

Vision Zero Council

10.7.21 Meeting Minutes

2:30pm – 4:00pm

This virtual public meeting was hosted on Zoom.

Meeting was called to order at 2:30pm

The following Council Members were present: Chairman Garrett Eucalitto – DOT, Jonathan Slifka - Department of Aging and Disability Services, Kevin Manzolillo – DESPP, Commissioner Sibongile Magubane – DMV, Susan Logan – DPH, Laura Stefon – SDE, Jackie McMahon – State’s Attorney’s Office

Absent Commissioner Beth Bye – Office of Early Childhood

Other Attendees: Aaron Swanson, Diana Palmer, CT-N, Douglas Hausladen, Caitlin Palmer, Neil Olinski, Katherine Grady, Edward McKeon, Alec Slatky, Roger Krahn, Sarah Roy, Benjamin Borecki, Richard Donovan, Thomas Regan-Lefebvre, Jennifer Lacker, Kate Rozen, Craig Yannes, Mark Carlino, Brian Kent, Eric Tang, Bruce Donald, Kevin Charland, Gannon Long, Robert Dickinson, Sandeep Aysola, Joseph Balskus, Kaethe Podgorski, Kate Rattan, Michael Kowalczyk, Amy Watkins, Adam Weber, Roland Lemar, Robin Comey, Alex Dahlem and Aaron Goode.

- Deputy Commissioner Eucalitto – adopt minutes from the last meeting. Moved by Jon Slifka and second by Kevin Manzolillo all in favor one abstention
- New member of the council from the Chief State’s Attorney’s office Jackie McMahon. All council members quick introductions. DOT, DESPP, DPH, ADS, DMV, State’s Attorney’s Office, SDE. Commissioner Bye unable to join us.
- Each Agency presentation: order DOT by Diana Palmer, DESPP, ADS, SDE, State’s Attorney (interrupted by a fire alarm), DPH, DMV and back to State’s Attorney.
- Garrett asked if any council members have questions, they did not, slides from the presentations will be posted on the website.
- Proposed Mission Statement, draft on the screen that was sent to the council members in advance of this meeting. Do you need time to comment? Or any suggested edits/changes.
- Susan Logan – wants more time to review, Aaron will send out to the members again and by the time we meet again, please send back any proposed edits, Aaron will provide a deadline for comments. He will circulate a new draft and we will have a discussion before adopting at the next meeting.
- Next Agenda Item – Subcommittees, good opportunity to involve the public and organizations.
- Proposed areas of focus for the subcommittees the 5 E’s: Engineering; Enforcement; Education; Emergency Medical Services; and Equity. As council members we don’t have to sit on a subcommittee but if we have people with expertise in our agencies they should be involved in the appropriate committees. Example Engineering we will want our traffic and safety engineers to participate, Enforcement State police may have someone who wants to participate. Education broader focus including ad campaigns and education for different communities. We

can also have topical experts, members of the public and other stakeholder organizations sit on these subcommittees.

- Council comments: Commissioner Magubane very happy to see equity included on this list. Susan Logan equity and evaluation both important. Jon Slifka good suggestion to not to have us sit on subcommittees, but representation from the aging and disability community on all of these subcommittees.
- Garrett we will move forward with the 5 E's as the subcommittees to start, my proposal for advancing recruitment, we will send an email to the Council reiterating what the 5 E's are, asking you for names of people from your agencies who may want to participate on these subcommittees to advise us. We also will go outside of state government and to other state agencies who are not already participating on this Council. And we will recruit members of the public through our VZC website, we will have method on there for members of the public to submit their information, indicating which subcommittee they would like to sit on. We will do a press release to let people know we will be doing this recruitment. We will use social media as well.
- Discussion on our website which will be used for recruitment for the subcommittees. Aaron and Diana have been working with the DOT IT team. It is basically designed, will house meeting related materials and we will create a form for public involvement. We will email to the council members once the website is ready. Once it is live we will email the link to all who registered for this meeting and the previous meeting. We have a vision zero email address ctvisionzero@ct.gov
- Deadlines: next meeting will be in November and then another meeting in January since we have statutory deadlines coming up. We will share some drafts of things in advance with the council members. Once we have subcommittees and members we will set up meetings for those. Once we start having those we will work to craft a policy as directed by the General Assembly in February of 2022. This first policy won't be as robust as they will be in the future. This will lay the framework for how we as a state look to achieve Zero Deaths and injuries on our roadways.
- Susan Logan – I was wondering about the policies? Do we have existing policies in place that the subcommittees will be looking at? Or we will be looking at it as a group? Garrett we have to submit to the General Assembly what our policy should be. The subcommittees will be key in addressing this. And looking at existing policies.

Public Comment

- Aaron first question from Gannon Long: Who are the audiences for these ads, and where are they being distributed? Are you able to use social media or other marketing to put these ads in front of people who are more likely to be (reckless) drivers? Garrett in our highway safety plan we look at who are the ones who are causing many of the crashes or doing unsafe behavior on our roadways. Our ads are targeted towards those individuals. We use regular broadcast television, billboards, social media push which is targeted towards males age 18-34, we also have bilingual advertisements, we also purchase social media and push it on people's feeds. (most people don't follow our pages).
- Next question from Sandeep Aysola: Is DOT's goal only zero fatal crashes? What about serious injuries? Garrett it is zero fatalities and zero serious injuries

- Alex Slatky from AAA Northeast, Have you thought about including a timeframe, a target date for the elimination of fatalities and serious injuries in that mission statement? I know that is something a lot of other vision zero communities do. Garrett that is a great comment, we will take that under advisement as we go back at look at the mission statement. If you have other examples of what other states or municipalities have done on Vision Zero, please send them our way. Aaron as a part of the strategic Highway safety plan document some goals were selected so we will need to look at that and make sure we are in concert with that.
- Sarah Roy - There is a National walk & bike to school initiative. It would be great if State Education leaders would get involved with this program and work with Local school districts to implement this program in their communities. www.walkbiketoschool.org Laura – I had not heard of this before but I made a note of it and it is something I am going to take a look at.
- Gannon Long - For Laura: Is DOE researching Safe Routes to Schools programs? Bus safety is important, but vehicle drivers speeding on roads are much riskier to kids overall, than kids' activities inside of the bus. Laura – I don't disagree with that, this VZC is our first foray into transportation safety in how it relates to schools, we don't have anything to do with busing but we are going to be looking into these things.
- Gannon Long - For Susan: Before Hartford had scooter share, public health advocates (including CCMC) warned that they would be dangerous for users and lead to an increase of injuries. We learned earlier today that Hartford's scooters get on average 4 rides a day each - one of the highest use rates in the country. Have you noted a corresponding increase in injuries? Or does early data suggest those fears were unfounded? Susan – that is something we haven't look at it this point. We can look at emergency department data to see how they were injured. We can look to see if there is anything related to that. Can put up on the website that is being developed.
- Sandeep Aysola - I've seen this DUI cases table before. Is there a reason the no. of guilty cases has been going down year over year, both as a total and %? What are the challenges prosecutors have in finding someone guilty? Jackie – lots of factors and diversionary programs. The total number of cases has gone down. I would have to do some math to determine if the percentage of not guilty has changed or not. Maybe our enforcement efforts are having a deterrent effect. DUI cases have very unique issues associated with them, scientific issues that come into play. We are working on it. Garrett – the cannabis legalization bill had lots of changes to the DUI statutes so it will be interesting to see the changes that we see over the next couple years and how that changes it. Jackie – the pandemic is showing us odd statistics. A lot of our court cases have been delayed due to court closures.
- Kate Rozen – Thrilled to see engineering first
- Kate Rozen – when will the next round of Community Connectivity Grant funding open? Garrett our team is looking at that now. Our team is looking to see what worked and what hasn't worked, we want to see more construction happening and see more money going out the door. Since we have dedicated funding for the next two years.
- Kate Rattan - will education include the siting of schools to enable walking to school, safe routes to school, school bus illegal passing, and site/walkshed access for bikes and pedestrians? Laura – siting of schools does not fall under our jurisdiction, that falls under OPM/School Construction there are statutes around the maximum amount of distance a child can be required to walk to school. We can add some of those issues into PSA ad campaigning.

- Adam Weber - To DMV: Will you explore using the virtual weigh station technology to identify and issue citations to commercial vehicles on the Merritt Parkway? Cmr. Magubane I will add that to the list of follow ups
- Jennifer Lacker - Our local Traffic Authority- the Police Commission continues to state that cyclists do not belong on our busy roads and that our smaller roads are too narrow for them. We have seen a tremendous increase in cycling and electric bike users as well as the new scooters. Garrett – you can email myself or Aaron or Diana after this and we would be happy to get some more information from you after this about which community and which roads because there are some roads that are limited access highways but bikes are considered vehicles and can travel on our roadways.
- Gannon Long – thank you on Q1 - glad to hear you are targeting riskier demographics of drivers with social ads. Q2: Great! Glad to hear Dept of Education is here and jumping into the issues. thank you. on Q3: Thanks. Anecdotal and early evidence/ minimal reports of crashing suggest the e-scooters with 15 mph limit inside the city limits (with geo fencing to keep users off the highway) are quite safe.
- Sandeep Aysola - I'm calling in behalf of ITE and we are researching this issue. But, the reason I asked the DUI question is because we are looking to see how effective laws could be towards deterrence. Because lack of prosecution makes the job of plan-engineers even more complicated. Just a comment. Jackie – I am happy to talk to you more about this
- Sibongile Magubane – Merritt parkway is not going to be the first place we are going to put the virtual weight station, I think first it is going on 91 but I need to check back in with my team.
- Anonymous Attendee - Is there a plan for MPO or COG involvement as the committee moves forward? Garrett – definitely, as the statute is drafted only state agencies can serve on the council so that is the make up but Cogs and mpos are going to be sent an email to request their participation in the subcommittees just like our traffic safety partners and the public.
- Raised Hand Gannon Long – with operation fuel. Couple of comments: excited about the website and email address. We can't see who is on the meeting, which is difficult, it is possible to see all the panelists. Signals in order to get a walk signal you have to press a beg button to request the light, at certain intersections this is dangerous. Sisson Ave at highway exit ramp and then you are waiting on a median for a second walk signal, this is very dangerous. What would it look like to close some of those highway exit ramps across the state. Where there is just so many exits that there are so many cars that it makes it dangerous for pedestrians. DOT and DMV should collaborate on this. The other thing post covid there were a number of intersections where we did automatic intersections at particularly dangerous intersections Charter Oak and Main street, instead of leaving those up they were reverted back to beg buttons. I think this is important for you to consider. Gannonlong@gmail.com think of how you can support cities in getting automatic pedestrian signals and how you can reduce the death and danger rate at highway exit ramps in cities. Hartford's complete streets leader had retired, there is a meeting next week on 10/12 at 1:30pm we would love to see DOT folks attending. Garrett – I will look at those intersections.
- Aaron Goode - Is OSTA represented on the Council? Under PA 21-28 they now have authority to consider bicycle pedestrian safety and accessibility impacts of major traffic generator projects. Garrett – no but I talked to him almost every day or so. OSTA reports directly to the Commissioner's Office.

- Neil Olinski - Related to the school siting comment, I think that OPM and land use policy in general should be at the table so that more mixed-use, walkable, and transit-oriented neighborhoods can be built over time. This could help reduce the need for driving for all trips. Garrett – we will reach out to OPM.
- Kate Rattan – verbal if it is reasonable under the statute consider reaching out to OPM for a participating member. They are also responsible for citing schools and the plans of conservation and development for the state. Land use and housing are both very large challenges as transportation planners.
- Edward McKeon - Great questions Gannon Long. In terms of walk signals, can we consider advocate for putting notification of walk signals on the actual traffic light so that drivers know when the walk signal is operable. As a pedestrian in Middletown, I find the driver's eyeline is never directed toward looking at a walk signal. It makes right on red very dangerous.

Garrett thank you to the council members and all others for joining us today. I am going to move that we adjourn 4:08pm