

ROCK COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes July 21, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. RCSO Large Conference Room And Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85922031869?pwd=dEg5Mmw1TzJoQkIzNWU1ZEo2VkhPUT09>
Meeting ID: 859 2203 1869 Passcode: 000903

TSC Members in Attendance: Mark Thompson, Terri Carlson, Randy Gordon, Duane Jorgenson, Charlene Schmid, Lisa Wallenkamp and Randy Wiessinger.

TSC Members Absent: Ron Bomkamp and Kim Peerenboom.

Also in Attendance: Tom Boguszewski, Ahna Bizjak, Madelyn Glaeden and Dennis Ryan.

Call to Order

Captain Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Introductions

Introductions were not necessary.

Approval of Minutes

1st motion to approve second quarter 2021 minutes by Ahna Bizjak.

2nd motion by Madeline Glaeden

Fatal Crash Review

Eleven fatal crashes in Rock County in the second quarter of 2021.

- **April 4, 2021:** Single-vehicle crash where driver appeared to have lost control and crossed the center line at a high rate of speed and rolled in the ditch. Captain Thompson commented it was winter with no leaves on the trees and clear. Speed was a factor, and a bottle of Fireball was found in the vehicle.

Lisa Wallenkamp stated blood alcohol was 0.19% with illicit substance also in decedent's system.

Captain Thompson reiterated that speed and intoxication were significant factors.

Ahna Bizjak commented that there have been discussions regarding looking into mental health as a factor in fatal accidents.

Captain Thompson responded that we always go back 24 hours, and nothing came up in this case.

Lisa Wallenkamp also responded, stating that the medical examiner's office obtains the medical records to get a good background history in every single case.

- **April 12, 2021:** Single-vehicle crash where driver crossed the center line and ran off the roadway into a ditch and struck a tree. Captain Thompson stated the weather didn't seem to be a factor.

Randy Wiessinger asked if cell phone use was a possible factor.

Captain Thompson responded that cell phone use was not in the report.

Ahna Bizjak noted there were a lot of pavement patches in that area as seen on the video.

Captain Thompson said that is very common on the county roads, and there were no skid marks or signs of difficulty.

Lisa Wallenkamp stated driver's blood alcohol was 0.00 but there was THC in his system.

Randy Wiessinger said the reason he asked about cell phone usage is because they are encouraging law enforcement to look more at distracted driving data when there is no apparent causation, which indicates something is missing – there has to be a reason.

Madelyn Glaeden asked if there was any indication of a medical incident.

Lisa Wallenkamp responded that records show fibromyalgia and no mental health issues or prior concerning behaviors.

Randy Wiessinger stated the THC could possibly have been for medical purposes for the fibromyalgia.

- **April 17, 2021:** Two-vehicle head-on crash. Captain Thompson noted Janesville PD listed the cause as reckless driving. This is a high-traffic area but wouldn't call it a problem area. The video showed it to be fairly wide open, good lighting, signage not an issue.

Lisa Wallenkamp stated the accident was on the 17th, but the victim did not pass until the 30th. As a result, they were not able to get the labs; however, blood alcohol was originally reported as 0.08%.

Captain Thompson noted the 0.08% spoke to a potential for alcohol as a factor.

Lisa Wallenkamp also stated the victim was alert but confused on admission.

Randy Wiessinger commented there must have been witnesses for JPD to issue a citation for reckless driving, with enough proof for the citation but not for contributing factors.

Dennis Ryan asked about center line grinding.

Charlene Schmid responded that it is now standard for new surfaces.

- **April 22, 2021:** Crash involving one car and two motorcycles. Factors were exceeding the speed limit, improper passing, and operating in a reckless manner on the part of the decedent who was the driver of one of the motorcycles. Captain Thompson pointed out this was at the start of motorcycle season. He questioned the note in the report that helmet use was unknown.

Randy Wiessinger responded that sometimes the helmet is strapped to the back of the bike and, in the aftermath of an accident, it is not certain if it had been worn.

Ahna Bizjak pointed out that the report states the helmet may have struck a quarter panel of the vehicle, but it does not state the motorcycle driver had been wearing it.

- **May 1, 2021:** Single-vehicle crash where the driver went over the curb and struck a tree. Contributing factors were exceeding the speed limit and failure to control.

Lisa Wallenkamp reported the blood alcohol level was 0.238% with an illicit substance also in the system.

Captain Thompson pointed out it was 2:30 a.m., area was clearly marked and lighted. Driver behavior and intoxication factors were the cause.

- **May 20, 2021:** Single-vehicle accident. The 89-year-old driver parked the car illegally outside the Cover Bar and exited the car without putting it in park. The vehicle rolled backward, and the front driver-side tire caught the foot/ankle area of the driver, pulling her to the road and rolling over her.

Lisa Wallenkamp stated the accident was on the 20th, but the driver passed on the 28th due to injuries sustained in the incident. No toxicology results yet.

Ahna Bizjak asked if there was debate over whether this was considered a traffic fatality.

Randy Wiessinger stated it does meet federal criteria because it was a public parking lot.

- **May 29, 2021:** Car versus motorcycle accident where the motorcycle driver exceeded the speed limit and failed to keep in designated lane.

Lisa Wallenkamp stated no toxicology back yet. Decedent was on his bike with his wife as a passenger. They were part of a motorcycle event. He was acting as a blocker for the rest of the bikers, then became reckless and was weaving as he tried to catch up to the group.

Discussion among meeting attendees as to this being dangerous behavior and a problem with other motorcycle events.

- **May 31, 2021:** Two vehicle accident where one vehicle failed to stop at the stop sign.

Discussion among meeting attendees regarding previous accidents at this site of Highway 14 and Tuttle Road and the sight lines at that intersection. There were double stop sign warning signs in place. Since this accident, flashing red lights have been installed on the stop signs.

Ahna Bizjak added that the driver seemed to be going full speed and blew the stop sign.

Lisa Wallenkamp said there is no toxicology data available as of yet.

Captain Thompson said there were dual utility poles in place, and the other vehicle hit one of the poles. They have since moved all to one pole. He also said we will be keeping an eye on this intersection as there has been a lot of feedback begging to have something done. Rumble strips not an option because of a residence within close proximity.

Charlene Schmid stated they have had a lot of feedback on this accident as well.

Randy Wiessinger said talk has come up about putting intersection warnings on Highway 14.

Charlene Schmid said intersection warning signs have not been found to be very helpful.

Captain Thompson asked Duane Jorgenson what authority we have for sight line clearance.

Duane Jorgenson responded they have not gotten a green light yet for clearing the area. No clear cut answers as to whether the standards are met.

Charlene Schmid responded that the trees have since been trimmed.

Captain Thompson said that would be northbound on Tuttle and agreed to continue discussions with Duane. Hopefully the double reds and flashing lights will help. Duane stated they will continue to push the issue on clearing the site line.

- **June 3, 2021:** Three-vehicle accident where the 85-year-old driver of one vehicle failed to yield. Captain Thompson noted there was nothing indicating intoxication, it was 4:30 in the afternoon, daylight, and signage was good.

Lisa Wallenkamp said the hospital gave no results for blood alcohol, and death was a result of injuries sustained in the accident.

- **June 11, 2021:** One-vehicle accident behind Pine Tree Plaza. Vehicle left the lot and went into a grassy area with boulders, striking and dragging a boulder causing vehicle to flip end over end. Captain Thompson stated speed had to have been significant to be able to drag a boulder and then flip. Wisconsin State Patrol was called in to do the accident reconstruction.

Sergeant Gordon of the State Patrol said they only did mapping of the scene.

Charlene Schmid said the decedent reportedly worked at Cozumel, and there was agreement that he was probably just leaving work.

No toxicology results yet, but he did smell of alcohol.

Captain Thompson concluded operator error and intoxication.

Randy Wiessinger pointed out that this accident is listed as being on private property since that part of the lot was not for public use.

- **June 13, 2021:** Car versus motorcycle accident. Car failed to yield right of way.

Lisa Wallenkamp reported the accident was on June 13th, but the victim passed on July 3rd. As victim was the motorcycle passenger, toxicology results would have no bearing on the crash.

It was pointed out that there was a third, non-contact vehicle making a legal turn that probably hindered the sight of the motorcycle.

Old Business

No old business.

New Business

Randy Wiessinger shared “Anatomy of Rock County, A Traffic Safety Summary” located under TSC Resources in Community Maps. Many relevant statistics including the notable impact of COVID-19. https://transportal.cee.wisc.edu/partners/community-maps/tsc_resources/CM%20profile%20files/2021/Rock_2021.html

Duane Jorgenson attended a DOT conference in June where an increase in highway speeds of 100 mph and over was noted.

Captain Thompson stated it is a problem on the interstate corridor but is not typical on Highways 14 or 26. The townships hit Highway 26 hard, so less speeding there.

Randy Wiessinger pointed out that risky drivers are on the interstates as well as county roads.

Sergeant Gordon agreed that we are seeing a mass increase in triple digit speeds, not so much by Rock County residents, but more so Dane County and Illinois residents. They mash on the gas because they know we aren't going to chase them through work zones.

Captain Thompson said they used to think two pursuits a month was busy; now we see two a week.

Sergeant Gordon stated the State Patrol is currently seeing two a day.

Captain Thompson stated another factor is stolen vehicles.

Sergeant Gordon said the juvenile offenders are getting so brazen they try to bait the State Trooper to get them to chase. He noted catching the same offender twice in one day. He also

said the offenders do try to avoid Rock County because they know our courts will do something about it. The most dangerous pursuits are stolen cars.

Charlene Schmid asked if those who are caught are under the influence or just out joy riding.

Sergeant Gordon and Captain Thompson both responded that a lot of it involves marijuana.

No more new business.

Public Input

Sergeant Gordon reported the State Patrol has 16 new recruits starting soon and have increased aircraft patrol by 300%.

Set Next Meeting Date

October 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Lisa Wallenkamp stated she will not be in attendance, but her partner Dan McGonagil will attend in her place.

Adjournment

1st motion to adjourn by Dennis Ryan

2nd motion to adjourn by Tom Boguszewski