

## LA CROSSE COUNTY HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 9, 2011  
 La Crosse County Administration Building Room B390  
 1:30 P.M.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tim Berg, Matt Gallagher, Tim Hammes, Ilona Hansen, Thomas Knoop, Robert Koenen, Bill Lubinski, Evan Stone, Reiny Yahnke  
**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Roland Solberg  
**MEMBERS ABSENT:**  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jackie Eastwood

**CALL TO ORDER:**  
 Sgt. Bill Lubinski, Committee Coordinator, called the meeting to order.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Thomas Knoop, seconded by Matt Gallagher, to approve the August 10, 2011 Highway Safety Commission minutes as printed. Motion carried unanimously.

### LA CROSSE COUNTY CRASH DATA FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER OF 2011

<b>2011</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Yearly Total
<b>Sheriff Department</b>					
Hit & run	15	9	6		30
Car/deer	34	63	38		135
Injury	30	38	42		110
Property damage	100	57	56		213
Fatalities	1	1	2		4
Sub-total	180	168	144		492
<b>Comparison of Prior Year Totals</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Total
2003	214	190	186	317	907
2004	199	195	162	295	851
2005	224	234	147	313	918
2006	215	192	150	251	808
2007	245	168	182	280	875
2008	228	150	158	284	820
2009	178	137	144	246	705
2010	177	128	126	260	691
2011	180	168	144		

The average number of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter accidents in La Crosse County is 155. Of 144 crashes, 13 included the use of alcohol. Of 106 reportable crashes with 224 occupants, 184 reported using seatbelts for an 82% compliance rate.

Two fatality crashes were worked by the Sheriff's Department:

- 07/20/11 @ 8:05 A.M., Highway 162 in the Town of Burns. A vehicle was stopped in the roadway to observe a bear. A second vehicle rear-ended the stopped vehicle resulting in the death of the operator of the second vehicle. No seatbelt was used in that vehicle but the airbags had been deployed.
- 08/03/11 @ 3:45 P.M., County Highway B. A car went over the center line, crashing into a motorcycle. The motorcycle driver was killed. He was not wearing a helmet.

Starting with today's snowy weather, people are relearning to drive on slippery roads for the season.

A draft of the letter to media was reviewed. Media will be requested to be less intrusive at accident scenes. A suggestion was made to add 'punishable by a fine of \$\_\_.' When the letter is okayed, Captain Horstman will send it to local law enforcement agencies for their input and then the letter will be sent to the media.

### **WISDOT UPDATES & HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN SOLICITATION**

Thomas Knoop reported that preliminary crash data shows that as of November 6, 2011 there have been 478 fatalities in Wisconsin. This is down from 562 on the same date in 2010. The 5-year average is 541. Year-to-date there has been 25.5% fewer passenger fatalities. 2011 had the safest September on record with 48 fatalities.

Bicycle fatalities have increased by 50%. No patterns in this increase have been found as the crashes had a variety of causes and included a wide cross-section of ages of bicyclists, locations, and other factors.

The number of fatalities in La Crosse County this year is already over twice the annual average for the county.

Legislative updates include:

- Act 35 (Concealed Carry): Also included in this law which went into effect on November 1, 2011 is that guns may be carried uncased in vehicles, but they cannot be loaded.
- AB-64 (Mobile Home Transport allowing issuance of a single permit to move multiple sections of a home on a single transport) and AB-81 (Disabled Parking Cards increasing the penalty for fraudulent production, sale, and/or use of disabled parking cards) have passed in both houses and will probably be enacted.
- SB-18 (Survivors of Fallen Officers requiring municipalities and counties to pay health insurance premiums for surviving spouse and dependent children of fallen officers) is moving along slowly.
- AB-80 (OWL/OAR/OWS): Creates/increases penalties for violations of operating without a license, operating after revocation, and operating while suspended. Ready to be signed.
- AB-55 (Failure to Yield): increases penalties for violation and shifts burden of enforcement from courts to DOT. Ready to be signed.
- AB-265 (Bicycle): Expands 'bicycle' to include hand-pedaled device (and additional provisions). Passed in 1<sup>st</sup> house; awaiting action from 2<sup>nd</sup> house.
- AB-293 (Child Restraint): Permits transport of a child in a more restrictive restraint than required by law (corrective language in bill). Passed in 1<sup>st</sup> house; awaiting action from 2<sup>nd</sup> house.

- AB-206 (Inattentive Driving): Expands prohibitions to include all electronic devices with visual display with some exceptions. (This is mainly for use of smart phones; GPS units are exempt.) Passed in committee in 1<sup>st</sup> house.
- AB-291 (GDL Phone Ban): Prohibits probationary license holder under the age of 18 from using a mobile phone while driving, except to report an emergency. Introduced.
- AB-327 (ATV Age Limits): Allows persons less than 12 years of age to operate ATVs in any location except on roadways if accompanied by guardian 18 years of age or older. Introduced.
- AB-334 (Possession of Roadkill): Expands current law to include bears and turkeys as well as certain small game if in season. Introduced.

Handouts were distributed including 'Are older drivers at risk?' and a news release entitled 'Potential for deer crashes will be high again this fall'.

Laws of the Month include:

- October 2011: Motorists will need to share the road with farm equipment and other slow-moving vehicles during harvest season.
- November 2011: How to meet the challenges of winter driving in Wisconsin.
- December 2011: December is National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month. Drugged drivers in Wisconsin face severe punishments.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION**

Michael Richards from Gundersen Lutheran called Bill Lubinski the day after the last Highway Safety Commission meeting. He appreciated hearing the concerns of the HSC regarding the Gundersen Lutheran signage at the Onalaska Clinic and the need to have clearer directions for patients. The Gundersen Lutheran grounds people have the same concerns and will follow-up on this matter. Gundersen Lutheran will attempt to resolve this issue at the State level in Madison. Shortly after the HSC meeting, Michael Richards was himself an eyewitness to someone using the turn-around on the interstate. He followed the vehicle to Gundersen Lutheran. It was an elderly couple who was lost. Onalaska Police Department is willing to help Gundersen Lutheran in stressing the urgency of this issue.

Kwik Trip had approached Evan Stone about getting a waiver from the DOT to be able to be non-compliant with their shovel shuttle trucks trailers used from one loading dock to another. These vehicles would have no ABS brakes and would go at a maximum of 20 mph. These vehicles are allowable as long as they are used only on Kwik Trip property.

Tim Berg reported that Onalaska Police Department held their annual towing training. Participants requested that local officers have drivers move over like they do for other emergency vehicles. Tow workers need to wear reflective vests. The training included the TIME system, public relations, and courtesy to other personnel working the incident.

The number of Wisconsin State Patrol troopers has decreased. This may mean other law enforcement agencies will have to cover areas when a trooper is not available. The new commissioner will be talking with law enforcement.

A letter to the Sheriff has been completed recommending Jackie Eastman as a Highway Safety Commission committee member.

## **AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 8, 2012 MEETING**

Items to be included on the February 8, 2012 agenda are La Crosse County crash data for the entire year 2011, WisDOT Updates and Highway Safety Plan Solicitation, Gundersen Lutheran signage, media letter outcome, announcements/discussion, and set agenda for May 9, 2012 meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Ilona Hansen, seconded by Tim Hammes, to adjourn the meeting at 2:39 P.M. Motion carried. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Approved 2/8/12, Lisa Bruring, Recorder