

# OTCDC Meeting Minutes

## September 17, 1999

**Members Present:** Mike Coleman for Rob Burchfield, City of Portland; Ed Fischer, Secretary, ODOT Traffic Engineer; Gary Judd, Deschutes County; Gary Ludeke, Chair, City of Eugene; Joseph Marek, Clackamas County; Charles Radosta, ITE/Kittelsohn & Associates; Lt Gary Miller for Lt. Gordon Renskers, OSP; Mike Wilson, City of Bend; Stephen Wilson, ODOT Region 4

**Other Members Absent:** Cynthia Schmitt, Marion County

**Others Present:** Lew Garrison, City of Salem, Terry Hockett, Salem Public Works; Tori Kinne, FHWA; Robert Morast, Washington County; Orville Gaylor, Doug Bish, and June Ross, ODOT Traffic Management Section

### Approval of July Meeting Minutes

The July 16, 1999 meeting minutes were approved without dissent and minor changes to the agenda noted.

### Old Business

#### **Update Crosswalk Guidelines**

Doug Bish handed out copies of a draft policy on crosswalk lines for an updated Traffic Line Manual for discussion. He noted previous policy allowed these lines only at signalized or stop-controlled intersections on state highways; but that we had no criteria for mid-block crossings, uncontrolled intersections and slip lanes. Doug then passed out draft copies of Criteria for Establishing Marked Crosswalks on State Highways and discussed previous policy and reason for the proposed criteria. He indicated that previous policy didn't allow for slip lane crosswalks when at times we may have wanted to mark a crosswalk. The last criteria was for longitudinal markings. Steve Wilson suggested an illustration of "Slip Lanes" should be added to the criteria. Committee consensus was to make that change. Doug explained the difference between required and optional criteria.

Pedestrian volume criteria was discussed. The ITE volume thresholds are suggested but the volume criteria was left somewhat vague because smaller volumes may be necessary for smaller jurisdictions.

Ed Fischer emphasized they are still just draft and we do want input, preferably within two weeks. He said that the Traffic Management Section was always interested in suggestions for improving.

Mike Coleman asked if the Traffic Section Manual is new and Doug explained that it is not entirely new, created in 1997, but getting revisions to improve it. The impact of allowing for crosswalks under the proposed new criteria was discussed extensively. Safety, maintenance costs and legal liability issues were discussed. Installation of numerous longitudinal crosswalks by local jurisdictions without approval was discussed. It was suggested that "No" was still a viable answer to those who do request longitudinal crosswalks. Ed said that without being able to point to a specific policy the State may be ignored. Joe Marek added the other possible outcome was having political pressure result in a mandate to allow crosswalks without any specific criteria. The intent is to require some kind of engineering investigation with some reasonable criteria that prevents wholesale installation. Doug was asked about a study Tom Lancaster was doing on crosswalks in Bend. Safety issues and pedestrian expectations were thoroughly discussed.

Gary Ludeke asked if signing was being handled separately. Signing policy regarding crosswalks was discussed. Orville said any mid-block crossing was supposed to be signed. It was requested that the State emphasize that the strong yellow green signs were only for school crossings on state highways. The Federal Register originally allowed for schools, and for bike/pedestrian crossings. Yellow signs are no longer being installed for school zones. Yellow-green signs are being used on all new installations and changed out on a replacement basis in current locations. Use of in pavement flashers was asked about. The state is waiting for results of studies before trying.

Doug passed out another document on striping crosswalk plans used by cities in Oregon and Washington. He asked for input on Committee preference for striping width and gaps. Gary noted the still experimental nature of gaps and not sure yet whether paint is being saved depending on vehicle tracking under various road configurations. Doug said ODOT currently just uses the transverse markings. Our standard for roundabouts will be continental (longitudinal) marking. He said the Region Traffic Managers like Sale's standard policy of using three variations— school are continental, intersection are transverse, and mid-block are ladder.

### **Draft Traffic Signal Policy and Guidelines**

Ed Fischer, filling in for Rick Wood, mentioned cancellation of the signal subcommittee scheduled for the afternoon. It will be rescheduled.

### **Pedestrian Flags**

Pictures of orange colored Pedestrian Flags being used by pedestrians to cross a 4-lane highway in Lincoln City were distributed. Initial ODOT reaction was dismissive but the seriousness of the jurisdictions that want to use them requires more thought. Section 6 of MUTCD appears to consider these traffic control devices which means each user is required to be properly trained. Tori Kinne said Lincoln City politicians borrowed the idea from other jurisdictions. City says the flags are not traffic control devices, but "visibility aides". Ed said it will probably come down to interpretation of whether they are traffic control devices by FHWA. If they are declared traffic control devices, they must go because they're illegal. Color may be major factor. Orville said we may need to contact Oregon's Attorney General. He said current law says that anything that might be used to control traffic is a traffic control device. I reiterated ODOT plans to wait for FHWA determination. If determined to be traffic control

devices, they will be removed. If not, may require city indemnification. It was asked why they aren't taken out until FHWA rules so they don't spread and become accepted prior to determination of what they are classed as. Lieutenant Gary Miller asked if the flags worked. It would be difficult to go out and remove them if it appears they do. It seems it varies. Some stop, some don't. This can increase accident risk. Ed will keep the Committee posted on FHWA action. Many conversations have been had with Lincoln City and in line with ODOT trying to be kinder and gentler, they haven't taken the signs down in the interim. Ed noted that a signal is scheduled to go in at illustrated location soon.

### **Revision to OAR Division 20 Update**

After a break, Ed Fischer handed out copies of the revision. He said ODOT has been working on this as a result of Access Management Advisory Committee need for revised rules relative to access management— One of the issues that came up as a result was the process for approving new traffic signal installations. Past practice, prior to the OAR adoption process, was using internal desk manuals, and documents, and just applying the MUTCD. There was a common knowledge among the traffic community about how to get signals approved for use on highway. In OAR adoption process Hearing November 4 from 9:00-noon in Room 122 of the Transportation Building in Salem. The process is leading to OTC adoption in a December-February time frame. Ed asked for comments/questions.

Regarding Rule J, it was asked what happens if its not warranted after 3 years. There was discussion of the different warrant requirements for highway sponsored construction versus construction to accommodate additional traffic from public or private development. In the end the intention would be to take down signal cross arm and heads within a few months in rare cases of warrants not being met.

Doug noted that Rules H & I are fairly new to Traffic and came out of the access management revision impetus. Was supposed to be separate from OAR Division 50.

It was questioned whether requirement was still in place to require consideration of less restrictive solutions over and above warrant analysis. Ed asked again for any comments to him or Rick Wood prior to the November 4 hearing.

### **Sign Policy and Guidelines Update**

Orville distributed handout and discussed policy for use of sign flag boards. This will reserve use of orange flag boards for construction and maintenance only. He clarified the use of the Stop Ahead sign created for use by pilot cars for wide/oversized loads towed through a tunnel or other restricted width section of highway and that a follow-up vehicle would actually carry the Stop sign.

Gary Judd Moved we approve new signs Orville presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **Revision to VMS Guidelines**

June passed out revision to issue explanation sheet for agenda item, and gave background of earliest approval of brief guidelines in 1995, later requests for differing uses of various messa

signs, and what changes are planned for the latest revision.

Gary Judd asked about requirement about not displaying PSA at least an hour after another message. Orville explained that it was to be sure any traffic after any other event is cleared out prior to being PSA use. Ed acknowledge it to be somewhat arbitrary but a generally good idea. Further discussion ensued.

Specifically allowing truck mounted variable message signs in the portable variable message signs supplement was recommended and generally approved but not yet added to the revision under discussion.

Steve Wilson moved adoption of the revised VMS written policy. It was seconded, and approved unanimously.

### **Non Agenda Items**

There were no non-agenda items.

Next Meeting will be held on November 19th, 1999, 9:00 a.m. at Marion County Public Works, 5155 Silverton Road, Salem Oregon.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

**To suggest agenda items or for further information regarding Committee meetings, please contact [Paul Davis](#) of ODOT at (503)986-3609.**

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