

BREVARD COUNTY
COMMUNITY TRAFFIC SAFETY TEAM
July 20, 2011 – Meeting Minutes

Tony Nosse, FDOT
Tami Gillen, Melbourne Engineering
Darlene Burton, Dept. of Health
Devin Swanson, Brevard Co. Public Works
Leon Terkasri (sp?), Palm Bay Police Dept.

John Znorowski, City of Titusville Public Works
Steve W. Ralston, DBI
Joe Steward, FDOT
Georganna Gillette, Space Coast TPO
Valerie Becker, Florida Safety Council

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman, Tami Gillen at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 20, 2011.

New Business: The committee opened with a discussion on the “Dangers of Texting While Driving”. Teen Survey report showed the 84 percent of teens would ask a friend who is drinking to refrain from driving. The survey also showed that 90 percent of the teens would acquiesce and would not get behind the wheel if asked not to drive under the influence. These hypothetical surveys imply that there is very good yielding behavior and a good understanding of the dangers of drinking and driving among teens. In contrast, the same survey was conducted, this time substituting ‘texting while driving’ instead of ‘drinking while driving’. Surprisingly, only 50 percent would ask a friend to stop texting or trying to access the internet while driving. Even less, only 33 percent regarded updating their Facebook status as “distracting”. Recent studies have shown that the level of impairment for texting while driving is the SAME as driving legally intoxicated. It is further known that driving kills more teens than any other factor. The great discrepancy in student response along with the statistical crash rate information clearly shows how technological advancements have added new challenges for teen drivers.

Given the latest trends, many states have implemented bans on cell phone usage while driving but many have limited this ban to school bus drivers and novice drivers. Novice drivers are those drivers categorized as younger than 18 years old with a provisional licenses. Thus far there are varying degrees of a ban on texting in thirty (30) states. It is not yet known if Florida will adopt a similar ban.

Fatality Report: There were (2) fatalities reported from July 1 to July 18 in Brevard County. There is one (1) on-going study request in the “Problems and Solutions” worksheet.

Announcements: Brevard County was runner-up to a strong Marion County for *2011 Community Traffic Safety Team Challenge*. Brevard was able to secure a digital camera to utilize in the future traffic studies. Many thanks to Sheryl Bradley for submitting the application! Thanks also to the CTST members for the tireless work throughout the year.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.