

**MADISON DEPARTMENT OF  
POLICE SERVICES  
REGULAR MEETING – July 12, 2007  
9 CAMPUS DRIVE, MADISON– 7:30 PM**

Attendees: Chairman Emile Geisenheimer, Commissioner David Smith, Commissioner Thomas Cartledge, Chief Paul Jakubson; Lt. Jon Dobbin

Absent: Commissioner Garry Gyenizs; Commissioner Michael Rollinson

Also Present: Press; James Deephouse, Board of Finance Liaison (Arrived 8:15 PM)

**REGULAR SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Geisenheimer called the regular meeting to order at 7:38 PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Smith, second by Cartledge to table the minutes from the meeting of June 14, 2007 for further review by the commissioners. The minutes will be approved at the August 9, 2007 meeting. All in favor. None opposed. So moved.

Commissioner Cartledge asked about a section of the Traffic Report relative to Written Warnings cited in 2006 VS those of 2007 in that those of 2006 seem to be at about one-half of what the number of written warnings will be for 2007. Chief Jakubson said the data is correct; in May 2006 there were 23; in May of 07 there were 52. Chairman Geisenheimer pointed out that this May there was seat belt enforcement in place, with action taken. Chief Jakubson added, in May 2006 we had 85 cited in seat belt enforcement; this year it was 103. The **WAVE** funding from DOT enabled us to put specialized teams out there for seat belt enforcement (*Click it or Ticket*).

**MOTION** by Smith, second by Cartledge to accept the Consent Agenda (minus minutes). All in favor. None opposed. So moved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

• **Traffic Accident Study**

Chairman Geisenheimer began this discussion by stating in the past there appeared to be a lack of an underlying strategy for traffic enforcement in many communities. There is an analysis of the consequences of traffic violations, which tends to be linked with property damage or injury. One of the consequences is to allocate traffic enforcement in the areas where there are repeat accidents to aim at reducing those accidents. A recommendation by the Police Commission was to have a lieutenant responsible for strategy and tactics to deploy our resources to address that action. We asked for a progress report to date with a plan to complete the traffic study.

Chief Jakubson added, based on recommendations from this Commission, he asked Lt. Dobbin to head this study; he is one of the senior lieutenants and is very proactive and experienced in traffic issues. Lt. Dobbin has been asked to start looking at the database of the record keeping system. He has been deploying MDTs (mobile data terminals) to integrate with our computer records management system. We have had deployment issues, which are being addressed. There was funding by the state based on the ability to compile the accident report in the field to get a true fix on location. DOT is now reporting injury only and property only accidents. Within the past week we have ironed out final bugs with the software company and are now becoming successful in bringing down data from the cars. We have found issues with the quality of the data inside the database that needed to be addressed within dispatch and with our personnel. To get the true and accurate data we need - it is not anyone's fault – we are capable of fixing locations using GPS and actually putting in longitude and latitude.

We can fixate a location. For accident data, the form actually has longitude and latitude and we can now get a more accurate picture to give the local engineering dept. and to DOT for more accurate locations. Previously, an officer would guesstimate (1/10 of a mile, 2/10 of a mile, etc). Now we can get very specific information.

Lt. Dobbin reported that as of today we could be at an accident scene, get coordinates and get the exact location. The first thing we did was have the IT Manager, Tim Rowe, get information from the computer. All the errors on location input have now been cleaned up. Lt. Dobbin then reviewed motor vehicle accident history from 2000 to 2007 by shift and totals for motor vehicle accidents with no injuries, motor vehicle accidents with injuries and fatal motor vehicle accidents. Not shown in this graph are accidents that happen on private property (Stop & Shop, CVS, Starbucks, etc.). There is no grading as to the level of injury on an accident. Chairman Geisenheimer reviewed the report statistics as to shifts and years with the highest occurrences tending to be the 8-4 shift followed the 4-12 shift. Similarly, for accidents with injuries, most are within 8-4 PM, followed by the 4-12 shift. Lt. Dobbin reviewed the pin map showing non injury accidents with the frequencies being in the center of town, Rte. 79 & I-95 intersections; the Rte. 80 circle, Race Hill @ Route 80; Hammonasset Connector, Nathan's Lane and the Pines (Horse Pond and Rte 79). Chairman Geisenheimer said it is very helpful to see the clusters delineated; once the findings determine the cause, it will be beneficial.

Lt Dobbin then reviewed the pin map for accidents with injuries for the 2007 calendar year, noting accidents in the center of town, Routes 79 & 80; the Connector and Mungertown Road. Commissioner Smith commented that although the number of accidents with injuries is relatively low, you still see consistent clustering. It almost looks like the areas with injuries and without are the same. Commissioner Cartledge asked that the accidents/incidents for the top 5 be documented by the press. Chief Jakubson said that as this data gets more refined we will be able to break it down by time of day, day of week, seasons, etc. for a much finer picture; he added, a lot of accidents are due to inattentiveness. Chairman Geisenheimer said he would be very interested in how many accidents are caused by speeding. Commissioner Smith added that a significant advantage is this will be invaluable to patrol officers in inclement weather where we have a cluster we want to patrol. Lt. Dobbin said this issue was talked about with the software company; they will come out with crime mapping for DWIs, accidents, burglaries, etc. and transfer the data to a map to show where the instances happen.

Chairman Geisenheimer said that with respect to separate files of accidents, they wanted to get the automated system to produce this information, but historical records can pull this out. Chief Jakubson explained we have identified a job for someone on light duty to update historical data to get a much better picture. Now that we require officers to electronically complete reports in the car, it makes the availability much quicker and with a full diagram it will be readily available to the public. Tied into that, we can ship the data to DOT in a timely fashion. Lt. Dobbin said they would explore the possibility of a college intern; it takes 4 hours to do 1 month.

Lt. Dobbin then distributed computer generated accident reports from 1/1/07-5/31/07 with contributing factors, of which there are 32 possibilities. Most common cause of both non-injury and injury related accidents is following too closely. Commissioner Smith noted that 1 in every 4 incidents of following too closely results in an accident. Chairman Geisenheimer added, it almost always is rear-ending. Commissioner Smith reviewed the order of occurrences: greatest with no injury is following too closely (32); animal/foreign object (18); failure to grant right of way (10). For injury related accidents, the highest is again following too closely, second is failure to grant right of way; speeding is 4<sup>th</sup>. Lt. Dobbin explained that speed is hard for the on-scene officer to establish; the driver may have been speeding, rounded the corner and sideswiped a car, which is failure to drive in the proper lane, Vs. speeding. Commissioner Smith commented there are no injuries cited that are associated with animals or objects in the road – that is fortunate. Chairman Geisenheimer said this report is very helpful; a matrix to show time of day/location/cause will provide obvious patterns and asked, from a traffic law enforcement, what can be done to address 'following too closely'? Lt. Dobbin answered it is hard to charge that because there is no hard and fast rule to determine car length. Chairman Geisenheimer suggested providing education on the public channel relative to safety driving tips. Chief Jakubson noted, when it is indicated speed too fast for conditions it means, in the height of a rain/snow storm going 25 in a 45 MPH zone may still be too fast. Commissioner Cartledge asked if anything is broadcast on community TV, he would suggest talking about failure to grant right of way and oncoming traffic in opposite directions; feels there are so many misses. Chief Jakubson agreed and said right turn on red, is not slow down and glide, it is stop. He continued, they would like to do viewer education for motoring and pedestrian traffic. Chairman Geisenheimer suggested when this is refined, it can go up on the website.

Commissioner Smith asked, since you have been doing this, is there any conclusion as to the data? Lt. Dobbin answered, we are seeing that day shift is the busiest for accidents and is the source of most calls; this is telling us that following too closely is a hot issue. Commissioner Smith asked how many warnings are issued? Lt. Dobbin said warnings given outside motor vehicle accidents are minimal. Chairman Geisenheimer said that is the idea, to mine the data to take necessary actions to reduce the accidents. It gives a purpose. When refined it will provide us with a strategy for officer deployment. Chief Jakubson noted that historically, when we have put even one person on traffic enforcement for 4 hours (10-2) or commuter hours either AM or PM, it has an effect due to higher officer visibility. Lt. Dobbin added the DUI Friday shifts that are aggressive are stopping 5/6 cars every 15 minutes; people pay attention and it has an impact.

Chairman Geisenheimer asked Lt. Dobbin what the timeframe is. He answered, starting Monday, every accident from that point on will be in the computer with instant access by lieutenants and sergeants to sort the reports. The database can be searched by weather/hotspots, etc. Chairman Geisenheimer said he would like to get to the point with the analysis of both you (Lt. Dobbin) and the Chief that these are our recommendations with a plan to reduce accidents on the day shift relative to speeding, accidents, etc. A result is concrete with a department goal with tactics; he asked Lt. Dobbin to give the Chief a recommendation so we are consistent. Commissioner Smith added, this would take advantage of the NexGen system and our goals by having meaningful impact to see if it is working. Lt. Dobbin said Monday it would be in the computer; the next phase is to enter back data. His plan is to have all 2006 data in by the end of the summer. Chairman Geisenheimer suggested giving it 60 days to bring it up to speed and see what has been accomplished and what is left to be done. Lt. Dobbin will report on the findings at the September meeting via a PowerPoint presentation. He continued, we are making progress and he is very pleased. Lt. Dobbin was complimented on a nice job by Commissioner Smith.

- **Signage Approval at The Hearth**

Chief Jakubson reported on a request relative to residents of The Hearth and their driveway onto Bradley Road regarding their report of near misses and potential accidents. The traffic counter has been there, as has the speed trailer. He has reviewed records for accident data (there is none). Last year the Chief said he asked for a caution/blind driveway sign on the west bound side of Bradley Road. One issue is, The Hearth's residents are an older generation of driver with slower reaction times. He explained this to people at The Hearth and explained the clear line of sight as exiting people look right/left but rarely look right again before they pullout. People don't look back to the right when exiting and then a car comes up quickly from the right traveling west on Bradley Road; there are blind driveway signs. He suggested a no left turn sign at the exit, allowing people to cross or go right onto Bradley Road. The management chose not to do that. He said he has talked to the town engineers (Stew MacMillan and Mike Ott); the residents want full signalization but he and the town's engineer do not agree with that request. He advised the Board that as the Traffic Authority for the town, they can recommend the installation of signage on private driveways. He is requesting a 'No Left Turn' sign at the driveway exit of The Hearth. In effect, that makes it a motor vehicle offense if someone turns left and it also becomes a cause/factor if there is an accident. There is no accident history at that site. He feels that a sign is the only way the scenario will be resolved because of the location of the building and the curvature of Bradley Road; the road will not be reconstructed. They have tried the "Warning Driveway" sign; he is recommending a 'No Left Turn' sign so people exiting can cross or turn right. When asked about the safety of crossing Bradley Road as opposed to turning left, the Chief said it takes less time to go straight across as opposed to turning left into the curve. There is no accident history to back up the residents' request. Chairman Geisenheimer said there has previously been a discussion regarding a driveway intersecting a town road; the Chief said it is not a normal occurrence. As at the Traffic Authority, you have the authority to approve stop signs, etc.

**MOTION** by Smith, second by Cartledge to accept the Chief's recommendation for the installation of a "No Left Turn" sign at the driveway exit onto Bradley Road of The Hearth. All in favor. None opposed. So moved.

Chairman Geisenheimer asked how residents of The Hearth would react? Chief Jakubson noted that he had invited residents and the property manager to attend this meeting but they said they did not feel it necessary. There will be reactions, but this is a progressive step.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Smith extended his appreciation to Lt. Dobbin for the work he has done thus far saying it is in sync with our staffing study. He is pleased we are being proactive and is looking forward to September's meeting update. The report looks very good.

**MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

Chief noted a letter praising Officer Aivano and his handling of an incident at a private home on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

**CHAIRMAN COMMENTS:** Chairman Geisenheimer said he appreciates the work done thus far on the traffic study.

Chief Jakobson reported the two new officers (Brown & Roy) are progressing with their field training and are evaluated daily and weekly. They should be available in August to be on the schedule. Our newest recruit, Gregory Martin, is attending the Waterbury Academy. We have one opening as of the first of the fiscal year, which we are not pursuing because we have no academy seats. Newest academy date is November – as we get closer we will try to fill that spot.

**MOTION** by Smith, second by Cartledge to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:35PM. All in favor. None opposed. So moved.

Minutes Accepted: August 9, 2007