

Ulster County Traffic Safety Board

March 7, 2022 Meeting Summary

Approved 4/4/2022

Members In Attendance:

Giovanna Russo

Eric Kight, Chair

Chief Egidio Tinti

Brian Slack, Coordinator

Chief Joseph Sinagra

David Corrigan, Resident Engineer, NYSDOT Region 8

Brendan Masterson, Commissioner, Ulster County DPW

Guests

Tom Polk, Bicycle Program Dir, Kingston/Ulster YMCA

Rose Mary Quinn

Phil Earner

Dennis Doyle

Lou Klepner, Town of Saugerties

Meeting Summary

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Public Comments

Rose Mary Quinn stated that she spoke on behalf of Victims of Traffic Violence to the NYS Assembly.

Tom Polk raised a concern regarding the corner of Broadway and E. St. James; it appears that there is an inordinate amount of 'cut-through' traffic from Broadway onto E. St. James, perhaps to avoid the roundabout. Rose Mary Quinn agreed that the location of the crosswalk makes it difficult for motorists and pedestrians to see each other in advance. Chairman Kight recommended that a team of volunteers visit the area to conduct an assessment and provide recommendations to the City of Kingston, who holds maintenance responsibilities of the area.

Action item: B. Slack will coordinate a site visit.

Phil Earner, Ulster County Legislator District 6, indicated his concern for the most vulnerable users of the transportation system, such as bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. This will be a theme that he intends to continue advocating for with the TSB going forward.

Chairman Kight indicated that he received a comment from the public regarding Broadway and Grand/Pine Grove. He indicated that the temporary signal that is presently in place is in advance of the stop bar; the stop bar should be moved back or the signal moved forward if possible. Slack indicated that the situation is temporary. Rose Mary Quinn indicated that the temporary signal system also does not provide any accommodation for pedestrians.

Rose Mary Quinn specifically asked Chief Tinti when the City PD will begin ticketing motorists who block the bike lane. She indicated that, after confronting a Kingston Police Officer regarding an observed violation, she was directed by the officer to submit her concern to the Mayor, Chief Tinti indicated that that was an inappropriate response for any officer to provide a concerned citizen and he would attempt to follow-up with the officer. He further indicated that there are plans in place to put officers on the street to address this and other similar concerns as soon as hiring and ranks return to normal levels.

III. Approval of Minutes – January 10, 2022

Motion made by Sinagra; second by Masterson. Carried

IV. Old Business (Open Items)

a. 2023 GTSC Grant Opportunities Announced!

Brian asked Rose Mary Quinn to provide some background given her extensive experience with the GTSC grant process. She indicated that there is a strong push by GTSC to get community based organizations and under-served and at-risk communities involved in safety grants. This is in-line with national trends under the current Secretary of Transportation and federal administration and new infrastructure act. Any grant application with need to be approved by the TSB prior to submission to the GTSC, the deadline of which is April 30th. The TSB will therefore meet in April to ensure that any proposed grants can be given review and approval by the TSB.

Slack will review the application form to make sure he is familiar with the application process and timeline and try to ensure that the TSB is provided necessary materials to the TSB.

b. Status of Membership & Appointments

The following appointments were approved by the Ulster County Legislature Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee for 3 year terms: Brunner; Gramoglia; Masterson; Sinagra; Corrigan; Kight; Schiller; Tinti; and Russo. Three vacancies remain; Tom Polk and Lou Klepner were recommended by the County Executive's Office and one vacancy remains. Slack will continue to work with the CE's Office to fill the remaining vacancy.

c. 2022 TSB Workplan

Slack continues to want to develop a work plan for the TSB; he would like to develop it over the course of 2022 to identify TSB goals and tasks.

d. Development of TSB Rules or Procedures

Slack moved to remove this item from the agenda; the purpose and rules of the TSB are described in the Ulster County Charter and do not appear to be necessary at this time.

e. Website Content

Slack requested members to continue to provide suggestions for website content. Masterson requested to investigate a 'flash screen' with TSB announcements.

f. Public Safety Message No. 1: Plowing Snow Across Roads

Slack released Message No. 1; he did not believe it received wide circulation.

i. Public Safety Message No. 2: April/May Target

Slack requested suggestions for new messages; 'watch for motorcycles' and bicycles were top suggestions. Kight agreed to check with the local Harley Davidson dealership to see if there is any ongoing message campaign that exists that could be coordinated with. Slack will look into developing a motorcycle safety message as well.

Action item: Kight will inquire with Harley Davidson and Slack will begin developing copy for review.

g. 2022 School Bus Driver of the Year

Slack indicated that the annual Call for School Bus Driver of the Year award has been issued; Slack sent a reminder. G. Russo indicated that in years past a small ceremony has been held at the Public Safety Building; the County Executive's office has been made aware of the scheduled date of April 28th, which is Operation Safe Stop Day. Submitted applications will be forwarded from Bill Johnston to the TSB on April 4th. The presentation of awards will be on Operation Safe Stop Day (April 28th) at the Rotunda at 11am; Slack has been coordinating with the County Executive's Office and will provide a gift certificate for winners.

G. Russo also indicated that she will be attending the March 24th meeting of the NYS Association of Pupil Transportation (Mid Hudson) in Wappingers; School Bus Driver of the Year is on the agenda; is there anything else that TSB members would like her to raise with the committee. Slack indicated that he would like to remind them that the TSB has reformed and will continue to be active and a resource. R. Quinn also indicated that whoever her replacement is at the Safety Institute should assume school bus safety training going forward.

V. New Business

h. Legalized Cannabis and Highway Safety – Chief J. Sinagra

Chief Sinagra requested the opportunity to provide TSB members with an overview of the recent legislation of cannabis in NYS and discuss some of the concerns that the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police Traffic Safety Committee. The legislation as passed does not address the operator of motor vehicles with regard to cannabis intoxication and safe operation of a motor vehicle; the measurement of impairment and intoxication is not defined. Nanograms per milliliter is one standard currently used by the State of Colorado. Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) are trained to identify different types of intoxication in people and can lay the foundation for departments to make arrests in local departments. IN the absence of an established measurement for enforcement and level of intoxication, people who are arrested for driving under the influence of cannabis will likely not be able to be convicted. No established scientific levels for enforcement were not considered when the law was passed.

Sinagra has requested that the TSB submit a letter to the New York State legislature requesting that the traffic enforcement issue be corrected. Chairman Kight requested that we reach out to the GTSC to see what their position is on the issue. **Action Item: Slack will reach out to the GTSC to see what their position is on the issue and if they can offer guidance; Sinagra will consider submitting draft language for consideration by the TSB at an upcoming meeting.**

i. **Crash Victims Rights and Safety Act – Rosemary Quinn**

Rose Mary Quinn recently provided a victim impact statement to the NYS Assembly regarding the referenced Act and related some of the main themes that she spoke about during her statement. Rose indicated that she is passionate about this issue due to the recent death of her partner, John Lynch, due to collision with motor vehicle while riding his bicycle in Kingston. Some of the elements of the law that she stressed include in particular drivers who injure or kill someone on the road are not necessarily subjected to a sobriety test. Other items include: authorization for municipalities to set their own speed limits; additional state funds for complete streets implementation at the local level; protecting vulnerable road users, incl. the 3 foot bicycle passing rule; DMV pre-licensing reform (to include increased emphasis on bike/ped safety); allowing victim impact statements at DMV license revocation hearings in cases involving a death or serious injury (victims are often excluded from this process).

Rose encouraged members to learn about the law and contact their elected representatives to support it. **No action.**

VI. Other Business

No Other Business

VII. Member Updates, News & Announcements

Slack gave a brief update from the UCTC and Planning Departments; UCTC will be updating its Transportation Improvement Program as soon as guidance is issued from NYSDOT. The annual Unified Planning Work Plan was adopted; two upcoming safety studies that will occur include a rail road safety study in City of Kingston and a corridor management plan in the 9W portion in the Town of Ulster.

Ulster DPW

No major updates

Town/Village Saugerties

An officer was sent to 'Livesavers' in Chicago, a national conference; Sinagra will be presenting at the Empire State Law Enforcement and Safety conference in April in Syracuse. Kight will also be coordinated with UC DPW regarding the status of a county RR bridge near DEP lands; the DEP does support the county regarding its maintenance activities and will support necessary land use permits to support the work on Basin/Dike Rd and 28A.

NYC DEP

Ice storm damage was significant in the areas around the watershed; support was provided by NYC DEP to the tree task force for tree removal after the event. There seemed to be a lack of a central source of information regarding road closures, especially during an emergency weather event.

NYS DOT

Staff continues to identify and address pot holes. Flashing beacons at Bruynswyck Rd are supposed to be installed within the next 2 weeks. A section of Rte 209 from the area near the NYS Police Barracks to the Kingston Bridge will begin with anticipated target for completion Memorial Day.

City of Kingston

No updates.

Mid Hudson Pupil Transportation Providers

No Updates

Kingston YMCA

Smart Cycling Safety Course for adults is scheduled for April

VIII. Adjourn

Next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2022. Remote meetings may not be optional in April unless Governor Hochul renews the emergency order allowing public bodies the option of remote meetings.

bcs