

Onondaga County Traffic Safety Advisory Board

May 11, 2006

Meeting Minutes

Members Attending:

Don Barrett
Warren Darby
Paul Gottfried
John Leo
Laura Madelone
William Mulroy
Glenn Murdock
Jeff Raub
Doug Robertson
Steve Rotunno
Jeff Tripp
Barry Weiss
Leo Williams
Patricia Wortley

Organization:

Mothers Against Drunk Driving
Onondaga County Sheriff's Office
Southern Wine & Spirit of Upstate New York
Onondaga County Department of Transportation
Syracuse University
New York State Thruway Authority
Brubacher Excavating
New York State Police
East Syracuse Police Department
Camillus Police Department
North Syracuse Police Department
District Attorney's Office - Stop DWI
Centro
SMTC

Stakeholders Attending:

Steve Brustein
Mark Buzzard
Gerald Deitz
Damon Gagnier
Diana Graser
Jack Keller
Mary Jo Kohl
Sharon Naftal
Chuck Murphy
Robin Palmer
Darryl Perrigo
Kathy Turner
Marty Werber

Organization

DMV Frauds & Auto Theft Unit
Manlius Police Department
Centro
DeWitt Police Department
NYS Department of Transportation
New York State Police
Onondaga County Sheriff/Safety Council of Upstate NY
Onondaga County Sheriff's Office
Senator DeFrancisco's Office
New York State Police
Solvay Police Department
Onondaga County Health Department
Clay Police Department

Excused: Mike Davison, Think First; Diana Dibble, AAA; Mike Lefancheck, Baldwinsville Police Department; Bill McAnelly, NYSMTA; Linda McKinnon, OCTSAB; Phil Politano, The Politano Group; and Shannon Trice, Syracuse Police Department.

Guests: Onondaga County Executive Nicholas Pirro and Mark Lynch, Onondaga County Department of Transportation.

1. Welcome

Ms. Madelone, Chair, opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. at the 14th Floor Conference Room of the John H. Mulroy Civic Center, Syracuse, NY. Following introductions, Ms. Madelone proceeded with the meeting.

2. Guest Speaker

County Executive Pirro welcomed all those present and thanked everyone for giving their time and service to the Traffic Safety Advisory Board. He stated that good results mean safer lives. Mr. Pirro stated that the Traffic Safety Program would be moving from under the direction of the Health Department to the Department of Transportation. He thanked the group for working together, stating that the make up of this group is impressive. He stated that there are wonderful working relationships on many levels. Mr. Pirro highlighted some of his top concerns, which included aggressive driving, currently being addressed on Route 11 in Mattydale; motorcycles; SUV's and most importantly, school bus safety and children. Mr. Pirro stated that the law enforcement agencies in the County bring what is happening to this group in order to see what can be done to address the issues.

Mr. Pirro stated that those present should call him at any time if they wish to talk about a particular issue. Before ending his comments, he congratulated the New York State Senate on the passage of recent DWI legislation.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

Ms. Madelone inquired if there were any changes/corrections to the March 22, 2006 minutes. Hearing none, Mr. Gottfried moved and Officer Tripp seconded approval of the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Communications and Reports

A. Onondaga County Health Department Update:

Ms. Turner expanded on Mr. Pirro's comments regarding the position shift to the Onondaga County Department of Transportation (OCDOT). She stated that the Health Department has been the recipient of the 402 grant in the past. This year, after soliciting input from the OCTSAB, the Health Department put together a new proposal. After reviewing the proposal, negotiations and discussions took place with the support of the County Executive and the grant committee. Beginning October 1st, the grant will be managed by the OCDOT. This will be a grass routes effort and an evolving process. The Health Department will still maintain one half-time health educator position funded through the grant.

Ms. Turner stated that the grant has been re-written to meet the needs of the OCTSAB. Ms. Madelone stated that it was determined that there was a need for better coordination and collaboration between the traffic safety partners. She stated that anyone wanting to view a copy of the grant should let her know. This grant was designed to have one person work under the direction of the OCTSAB. With the help of the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office, this grant identifies the top five hazardous crash locations. Lt. Rotunno stated that part of the reasoning behind the revised grant was that we were in danger of losing the funding. The grants committee did not want the County to lose the funding. Chief Robertson stated that he was excited that the Health Department would continue the educational phase of the grant.

Ms. Turner also presented the October 2005 through March 2006 grant highlights. She noted that a synopsis will be included in the next OCTSAB mailing. Highlights included: Walk to School events; renewal classes for technicians regarding Booster Seats; participation in the Lights On Caravan; helmet sales; Alive at 25 presentations; and pedestrian safety education. Overall, 25 presentations were made to over 1,300 individuals in the first six months of the grant. Currently, work is being done to revamp the OCTSAB website. The Health Department has been working with Ms. Wortley to update the information on the site. The site is being streamlined and the changes will be sent to the OCTSAB Executive Committee for review. There will be an upcoming events section on the site. Ms. Turner stated that a question had

arisen regarding a central e-mail account for the OCTSAB on the site. The County's IT Department is looking into setting up an account. Discussion followed about setting up a generic e-mail account and who would have access to the account to answer the questions received. Ms. Turner stated that once the updates have been approved, the site should be live in 8-10 days. It was noted that the person in the Traffic Safety Program position would be responsible for making further updates to the site.

B. Committee Updates:

Grants: Ms. Madelone provided an outline of the grants applied for. She stated that the grants are performance-based. She reviewed the numbers. She noted that Operation Eagle Eyes is included in the Camillus Police Department's Local Grant application. Deputy Naftal noted that the Sheriff's Office was accidentally omitted from the Child Passenger Safety portion of the outline.

Aggressive Driving: Lt. Rotunno stated that Operation Eagle Eyes is slated for June 9th. Air coverage will be provided by the State Police and Sheriff's Office. He stated that the Aggressive Driving Committee needs to meet to determine which agencies want to participate.

Also in June, he is looking at having all law enforcement agencies participate in an aggressive driving crack down. He reminded those present that STEP money needs to be spent.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety: Officer Tripp stated that the committee would be meeting on Friday, May 26th, at 2:00. The location will be determined.

Project Planning: Ms. Wortley stated that the Lights On Committee met in April and will be meeting again on May 24th. Preparation has begun on the 23rd annual event to be held in December. Lt. Rotunno inquired if the Caravan would be going to West Genesee High School. Mr. Barrett stated that it would be.

4. Old Business

A. DMV's Heat Is On Event – June 20, 2006

Sr. Investigator Brustein stated that the event is scheduled for June 20th at the North Syracuse DMV. Lt. Trice will be running the press conference which begins at 10:00. Sr. Investigator Brustein stated that anyone wishing to participate in the event, either using the parking lot or setting up a booth, should let him know. The DMV will be doing VIN etching, while tint checking will also be available. Trooper Keller is handling the media relations for the event. Ms. Turner inquired if there was a rain date. Sr. Investigator Brustein stated the event goes on rain or shine as the tables are set up inside the DMV.

Mr. Murphy stated that following the last meeting, he contacted the deputy assistant director of the DMV about holding the event on a Saturday to draw more people. That was not possible. However, DMV officials will be monitoring this year's event and they may consider a Saturday event in the future.

5. New Business

A. Allstate Foundation Grant:

Ms. Madelone stated that there is funding available for safe teen driving education through Allstate. However, police and government agencies are not eligible to receive the funds. Lt. Rotunno stated that the deadline for applications is June 1st. It was noted that Allstate has been

in contact with Sheriff Walsh. Mr. Murdock inquired if Ms. Madelone would be writing the grant? Ms. Madelone stated that she could put it together with help. Deputy Kohl noted that the Safety Council of Upstate New York was looking into this as well. Ms. Madelone stated that she sees this as an opportunity and that we need to find a way to coordinate and collaborate. Deputy Kohl will keep us updated.

B. Roundtable Discussions:

Ms. Madelone stated that she attended the Lifesavers Conference in Austin, Texas. Driving Skills for Life was presented by Ford. She brought back information on the program and she stated that it is free.

Mr. Murdock stated that he believes we need to include educational elements in our efforts, further stating that education is a big part of enforcement. He commended the Camillus Police Department on their recent cell phone campaign. Mr. Murdock would like to see more group activities, stating that communication is needed. Lt. Rotunno stated that we need to get the word out there that the OCTSAB exists, as most people are not aware of its existence. Mr. Murdock believes an e-mail contact or some type of hotline would be helpful. Officer Tripp stated that the North Syracuse Police Department just added a link to their website, traffic@northsyracuse.org, to report aggressive driving and other traffic-related issues. This should also be added to the OCTSAB site. Ms. Turner is collecting updates for the 3rd quarter of the grant. Ms. Madelone stated that the site will take a different shape once the transition takes place. Mr. Gottfried inquired about publicizing the OCTSAB through Christie Casciano, Channel 9 WSYR. Trooper Keller stated that Ms. Casciano is already working with the police departments on Operation Eagle Eyes. Ms. Madelone stated that the website needs to be updated before we begin to promote the OCTSAB.

Mr. Murdock inquired about Ms. Kogut attending a training conference that had been mentioned at a previous meeting. Ms. Turner stated that there had been a request from the Mr. Swartz at GTSC that Ms. Kogut attend a training session. However, that training has been put on hold given the shift in the position. Ms. Madelone stated that a training conference is not part of the new grant.

Mr. Barrett stated that he has been working on developing a history of Lights On. He is looking for an archivist.

Ms. Turner stated that the County Executive's Office was contacted about a Motorcycle Safety Event on May 20th. It is the second year of the event. Ms. Turner has been asked to assist the County Executive's office with press for the event. Ms. Turner inquired if the OCTSAB wanted to endorse the event. Significant discussion followed. It was determined that the OCTSAB does support motorcycle safety, but we would not be sponsoring this particular event. Ms. Turner inquired if there would be any objection to the Health Department assisting with getting out the event information to the media. Following discussion, it was determined that the Health Department could assist with the distribution of information to the press, but the OCTSAB would not be endorsing the event. It was noted that the State Police and Sheriff's Office would not be providing escorts for the event. Mr. Murdock noted that there is a motorcycle safety course offered through OCC that is very well attended.

Mr. Murphy spoke relative to recent events in the community. He noted that on May 10th, the NYS Senate passed the Bill Leaf - Brandi Woods Law. He further stated that the Senate has

passed numerous bills relative to DWI legislation. However, in order for a bill to be signed into law, it must be passed by both the Senate and the Assembly. He noted that the Senate had passed legislation years ago that made fleeing a police officer a felony, but the Assembly never passed the bill. Now the Assembly is drafting the same legislation. Mr. Murphy noted that there is no one representing any of the four Assembly Districts at the OCTSAB meeting. Ms. Madelone inquired if we should have a letter writing campaign to the Assembly members. Mr. Murphy encouraged writing to all four Assembly representatives. He agreed that we need to make people more aware of the existence of the OCTSAB. Zone Sgt. Palmer stated that she remembers Sen. DeFrancisco speaking at a meeting and suggested inviting Assembly members to a meeting. Following discussion it was agreed that we would invite the local Assembly members to speak at a fall meeting.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Murdock moved and Undersheriff Darby seconded the adjournment of the meeting and the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.