Traffic Safety Council Notes

September 1, 2005

Present: Bill Bremer, Rose Phetteplace, Xiao Qin, Carolyn Bourie, John Corbin, Todd Szymkowski, Dennis Hughes, Steve Olson, Marie Treazise, Tim McLain and Jerry Smith

1. Rose Phetteplace reported that DTSD is forming an Executive Group and suggested that the TSC consider splitting and forming an Executive Group that meets less frequently and a Technical Group that makes recommendations to the Executive Group. Carolyn Bourie reported that the Data and Decision Work Group made that same recommendation. The Data Group recommendation has been forwarded to the committee sponsors and when they act on the recommendation, it will be brought to the TSC. Dennis Hughes reported that Major Dan Lonsdorf has had similar discussions within the Transportation Safety Bureau. HSIP will require top level administrators to make decisions on how SAFETEA-LU funds are spent. Bruce Matzke can be a voice in support of this recommendation and Bill Bremer will speak to him about it.

2. Bill Bremer discussed the safety provisions of SAFETEA-LU. President Bush signed the six year legislation in August. Safety is now a “core” program. The amount of money available for safety efforts doubles. SHSP requirements are uncertain but existing efforts will have to be expanded. States have flexibility on how some of the funds are utilized. Safety has $5.1 billion over four years (FY06-FY09). There will be a $220 million set aside for railroad crossings and $90 million for High Risk Rural Roads. HSIP funds are based on a formula. 1/3 on total lane miles of federal aid highways, 1/3 on total vehicle miles traveled on lanes on federal aid highways and 1/3 on number of fatalities on federal aid system. Federal aid highways means all public roads except those classified as local roads and streets or rural minor collectors. Federal aid systems means the National Highway System (NHS; which includes the Interstate network). HSIP requires states to produce a program of projects. HSIP is now known as Section 148. SHSP requires plans be developed by DOT after consultation with prescribed safety stakeholders. It addresses the 4 E’s plus Management and Operations. SHSP is required by October 1, 2006. FHWA will develop flexibility guidelines for states to use. A rail crossing report to Congress is required every two years starting on April 1, 2006. High Risk Rural Road set aside funds can be used on local roads. Safe Routes to School funds have to be administered by state DOT’s. K-8 schools are included in the program. States will have to have a fulltime SR2S coordinator. At least 10% but no more than 30% of funds must be used for non-infrastructure activity. Activity must be within the vicinity of schools and that means within 2 miles. Section 406 Safety Belt Performance Belt Grants are now administered by NHTSA. Wisconsin could receive about $15 million if we enact a primary enforcement law. Sheboygan County will receive $6.25 million for each of the next 4 years to link bicycle trails and pedestrian paths.
3. Xiao Qin discussed SHSP engineering components. AASHTO new dimensions compared to 01-03 and 05-07 SHSP were updated. Improve design/operation of intersections, minimize consequences of leaving roadway/keep vehicles on roadway, design safer work zones and reduce head on and cross-median crash elements were included.

4. John Corbin reported on Roadside Worker & Emergency Responder Safety Report. European countries have done much better job of protecting their workers/responders than the US. NCHIP is being looked at to prepare a similar report to “The SURVIVE Report.” This topic has become vital to Incident Management efforts.

5. Dennis Hughes led off discussion of SHSP updates. He reported that a workgroup on Reducing Intoxicated Driving have recommended that we keep doing what we know works and look for funds to continue efforts. Leveraging partnerships should become a more formalized process. Looking at forming state-wide Safe Driving Coalition. Safety Partners should be considered for renewal.

   Xiao Qin has placed TSC agenda, roster, notes and related items on the TOPS website.

   Carolyn Bourie reported that the Data and Decision Workgroup have forwarded their recommendations to program sponsors are awaiting their reaction. The Federal Relations section in OPBF is organizing briefings for the Secretary’s Office on all aspects of the federal reauthorization bill, including HSIP.

6. Dennis Hughes reported that SB-270 has been introduced by Senator Reynolds. It would allow WisDOT to go to 75 mph speed limit on rural freeways. Media picked up on the issue. WisDOT Legislative Committee held a brief discussion on the topic. OPA put out talking points for DSP to let staff know that the Department formal position was to oppose increases in speed limits. Engineers favor steps to give a more uniform speed for flow of traffic.

7. Membership Reports:

   Dennis Hughes reported that TRB is holding a training meeting in Phoenix to train on how to develop Comprehensive Strategic Highway Safety Plans. WisDOT is going to send three delegates to this training.

   Jerry Smith reported that BOTS has hired a new Regional Program Manager for the Green Bay Region. His name is Michael Panosh and he began duties with BOTS on August 22nd. Mary Rogers duties will be changed so BOTS will ultimately have 4 RPM’s to cover the five Regions. John Corbin expressed concern for interaction with Region Safety Engineering staff.
Steve Olson reported Wisconsin is participating in the national You Drink, You Drive, You Loose campaign. A press conference was held in Green Bay during the Governor’s Highway Safety Conference to kick off the event.

Todd Szymkowski reported on NHI training scheduled for Wisconsin Dells in February of 2006. Training will be on Highway Safety Analysis and there will be 30 slots. There is no cost for the three day class. ITS Forum will be held at Marquette University on September 13th.

Next meet set for October 6, 2005 at 9:30 a.m.