

Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

July 15, 2005

Meeting Minutes

Marion County Public Works
Salem, Oregon

Members Present: Eric Niemeyer, Chair, Jackson County; Joel McCarroll, Vice-Chair, ODOT Region 4; Robin Lewis, City of Bend; Charles Radosta, ITE/Kittelson & Associates; Cynthia Schmitt, Marion County; Ed Fischer, Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer; Mike Coleman for Rob Burchfield, City of Portland; Joseph Marek, Clackamas County; Alan Hageman, OSP

Members Absent: Rob Burchfield, City of Portland; Randall Wooley, City of Beaverton

Others Present: Nick Fortey, FHWA; Doug Bish, Kevin Haas, Katie Johnson, June Ross, Chris Rowland, Massoud Saberian, Greg Stellmach, ODOT Traffic Engineering & Operations Section; Rick Braden, Oregon State Parks; Brian Barnett, City of Springfield; Terry Hockett, City of Salem; Bill Kloos, City of Portland; Tom Larsen, City of Eugene; Robert Morast, Washington County; Jim Mitchell, City of Corvallis; Orville Gaylor, Retired ODOT; Lynne Mutrie, ACTS Oregon

Introduction – Approval of Minutes – Additional Agenda Items

Chairperson Eric Niemeyer called the meeting to order. Alan Hageman moved, Cynthia Schmitt seconded, and the meeting minutes for May 20, 2005 were approved as written. Robin Lewis said she had one non-agenda item regarding use of Opticom on roundabouts if time permits.

OLD BUSINESS

School Zone Legislation Update

Doug Bish reviewed HB 2840 as passed by the Legislature and introduced new draft signing designed to implement the measure. There are two categories delineated under the new law. For school zones adjacent to schools, the school speed must be signed either 20 MPH on school days from 7 AM to 5 PM or when a beacon is flashing. For school zoned crosswalks not adjacent to a school the school speed must be signed 20 MPH either when a beacon is flashing or when children are present.

The new law will go into effect July 1, 2006. The committee discussed timelines for implementation and various plans for how it would be accomplished in various jurisdictions. The delay was largely to allow time for jurisdictions who wanted to install flashing beacons and use the "WHEN FLASHING" option.

Discussions of the size of riders revealed the need for further adjustment due to the size of sign blanks. Greg Stellmach said ODOT would work on designs to fit 24 x 18 blanks and return with further samples at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Update to Sign Policy & Guidelines

Roll-up STOP Sign (CR1-1): Greg Stellmach reintroduced this sign from the last meeting. It includes the STOP octagon with either a black or silver/white background. It is for short term emergency or hazard situations (not construction) only. The black background is preferred.

Decision – Ed Fischer moved that the sign be adopted with an option to also use flags with it. Charles Radosta seconded. The committee passed the motion.

Advance Speed Reduction Sign for SPEED XX Signs (OW3-5): Greg introduced this sign in accordance with MUTCD Section 2C.30 which covers SPEED LIMIT signs to apply to cases when the word LIMIT is not used. The sign was not to be used on interstate or multi-lane highways. However after discussion the committee agreed to simply not allow its use on interstate highways.

Decision – Ed Fischer moved that the reduced speed sign be adopted with the limitations on use as discussed. Charles Radosta seconded. The committee passed the motion.

Traffic Signal Policy & Guidelines Revisions – Section V – Pedestrian Crossings and Signals

June Ross introduced proposed changes with handouts that delineated revised sections. The first modification added the words, “and Signals” to the section title since it’s not just about pedestrian crossings.

A. Pedestrian Crossings at Signalized Intersections: This segment is proposed for major modification to be more specific about the basic requirements for typical pedestrian signals and push-button activations. Specific design aspects are available in standard drawings.

The committee agreed on wording in V.A.1 to replace “...crosswalks *are* marked” with “Crosswalks *should be* marked”. The committee consensus was also to leave room for cases where pedestrian activity does not warrant having a pedestrian head at some signalized crosswalks.

The committee agreed on wording in V.A.4 to replace “Pedestrian pushbuttons *are required* for all crosswalks where pedestrian signals are provided except when the pedestrian phase is recalled at all times...” with “Pedestrian detection or activation *shall be provided* for all crosswalks where pedestrian signals are provided except when the pedestrian phase is recalled at all times.”

The case of whether unsignalized right-turn slip lanes need to have marked crosswalks was discussed. Since they aren’t part of the signalized intersection a crosswalk is not required. The general consensus was that they should still be marked in most cases in order to guide pedestrians and make it clear that vehicles need to yield to the pedestrians.

B. Countdown Pedestrian Signals: This is entirely new and allows for the use of countdown pedestrian heads to inform pedestrians of the number of seconds remaining in the pedestrian change interval (flashing DON’T WALK) as allowed for in Section 4E.07 of the MUTCD.

The committee discussed what the intent and best language was for discouraging use of the countdown signals at railroad grade crossing interconnected signals. The committee agreed to simplify

this language as follows: "Special consideration should be given before using countdown pedestrian signals where railroad preemption may cause a pedestrian change interval to be shortened."

Decision – Ed Fischer moved that the first two subjects under "A" and "B" discussed above be approved as amended by the committee. Cindy Schmidt seconded. The committee passed the motion.

C. Accessible Pedestrian Signals: This title would replace "Audible Pedestrian Signals" in accordance with the new MUTCD.

The committee discussed the requirement for a user request to demonstrate the need for an accessible pedestrian signal. (V.C.1.a.). Corvallis and some other cities have a policy to install accessible pedestrian signals at all actuated traffic signals and would like the revision to allow for that. Other cities may have a similar policy but may not retrofit existing signals. Not all those that do have the policy retrofit existing signals. Bill Kloos suggested that the committee may at some point need to discuss what the [US Access Board](#) is going to do. A preliminary [report](#) that came out said that they were going to require an accessible pedestrian indication wherever there is a visual pedestrian indication. No final report has been issued. June said that cost was still a factor. Further, some disabled people do not want the audible signals. Those were two reasons for requiring a user request in the first place. Bill Kloos said the [National Federation of the Blind](#) (NFB) and the [American Council of the Blind](#) (ACB) do not represent a majority of sight-disabled people (the two groups have contradictory opinions on the matter). Committee consensus was that guidelines should allow for local policies. Ed Fischer said that times are changing and we need to have more flexibility so that we can accommodate without being overly cumbersome. He said ODOT will probably wait before changing our policy but we would not want to obstruct local policies.

The committee consensus was to have June work on a rewrite of C1, the Basis for Installation.

Regarding Standard Practices (V.C.2), Bill Kloss explained that Portland's practices regarding activation of an accessible pedestrian signal have changed. He suggested that the standard practices allow for the option of allowing for automatic activation of the audible message. Ed agreed that some agencies may want the option of whether activation is automatic. In some cases there are complaints about the added noise of the signals. In some cases, activated signals have been replaced in downtown areas with fixed time (ped recall) signals. In some cases the audible locator has been turned off at night. The committee agreed to make the pushbutton activation delay permissive rather than required.

There was discussion about whether a verbal message (V.C.2c) should be a standard practice or an optional practice. The "should" wording for a verbal message being used to communicate that the "WALK" interval is in effect was questioned because of costs and maintenance requirements to record different street names and because the US Access Board has yet to publish requirements. The consensus was that this should be written more permissively. Ed said the state will continue to have a standard practice to use "cuckoo" and "peep" while allowing for the option of having a verbal message. This will also allow for different local practices. June will revise sections V.C.2 and V.C.3 and present revisions to the committee at their next meeting.

The final Section on timing pedestrian signals was removed from the guidelines and is included in timing materials that signal timers use. This was the only section of the guidelines that included specific timing guidance. The guidance given in the signal timing materials is based on the MUTCD.

Update to VMS Guidelines (Amber Alert)

June Ross introduced a draft update to Guidelines for the Operation of Variable Message Signs on State Highways with a handout that delineated revised sections for member information. The change in Supplement D is to have vehicle description and license plate information provided in the message instead of directions to tune to a local radio station.

Parking Prohibited Pavement Markings

Joe Marek provided a handout and asked members to consider the issues for a possible future meeting. Clackamas County has a local ordinance prohibiting parking adjacent to an area with yellow painted curb. The MUTCD appears to endorse red for areas not to be entered or used, although it does allow agencies to adopt their own color schemes. The county is starting to see red curb at the request of the fire district and the question of enforcement and consistency has come up. The committee agreed that it was pretty much up to local jurisdictions to write local law/policy. It will not be taken up statewide.

Non-Agenda Items

Opticom use in Roundabouts - Robin Lewis recalled a May 14, 2004 OTCDC meeting that she'd presented a discussion item as a means of clearing out a roundabout for fire trucks or other emergency vehicles.

5/14/2004 Minutes Excerpt:

Robin said use of preemption devices in advance of roundabouts is an issue in Bend where the fire department is resisting signing agreement for further roundabouts without preemption capabilities. Robin's working to get a viable solution that defines when preemption of roundabouts would be a good option. She'll report back to the committee. It will be similar to the "Stop Here for Peds", except it will be "Stop Here for Emergency Vehicles" in advance of the roundabout.

Robin said that the City of Bend wants to go forward with this as soon as possible and she wants to be sure it's done right and can be a useful example for the entire nation. She asked if the committee wants her to bring a proposal to them in regards to sign layout, operation parameters and the before/after study design. The local fire department considers this a huge problem and the council is giving a choice of removing roundabouts or providing preemption. She has thirty roundabouts she doesn't want to lose. They have retrofit splitter islands so no signs are in the way, they have remodeled curbs so they're basically flush and mountable but the fire department doesn't think this is enough. There have been two documented problems of delayed responses, one due to a stalled vehicle and one to a long queue of vehicles on the approach that would not give way to the fire truck. They need to be able to clear the approach the emergency vehicle is taking and clear out about two vehicles from the roundabout and stop other vehicles until the emergency vehicle passes through. The detection therefore would have to be quite a ways back in order to effectively activate blank-out signs at the roundabout in time. Education of drivers to never stop in the roundabout is important. The city might need to add a lane to the roundabout, which could require more right of way acquisition. Research proposals to the NCHRP have not been accepted. Ed Fischer suggested sending him a copy of the problem statement to see if AASHTO contacts might have ideas.

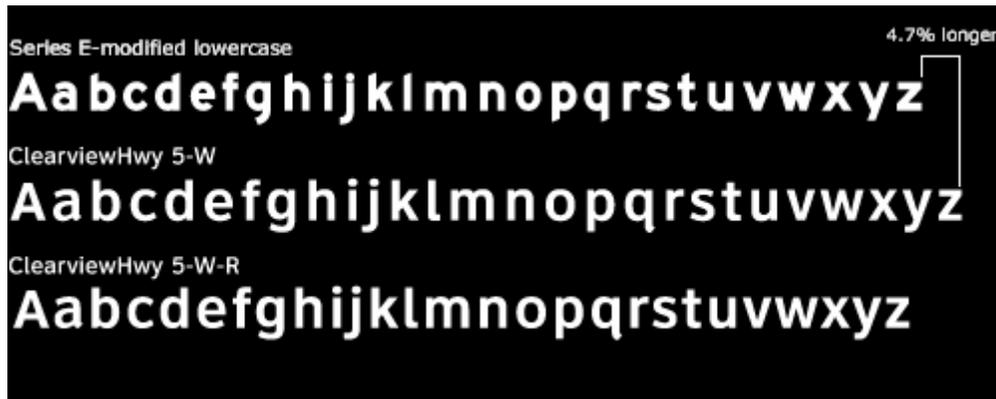
Fire Danger Signs

Joel McCarroll passed out pictures of a forest service sign from the Deschutes County Fire Protection District No. 2 that has a fire danger color coded scale and fire district rider. They're requesting to put up in the operating right-of-way along the state highway leaving Bend and heading south. He wanted feedback as to whether this should be permitted. Ed Fischer said he thought these signs look fine where they are, outside the ranger's office or the fire district's office and can be maintained, moving the arrow on a regular basis -- generally not on the right-of-way. Greg Stellmach said there are some

smaller versions with a white background in or near the highway right-of-way. Ed would prefer they stay where they are today, where the fire danger level can be updated on a daily basis. He would not want to see a proliferation of the signs to the degree where the danger level is not updated. He might consider cases where there's a signed agreement that makes the responsibility that of the fire district to update the signs as needed. Breakaway posts would be needed. The signs would have to be installed and maintained by the fire districts. Having the signs away from the fire district office also makes them vulnerable to kids messing with the scale. Cindy Schmitt warned there could be a desire to delineate the boundaries of each district's entire fire danger area if the riders are allowed. This will be taken up at the next ODOT Region Traffic Managers meeting.

Clearview Font Presentation

Greg Stellmach presented a demonstration of the [Clearview](#) font developed to increase legibility and reduce overflow of highway sign legends. ODOT is not pushing or promoting it but since FHWA has given it [interim approval](#) last September, Ed Fischer wanted the OTCDC informed about the font. Further information can be found on the interim approval link above. ODOT has no plans to experiment yet but is willing to do so. Possible projects were briefly discussed.



Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Next Meeting Date

The committee will reconvene in Gleneden Beach on Monday, September 19th, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the [ACTS Oregon Safety Conference](#) at the Salishan Lodge.

From Salem, follow the signs to the Ocean Beaches going west on HWY 22. Follow Hwy 22 until it merges with Hwy 18 heading toward Lincoln City. At the junction of Hwy 18 and Hwy 101, go south on Hwy 101 through Lincoln City. Salishan is located three miles beyond the Lincoln City limits on the south side of Siletz Bay.