

Safe Communities Executive Committee Meeting  
Otter Tail Lake Room - Government Service Center - Fergus Falls  
February 9, 2011 10:30 – Noon  
Minutes

- 1) **Welcome & introductions** - In attendance: Tom Kummrow (Office of Traffic Safety); Ryan Cheshire (OTC Attorney's Office-3); Mary Matteson (Fergus Falls ISD #544 Community Education – 3); Steve Adams (Fergus Falls Police Department – 3); Jake Grabow (OTC Sheriff's Department-3); Tria Mann (DWI Court Program-3); Ray Aafedt (Minnesota Motorcycle Safety Center-50); Rick West (OTC Engineer-3); and Jane Patrick (Project Coordinator).
- 2) The group conducted a review of the minutes from the last meeting. There was a clarification regarding the bike and pedestrian safety presentation that we participated in that we will do what comes naturally to support this effort including promoting the events, but the group will not be expected to spend a considerable amount of time conducting bike or pedestrian safety initiatives.
- 3) Ray Aafedt shared information about ongoing motorcycle safety efforts. The ad hoc group working on this initiative will be sending out packets of information to local ride organizers and law enforcement which they have compiled through the state. Information being sent out includes local and regional training opportunities which are available this spring. In addition, the group has been working with the local A.B.A.T.E leaders to encourage proposed legislation to allow group ride organizers to arrange their own traffic control with appropriate road guard training. Sheriff Schlueter will be submitting a letter to the state Sheriff's Association, Chief's Association, and State Patrol see what work can be done in this area.
- 4) **Media events**
  - The group discussed Super Bowl efforts. Tria reported that there was one (or possibly two???) local felony DWI arrests in Otter Tail County. Other communities reported low numbers as well. Jane noted she had heard a radio news report from neighboring Becker County that an officer had pulled over a designated driver who stated to the officer, "I heard you guys were going to be out tonight. I thought they were just saying that, but I guess they weren't kidding!"
  - The group discussed the media coverage of the fatal crash in Otter Tail County near Parkers Prairies which has been related to texting while driving. Ryan reported that charges are pending and that this appears to be the first time a texting case has been charged out in the State of Minnesota. The group discussed the challenges for law enforcement in documenting probable cause for pulling someone over for texting since dialing a cell phone is still considered legal.
  - The group discussed the need to reduce and eliminate use of cell phones while driving. Jane made mention of an initiative in Douglas County where they are implementing a cell phone use policy for county employees. Jane inquired as to whether or not this was something the coalition would be interested in pursuing as a recommendation for local employers including the County of Otter Tail. The consensus of the group was that they preferred for this to be considered at the state level rather than the local county level similar to the State of California and to the .08 impaired driving laws. The group determined it would be worthwhile to at least recommend to companies, businesses, etc.,

to implement a policy to restrict or reduce cell phone usage by employees. Jane will develop a short email, newsletter or statement to encourage employers to support their employees in making good decisions when it comes to cell phone use.

- Youth Health Day was discussed. Jane will send Ryan an email with the date to see if he can help out. Steve will be there along with one or more of his officers. AAA has agreed to purchase and let us use the large screen monitor for the driving simulator and it should be available by the time of the March 15<sup>th</sup> event.
- The group discussed recent efforts to talk about the Coalition and traffic safety efforts with local government representatives. Steve suggested the Public Safety Committee meeting in Fergus Falls would be the place discuss this. Jane will try to schedule something with Lynne Olson. Tria also offered to have the coalition do a presentation for the DWI Court Advisory. The group will arrange to get on board meeting agendas for townships; school boards; chamber of commerces (Perham, Mills, and Pelican & Fergus). Business After Hours (in Fergus).
- May is the next seatbelt wave and the group would like to arrange a billboard and find a sponsor. The group discussed asking schools to participate and having students design ads through a local police department competition. Steve will check to see if the Fergus Falls Police Department could take kids out to lunch for top six winners, and the #1 winner to get their art work displayed in posters and/or billboards; look at 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> graders. The group would need the artwork by April 15<sup>th</sup> in order to get billboards and posters created by the end of April. The group will also ask local newspapers to get on board with promoting the event.
- Another idea was to find some funds to purchase tee shirts to be given out during key enforcement times at the high schools. Local police departments will be encouraged to do presentations at the schools and try to find some incentives to be given out to students caught wearing their seatbelts.
- Jane reported that KLN Enterprises in Perham had invited them to participate in their annual health fair with over 1000 employees being required to attend. The group agreed to participate and arrange the AAA driving simulator. Ray will also check on the motorcycle simulator. The event will be from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 26<sup>th</sup> at the PACC in Perham.

5) Sober Cab updates:

- Sober Cab expansion – Pelican, Battle Lake/Underwood are interested. The Last Leg Shuttle owner is working with them to identify options.
- Judge Senyk was part of the DWI Court presentation to the County Board in January. He made mention to Jane of the local judges support for the program.
- The group discussed challenges with the program in that there are some challenges with getting all the rides necessary for people between midnight – 2 a.m. with a large geographical region. Jane continues to work with the Lest Leg Shuttle service to identify options for adding additional drivers during this time.

6) Partner Sharing:

- Safe and Sober updates from Tom; the office knows and understand that enforcement is an issue and they will be coming to visit with OTC leaders to try and identify options to resolve the current issues.

7) **Next meeting dates: March 9, April 13 & May 11**