

December 6, 2005

Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee
Minutes of Meeting

The regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee was called to order by Chairman Thomas R. Toepfer at 9:00 A.M. on December 6, 2005 in the 3rd floor courtroom at the Taylor County Courthouse. Present were: Dorothy Falasky, Jim Barnier, James Seidl, Nick Synol, Tim Mason, Kim Sybers, Patti Nelles, Marc Bowker and Luke Klink.

Motion by Barnier/Falasky and carried to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2005 regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee. Chairman Toepfer reported that the 2006 meetings have been scheduled at 9:00 A.M. on March 7, June 6, September 5, and December 5.

Sergeant Nick Synol of the Taylor County Sheriff's Department reported that there have been no fatalities in Taylor County since the last meeting. Synol expressed concern with frequent crashes on CTH E south of STH 64. Toepfer will review the site with WISDOT Traffic Engineer Marc Bowker.

Ms. Patti Nelles was introduced as Taylor County's new Bureau of Transportation Safety Coordinator. Ms. Nelles distributed information comparing other state's traffic safety laws, data on safety belt use and crash/fatality statistics for Wisconsin.

Ms. Nelles reported on current legislative actions including pending bill AB618 which strengthens the child passenger safety restraint law.

Chairman Toepfer reported on a Taylor County Highway Department effort to coordinate a county consortium grant application for "Traffic Signing and Marking Enhancement Program" funds.

Committee Member Seidl reported on AB567 which expands existing forms of inattentive driving and prohibits electronic devices which transmit information or provide entertainment for a vehicle's driver.

Motion by Barnier/Falasky and carried to adjourn at 9:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Thomas R. Toepfer
Committee Chairman

September 6, 2005

Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee Minutes of Meeting

The regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee was called to order by Chairman Thomas R. Toepfer at 9:00 A.M. on September 6, 2005 in the 3rd floor courtroom at the Taylor County Courthouse. Present were: Dorothy Falasky, Jim Barnier, James Seidl, Nick Synol, Tim Mason, Sean Haskamp, Tim Ludwig, Bruce Kinlen, Diane Niggemann and Kim Sybers.

Motion by Barnier/Seidl and carried to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2005 regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee.

Sergeant Nick Synol of the Taylor County Sheriff's Department reported that there have been no fatalities in Taylor County since the last meeting.

The District 6 Traffic Safety Coordinator was not present.

The committee discussed the STH 13/CTH O intersection. Chairman Toepfer expressed concern that westbound traffic on CTH O with a green light and a speed of 45 mph does not have adequate sight distance to the north due to the abandoned building. Traffic Engineer Tim Mason reported that the crash history of the intersection documents only one incident. Motion by Seidl/Falasky to recommend that Chairman Toepfer pursue hazard elimination funding to address the intersection.

Chairman Toepfer reported that he received no response to the committee's resolution to address inattentive drivers.

Motion by Barnier/Seidl and carried to adjourn at 10:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Thomas R. Toepfer
Committee Chairman

June 7, 2005

Minutes of Meeting

The regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee was called to order by Chairman Thomas R. Toepfer at 10:00 A.M. on June 7, 2005 at the Taylor County Courthouse. Present were: Dorothy Falasky, Jim Barnier, James Seidl, Justin Lokken, Nick Synol and Tim Mason.

Motion by Seidl/Barnier and carried to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2005 regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee. After discussion, motion by Barnier/Falasky and carried to begin future meetings at 9:00 A.M.

Officer Synol reported that there have been no fatalities in Taylor County since the last meeting. Officer Synol expressed appreciation for the increased state patrol presence over the Memorial Day weekend to enforce the "Click it or Ticket" campaign.

WISDOT Traffic Safety Representative Dennis Johnson was unable to attend the meeting.

Motion by Seidl/Falasky and carried to approve the attached resolution for presentation to all Taylor County legislative representatives.

Chairman Toepfer reviewed statutory membership requirements for the committee and reported that the committee is in compliance.

Motion by Barnier/Seidl and carried to adjourn at 10:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by Thomas R. Toepfer, Committee Chairman

Resolution

Taylor County Traffic Safety Commission
Medford, WI 54451

Whereas, inattentive driving and/or distracted drivers is the primary cause of motor vehicle accidents; it being cited as the contributing factor in 17.5% of all crashes and in almost 13% of fatal crashes in Wisconsin, and

Whereas, drivers are often distracted by such mundane activities as conversing with others in the auto, listening to or tuning the radio, watching children, observing objects or activities on the roadside, eating, drinking and/or smoking while driving, retrieving dropped objects in the car, reading maps or other materials, and numerous other routine actions, and

Whereas, the problem of distracted drivers has been exacerbated in recent years by the introduction of newly developed electronic technology including cell phones, CD players, global positioning instruments with visual map displays, portable electronic games, etc., and most problematic of all, the recent introduction of cell phones with visual display of text messages and /or pictures, and portable DVD players which can be energized by power outlets in the driver compartment and viewed by drivers while operating their vehicles, and

Whereas, the use of these electronic devices with visual displays while operating a motor vehicle is exceptionally hazardous because it requires that drivers take their eyes off the road to view the displays, and

Whereas, operating a motor vehicle on our often congested highways requires the full-time, undivided attention of the operator leaving no time for other distractions, and

Whereas, Chapter 346.89 **Inattentive Driving**, Wisconsin Statutes, was enacted prior to the advent of the many distracting electronic devices found in the automobiles of today, currently fails to address these issues, and is also so broadly written that law enforcement and traffic officers have difficulty citing drivers for the offense unless such drivers have caused, or could very likely, cause an accident; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Taylor County Traffic Safety Commission strongly urges the Wisconsin Legislature to enact legislation which recognizes the additional hazards created by recently developed electronic devices, especially those with visual displays, and which includes provisions more clearly defining driver actions which constitute inattentive or distracted motor vehicle operation, and, be it further,

Resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to each member of the legislature having constituents in Taylor County and a copy provided to the Bureau of Transportation Safety, Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

March 1, 2005

Minutes of Meeting

The regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee was called to order by Chairman Thomas R. Toepfer at 10:00 A.M. on March 1, 2005 at the Taylor County Courthouse. Present were: Dennis Johnson, Dorothy Falasky, Greg Helgeson, Diane Niggemann, Jim Barnier, Bruce Kinlen, Tim Ludwig, James Seidl, Kim Sybers, and Tim Mason.

Motion by Barnier/Seidl and carried to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2004 regular meeting of the Taylor County Traffic Safety Committee. The next meeting was scheduled for June 7, 2005.

Reporting for the Taylor County Traffic Safety Coordinator, Chairman Toepfer informed the committee that Taylor County has had no highway traffic fatalities since the last meeting. A snowmobile/ATV collision on county trails did result in one fatality and Trooper Kinlen reported on a serious rollover on CTH A & CTH E.

District 6 Traffic Safety Coordinator Dennis Johnson reported that to date there have been 85 state traffic fatalities compared with 111 last year and 101 for the five year average. There was a total of 785 fatalities in 2004 compared to a five year average of 798.

Johnson distributed a 2005 – 2006 traffic legislative update including proposed shortened re-test cycles for drivers older than 75 years, proposed inexperienced driver phone use restrictions, and daytime light requirements.

Johnson reported that the federal railroad administration will be requiring reflective markings on locomotives in five years and on railroad cars in ten years.

Committee Member Seidl expressed concern with the enforcement of inattentive driving laws. After committee discussion, motion by Seidl/Falasky and carried to have Seidl draft a resolution addressing the enforcement of distractive driving practices and to forward the resolution to local legislators.

Commission on Aging Director Diane Niggemann reported that AARP will be conducting 55 Alive classes in Gilman and Rib Lake with three sessions in Medford this spring and summer.

Motion by Seidl/Barnier and carried to adjourn at 11:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by Thomas R. Toepfer, Committee Chairman