

# **ROCK COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION**

## **Amended Meeting Minutes** January 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. Online Zoom Meeting

**Proposed Committee Members In Attendance:** Brian Donohue, Charlene Schmid, Lisa Wallenkamp, Mark Thompson and Randy Wiessinger.

**Proposed Committee Members Absent:** Barry Irmen, Duane Jorgenson, Kim Peerenboom, Nick Elmer, Terri Carlson, Bridget Laurent and Randy Gordon.

**Others in Attendance:** Dennis Ryan, Ahnaray Bizjak, Jason Dupuis, Madelyn Glaeden, and Diane Kowal

### **Call to Order**

Captain Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

### **Introductions**

Not necessary

### **Approval of Minutes**

We do not have County Board approval of new members as of yet, so official approval of minutes cannot take place.

### **Fatal Crash Review**

- **October 6, 2020:** 2 vehicles/2 deceased, ages 67 and 58. This was a double fatality involving a motorcycle and a pickup truck. Decedents were the driver of the motorcycle and his passenger. State Highway 59 at Dunphy Road in the Town of Magnolia. The pickup truck was stopped, waiting to turn left on to Dunphy Road, when the motorcycle approached and struck the rear of the truck on the passenger side. The road condition was dry, and this accident appeared to be due to operator error on the part of the motorcycle driver. Possible contributing factors were failure to yield right of way and following too close.

After viewing the video footage, Ahnaray asked for clarification on the intersection. One intersection in the video appeared to be just after the crest of a hill, but that was not the intersection where the accident occurred.

Lisa stated toxicology results on both decedents were negative. Witness data suggests the driver of the motorcycle just didn't react quickly enough.

- **October 8, 2020:** 2 vehicles/1 deceased, age 4. State Highway 67 near State Highway 140. Unit 1 was traveling eastbound on Hwy 67, and unit 2 was traveling westbound. Unit

1's passenger-side tires left the roadway, driver over corrected and crossed the center line and collided head on with unit 2. This crash appears to be due to operator error. It was a headlight to headlight head-on impact. Damage suggests highway speeds. This was at 6:00 p.m., still daylight, with dry road conditions. The intersection at Highways 67 and 140 is on the list to get a roundabout in the next few years, but this was not an intersection related accident.

Dennis asked if we look into cell phone use at the time of accidents. Captain Thompson stated we do, and it was not a contributing factor in this accident. Randy asked if the child was ejected. Captain Thompson answered no, the child had slipped under the chest strap and was bent forward. Lisa stated toxicology on the deceased was negative, and the mother/driver was not tested. She also stated the condition of the booster seat is not yet known.

- **December 8, 2020:** 1 vehicle/1 deceased, age 41. Vehicle was southbound on Van Allen Road and crossed the center of the road, went into the ditch line and struck a tree. Captain Thompson stated the deceased had just lost her job the day prior, and her two teenage daughters had just moved in with their grandmother. A search did not produce a suicide note, but suicide cannot be proven or ruled out. There was no evidence of breaking prior to impact, no yaw marks; the car just crossed the road and struck a tree.

A question was asked about where the decedent lived in relation to the crash. Captain Thompson answered she lived on the south side of Janesville, 3-5 miles from the crash site. Randy asked if reconstruction of the accident estimated the speed. Captain Thompson said speed is not known, but damage suggests a pretty high rate of speed. Decedent did have a history of mental health issues, having had involvements with Crisis Intervention and possible substance abuse issues. Lisa said toxicology was positive for marijuana. Decedent had been in the Emergency Room and left against medical advice a few hours prior to the accident. ME is still investigating, and the ME office has not ruled at this point if it was an accident or suicide.

- **December 16, 2020:** 2 vehicles/1 deceased. Interstate 43 near Carvers Rock in the Town of Clinton. Unit 1 was traveling northbound on Interstate 43, entered the median, then corrected back onto the northbound lanes, but then overcorrected to the left and traveled through the median and into the southbound lanes, traveling in the wrong direction and colliding with a southbound semi. No safety belt use by the decedent. This was a State Patrol accident, so we do not know if cell phone use was a factor. Lisa stated they do not have toxicology results yet. There is a backlog of toxicology results having to do with Covid 19. She stated the family of the decedent indicated he could very well have been intoxicated, given his history, but it is unknown at this time.

### **Old Business**

Randy Wiessinger notified us that we were missing an accident in our 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter report. This was a two vehicle accident with one death on June 25, 2020 in the Village of Clinton. This accident has since been added to our reports, and our numbers now align with Randy's of WisDOT: For the year 2020, Rock County had 22 fatal accidents with 25 deceased. In 2019, Rock County saw

20 fatal accidents with 21 deceased. The numbers were up a little in 2020 from 2019 but are still within our typical range.

Dennis Ryan brought some clarity to an issue in the minutes from October 21, 2020. He and Ahnaray agreed the TWLTL project in Janesville is planned for West Court Street between Crosby Street and Pearl Street with signal improvements at Pearl, Arch, and Crosby intersections. The October 21, 2020 minutes will be amended to reflect this clarification.

Dennis also asked if toxicology tests aren't required with all fatal accidents. Captain Thompson stated Act 163 deemed it unconstitutional to draw blood without a warrant, unless consent is given.

The Zoom meeting was close to expiring, so Randy said he would send out his informational slides.

### **New Business**

No new business.

### **Public Input**

No public input

### **Set Next Meeting Date**

The 2020 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Traffic Safety Commission meeting is set for April 21, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. It is yet to be decided if that meeting will be held in person or via Zoom. Coordinating with Randy Wiessinger of WisDOT, the other meetings for 2021 are set for July 21, 2021; and October 20, 2021.

**Amendment:** Proposed Committee Members in Attendance, Proposed Committee Members Absent, and Others in attendance were amended to reflect the eight categories of TSC membership requirements according to the by-laws as submitted to the County Board for approval.