

LA CROSSE COUNTY HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 9, 2012
 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, Roland Solberg, Evan Stone, Reiny Yahnke

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Jackie Eastwood

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

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 February 8, 2012 Highway Safety Commission minutes as printed. Motion carried unanimously.

LA CROSSE COUNTY CRASH DATA FOR 1st QUARTER OF 2012

2012	1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter	Yearly Total
Sheriff Department					
Hit & run	15				15
Car/deer	69				69
Injury	26				26
Property damage	65				65
Fatalities	0				0
Sub-total	175				175
Comparison of Prior Year Totals	1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th 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	211	703
2012	175				

The average of 1st quarter accidents from 2003 to 2012 in La Crosse County is 203. This is below the average for the 1st quarter. The 175 crashes is the lowest number of 1st quarter

crashes that the Sheriff's Department worked between the years of 2003 and 2012. Of the crashes, 11 involved the use of alcohol (7 of the 11 were injury accidents and 4 were property damage). In the 1st quarter there were 106 reportable crashes with 208 occupants, 175 reported using seatbelts for an 83% compliance rate. There were 15 hit and run accidents; all property damage.

There were no fatalities worked the 1st quarter by the Sheriff's Department. Evan Stone also reported that there were no fatalities within the City of La Crosse.

WISDOT UPDATES & HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN SOLICITATION

Thomas Knoop reported that the state, to date is not having a good year as far as fatalities are concerned; that being close to our five year average. As of this past Sunday there have been 138 crashes and 159 fatalities. The number has gone up by one or two this week.

Crash data shows that last year finished up with 517 crashes and 567 fatalities (two were backed out of this number and determined to be suicides and another crash was determined to be natural causes).

The numbers from last year are 120 crashes and 134 fatalities. This is up 25. The mild weather this winter has made a difference in the increased number of fatalities we've seen the last couple of months.

In reference to motorcycles, until this last weekend, we were looking at double what we were last year from motorcycles, also mainly due to the nicer weather we've been having versus last year.

Pedestrian fatalities down; 10 versus 16. Last year, for the better part of the year we were doubled what was normal for the average of pedestrian fatalities.

There have been a number of multiple fatality crashes. There have been two or three triple fatality crashes; which also drives the number. La Crosse County has only reported two so far this year.

Preliminary Year-End 2011 Crash Statistics:

Fatal Crashes – down .5%	Motorcyclists Killed – down 21%
Injury Crashes – down 1.6%	Train Crashes – up 53.8%
Alcohol-Related Crashes – down 9.5%	Construction Zone Crashes – down 2.6%
Alcohol-Related Injuries – down 16.3%	Construction Zone Fatalities – down 43%
Speed-Related Crashes – up 9.7%	Construction Zone Injuries – up 5%
Speed-Related Fatalities – down 7%	School Bus Crashes – up 3.2%
Pedestrian Crashes – down 2.2%	School Bus Injuries – down 24%
Pedestrians Killed – up 5.6%	Deer Crashes – up 7%
Pedestrians Injured – down 14%	Deer/Animal Crash Fatalities – down 64%
Bicycle Crashes – down 5%	Large Truck Crashes – up 2.7%
Bicyclists Killed – up 22%	Large Truck Fatalities – up 34%
Motorcycle Crashes – down 5%	

The preliminary 2011 crashes in La Crosse County by crash severity shows two fatalities on local roads, four fatalities on county highways, six fatalities on state highways and two fatalities on the interstate.

The numbers of alcohol fatalities in La Crosse County for the years 2008 through 2010 are as such: 2008 – 0, 2009 – 3 and 2010 – 2. The actual fatality rate for alcohol has been below the state average for these three years.

Bills of interest include:

- Act 113 (OWL/OAR/OWS): Effective March 3, 2012, increases penalties for operating without a license, operating after revocation and operating while suspended.
- Act 164 (GDL Phone Ban): Effective November 1, 2012, prohibits instructional and probationary license holders from using a mobile phone while driving, except to report an emergency.
- Act 173 (Failure to Yield): Effective August 1, 2012, increases penalties for violation, and shifts burden of enforcement from courts to DOT.
- Act 184 (Open Doors on Emergency Vehicles): Effective April 17, 2012, permits emergency personnel to leave vehicle door open when stopped and performing official duties on the side of the highway.
- Act 241 (B&W DL Photo): Effective April 20, 2012, permits DOT to use black and white photos on motor vehicle operator's license.
- Act 251 (Possession of Road kill): Effective April 20, 2012, expands current law to include bears and turkeys, as well as certain small game if in season.
- Act 256 (Failure to Notify of Crash): Effective August 1, 2012, increases penalties for failure to notify law enforcement of a crash, and extends those penalties to all occupants of a vehicle. Note, per Bill Lubinski, the points have been raised to 6 points for this violation.
- Act 279 (Transporting Manure): Effective April 27, 2012, allows vehicles hauling manure to exceed weight limit from September 1st to December 31st.

Laws of the Month include:

- May 2012: Drivers must yield to pedestrians.
- June 2012: Drunken drivers face court-ordered install of ignition interlock devices.

There is a training course (Designing for Pedestrian Safety) being held on June 11th and 12th in St. Point, Wisconsin. Two excellent engineers will be teaching the course: John La Plante and Peter Rusch. Those interested in the course should contact Larry Corsi in Madison.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION

Bill Lubinski had a concern that was brought to his attention regarding the signage on OT between Highway 35 and Sand Lake Road. When traveling westbound on OT the first sign observed is a 45 mph speed sign. When traveling eastbound there are a couple of 35 mph speed signs between Highway 35 and Thomas Drive, with another 35 mph sign just before the bridge. Should this area all be either 35 mph or 45 mph? Tim Hammes will check with the county commissioner on this issue.

Bill Lubinski reported that he has not heard anything regarding the Triathlon that is possibly taking place in West Salem next month. He will contact Chief Ashbeck for an update.

Ilona Hansen questioned when buying a vehicle of which the airbag has been deployed if it is the new owner's responsibility to replace the airbag. It was discussed and determined that it is in fact the responsibility of the owner to replace the airbag to legally drive the vehicle.

Ilona Hansen reported that there is skateboarding on scenic highways; specifically County Road YY and FO. Ilona observed these occurrences around noon on a Saturday and another

was after 4:00 PM on a Thursday. There have been other people that have noticed this also. Per Thomas Knoop, skateboards are still classified as "play vehicles".

Tim Hammes reported concern with property damage tags being sent to the Highway Department. He requests to have a copy of the report attached to the property tag when the tag is sent over to the Highway Department.

Bill Lubinski reported that he has not heard back from Gundersen Lutheran in reference to the signage issue. Bill will contact Michael Richards from Gundersen for an update. Tim Hammes reported that he would be willing to contact them also.

Thomas Knoop reported on the seatbelt grant given to the La Crosse County Sheriff's Department to work with the City of La Crosse and City of Onalaska on seatbelt enforcement, using spotters and chase cars. The results have been impressive.

Matt Gallager reported that in reference to the interchange study, the plan is still to reconstruct into a different configuration in the same place. This will involve deck work at Highway 157, bridge work at County Road B and a pedestrian overpass on French Island. Most of it will be resurfaced. Exit 3 will be completely reconstructed.

AGENDA FOR AUGUST 8, 2012 MEETING

Items to be included on the August 8, 2012 agenda are La Crosse County crash data 2nd Quarter, WisDOT Updates and Highway Safety Plan Solicitation, Gundersen Lutheran signage update (contact Michael Richards), announcements/discussion, and set agenda for the November 14, 2012 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Thomas Knoop, seconded by Ilona Hansen, to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 P.M. Motion carried. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Approved 8/8/12, Lisa Bruring, Recorder