

## Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

November 21, 2003

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Marion County Public Works, Salem, Oregon**

Members Present: Joseph Marek, Chair, Clackamas County; Eric Niemeyer, Vice-Chair, Jackson County; Charles Radosta, ITE/Kittelton & Associates; Ed Fischer, Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer; Randall Wooley, City of Beaverton; Bill Ciz, ODOT Region 1; Rob Burchfield, City of Portland; Cynthia Schmitt, Marion County

Members Absent: Robin Lewis, City of Bend; Jim Rentz, OSP

Others Present: Massoud Saberian, Doug Bish, Paul Davis, Greg Stellmach, Tim Burks, Julia Wellner, June Ross, ODOT Traffic Management Section; Ed Chastain, Lane County; Kevin Hottmann, Terry Hockett, City of Salem; Robert Morast, Washington County; David Fulton, Capitol Enterprises & Engineering; Bill Marshall, President Eltec; Brian Genovese, John Emmons, Tom Larsen, City of Eugene; Rick Braden, Henry Mackenroth, Oregon State Parks; Brian Barnett, City of Springfield; Troy Costales, ODOT Transportation Safety Division;

#### **Introduction – Additional Agenda Items – Approval of October 15, 2003 Meeting Minutes**

Chairperson Joseph Marek called the meeting to order. The committee and other attendees introduced themselves. Eric Niemeyer made a motion to approve the [October](#) 15 Meeting Minutes. Randall Wooley seconded. Minutes were approved.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **[House Bill 2661](#)**

Ed Fischer gave the committee an update on HB 2661. Ed said that ODOT must develop OARs to provide a process for ODOT to follow in establishing higher speed limits on I-5 and I-84. There is a debate centering around how many stages this will take. There is also concern that this will be a contentious issue with the public and the Transportation Commission.

The plan is to get a draft together through public input and use of the Speed Zone Review Panel, which will receive public testimony and oversee the four public hearings representing the major corridors of Interstate 5 and Interstate 84. The Speed Zone Review Panel will then make a recommendation for final approval by the Oregon Transportation Commission.

Ed told the committee that ODOT will be compiling and analyzing information including speed data, crash data, truck volume, vehicle volume and roadway characteristics. This will take several months.

Traffic Management will send a draft OAR to Brenda Trump, who will send the OAR to small businesses and interested parties for comment. The process will continue with public hearings and finally an approved OAR defining the process by April. A new process then begins with collection of information which will begin in April. Changes are expected to be completed by July or August.

Ed has asked the Attorney General's office if the speed limits could be changed internally through a speed zone order. But the Attorney General's office decision was that the term "by rule" used in HB 2661 means that the speeds must be listed in the OARs. Ed's response was the same wording has been in previous law and we wrote all earlier speed zone orders under that authority. If we had to list all of the speed zones that we were doing it would be literally thousands of pages and would be a constant process of updating the OARs. It could take an additional 8 months or more to get out each OAR. Ed was optimistic that the issue can be worked out.

### **Sign Policy & Guidelines Update (Abrupt Edge Sign)**

Julia Welner, submitted a new policy for committee approval regarding the new roll-up centered placards on abrupt edge signs, similar to the current abrupt edge signs.

Decision – Ed Fischer made a motion that the new roll-up version of the abrupt edge signs with all three placards be approved by the committee, similar to the already existing abrupt edge sign, and delete the rule that it's only allowed on four lane installations. Charles Radosta seconded. Motion passed unanimously

### **Senate Bill 179 (School Speed Zones)**

Doug Bish introduced Troy Costales, the manager of the Transportation Safety Division. Troy, told the Committee that Senate Bill 179 originated as an ODOT Highway Division bill requesting the Legislature to amend the language and definition of when "Children are Present". Chairman Rick Metzger, along with Senators Bruce Starr and Roger Beyer, asked Troy to form a team to define what the senators wanted to see in the school zone law. Starr wanted to eliminate any potential confusion to the driver about when it is necessary to slow down . Beyer was concerned about school zones in higher speed roads in areas where a school zone is hidden from sight due to a corner or trees and not enough time to slow down. There were also concerns about schools being used by children and sports teams in the off hours and on weekends. The senators asked that Troy return with a bill that clearly outlined a driver's responsibility on both the higher and lower speed roads.

The question is why have 20 MPH school zoning 24 hours a day in a residential or downtown area but not 20 MPH on lower speed roads where you are likely to see kids? He also told the group that a different legislative committee chose not to fix the double fine flaw in the bill. Troy said using the phrase "school days" or "weekdays" will cause confusion.

Troy encouraged the group to get the bill fixed in a future legislative session. There was doubt that trying to get the bill through a special session would work. Rob Burchfield suggested that they add the continued use of flashers in locations that already exist. He also added that the double fines should be removed to clean the bill up. It was also discussed that if double fines were to remain, they should be all or none and if the penalty is to continue, it should include all school zones.

Joe Marek stated that the committee needs to explore the compatibility between allowing both the flashers in areas that already have them and the proposed "at all times" law. The other idea was to remove the double fine provision totally. Rob added that there are two options: either designate the

school zones to be in effect at all times, or add the option of allowing flashers for school zones 30 MPH and under.

The Committee then went through the "Questions Generated by Bill 179" list. Everyone on the committee agreed that most of the questions were satisfactory as written with the exception of the following changes:

- Questions 4, 5, and 7 were completely omitted from the list.
- Question 6, omit the last sentence. Only one rider should be used.
- Question 13, is okay, pending possible action by the Legislature.
- Question 14, omit the first sentence, "The preference would be to only operate the lights when children are arriving and leaving and then only in conjunction with "Double Fines When Flashing." Also, omit the second and third paragraph. And change the word "recommended" to "allowed" in the first sentence of the last paragraph. Omit the rest of the sentence.

Concerning the language, Doug Bish pointed out that it was the consensus of the committee that it should read "at all times." Another important point was cleaning up the language pertaining to the flashing beacons and the signs which now say "when flashing or when children are present". A guest at the meeting suggested that all school zones should be eliminated altogether and replaced with a standard 20 MPH zone. It was then brought up that this idea would not meet code, would de-emphasize the importance of a school zone and cause a public outcry, and many current speed zone orders would have to be changed.

It was then discussed that it would be advantageous for a pair of OTDC Committee members to join the school zone task force. Randall Wooley and Cynthia Schmitt volunteered to join the subcommittee. After further discussion, the committee brought up their concerns about the double fines vs. flashers. It was suggested that the double fines are going to be too high and there may be some political fallout as soon as someone gets a \$350.00 ticket in a school zone at two in the morning. The committee agreed to hand the issue over to the Legislature so they can decide.

Ed suggested that the committee should give the LOC a heads-up about bringing this subject to the emergency session. Cynthia will talk with Ed further about the flashing lights issue and the double fines before contacting John Oshel of the LOC.

### **Rail Safety - New OAR**

Ed summarized the action taken so far including a recommendation in advance of the OTC meeting that they should pass the OAR. Ed also received four concerns by the City of Portland about why more time is needed to consider the OAR. Ed summarized Portland's concerns along with the concerns from ODOT. Of the four concerns, ODOT had no problem proceeding with three of them. The fourth point concerning pavement marking was an issue, however. Ed asked Rob if a meeting had been set up between the City of Portland and Claudia Howells of ODOT. Rob Burchfield told the committee that they are still planning to set up a meeting, but an issue of greater importance are the old railroad tracks no longer in service.

Rob also said that ODOT's Rail Section has had a difficult time in requiring the railroads to remove the old tracks. There was also concern among committee members regarding the one foot distance between the railroad signal gate and the stripe. Ed told the committee that he would take this issue back to the Rail Section for further discussion and as a result, it should be easier to modify the OAR.

## **OTCDC Chairperson & Vice Chairperson**

Robin Lewis was nominated as the Chairperson.

Decision – Rob Burchfield moved to elect Robin Lewis as Chairperson of the OTCDC. Bill Ciz seconded it. Motion pass unanimously.

Eric Niemeyer nominated Cynthia Schmitt as vice chair. Cynthia withdrew her name from consideration as she had previously served and nominated Eric.

Decision – Cynthia Schmitt moved to elect Eric Niemeyer as vice-chairperson of the OTCDC. Charles Radosta second it. Motion passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Red light Running Camera (RLR)**

June Ross handed out a draft of the Red Light Running (RLR) Camera Guidelines. She then explained to the group that the original guidelines were made for all cities with a population over 30,000 and the City of Newberg to give them guidance when considering red light cameras on their own signals and also some additional guidelines and requirements for cameras to be installed on state highway signals. The 2003 legislature passed SB 764 which makes changes to the requirement to allow:

- up to 12 cameras for cities with populations over 300,000.
- up to 8 cameras for cities with populations over 30,000 and Newberg
- requirement that yellow times had to be at least as long as standards recommended by ITE

The new draft Guidelines reflects these changes. ODOT is working with Newberg to add cameras to signals on state highways, and signals maintained and operated by ODOT. June asked the committee to review revisions on page 6. The changes clarify the information that should be included in the reprint which is the basis for determining if a red light running camera should be installed at a traffic signal or a state highway.

Rob Burchfield, suggested that the word "independent" should be taken out. Ed asked "what was different about the italics?" June answered that changes were made to include operational issues and public information program. She also changed no. 2 to read, "statement of consistency with operational considerations" in order to change some of the tried language from "shall" to "should". It was suggested that the footnote citing other means that should be prior to installing a RLR camera be revised from "retiming the signal" to "assure the signal timing is appropriate for traffic volume, speed, and specific intersection design elements."

Ed asked to sit down at a later date with Randall Wooley and Rob Burchfield to learn more, as both have considerable experience with red light cameras in their municipalities. Ed told the committee that ODOT wants to incur no costs or liability. The cities using red light cameras on state highways where ODOT is operating and maintaining the signal will have to reimburse ODOT for any court cost, or time ODOT employees use for testifying in court.

There was discussion about the ITE equation included in the guidelines including its completeness and the need to include information on red clearance time. June will investigate this and revise the draft guidelines as appropriate.

June will return to the next meeting with a revised document

### **No Passing Zone**

Eric Niemeyer asked the committee for feedback on developing a policy for marking no passing striping through the approach of an intersection on a county road. The idea was rejected once by ODOT already. Ed Fischer encouraged Eric to bring it up again as there is more flexibility than there once was.

Rob pointed out that it needs to be done on a case by case basis. It was then discussed that this could become a liability issue if it isn't instituted at all intersections.

### **Future Meeting**

The next meeting will be held January 16, 2004 at [Marion County Public Works](#).

The meeting adjourned at 12:18.