembly Short Session. Some of the safety strategies include:

- Additional passing distances (4 feet) for bicyclists/mopeds
- Possibility of asking for bicyclist to ride two abreast
- Statutory speed limit for unmarked roads
- Changing statutory speed limit of 55 mph to 45 mph on rural roads
- Providing additional language to promote the designation of identified Safety Corridors

Mr. Alan Dellapenna also shared that ignition interlocks and forensic testing for alcohol are among the Action Agenda items the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force (CFTF) is considering for the short session. He also emphasized that the CFTF is looking for a new safety champion to help move forward legislation allowing for the primary enforcement of all unrestrained back seat passengers.

Mr. Lacy shared that our safety partners have started discussions on speed management strategies within our state. Attendees of the [2020 North Carolina Transportation Summit](#) also discussed some of the emerging changes that are occurring within the transportation industry. Additionally, Mr. Torre Jessup stated that the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles has been in discussions with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) as our state continues to determine the policies and legislation needed for the operation of automated vehicles on our roadways.

Future Meeting Dates

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| • <i>May 8, 2020 @ 10:00 am</i> | <i>Chief Engineer's Conference Room</i> |
| • <i>September 4, 2020 @ 10:00 am</i> | <i>4809 Beryl Road</i> |
| • <i>January 8, 2021 @ 10:00 am (TENTATIVE)</i> | <i>Raleigh, NC 27606</i> |

If there is a need to reschedule any meeting, we will let you know well in advance of the scheduled date.

Meeting agendas, minutes and presentations are also available on the [ECHS website](#).