

Motor Carrier Advisory Council
Microsoft Teams Meeting
June 24, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Chris Smith, Cindy Zuerblis, Joe Sculley, Jean Cronin, Chris Herb, Joan Nichols, Mathieu Asselin, Paul Farrell, Michaela Rosenberger, Iliana Rodriguez, Michelle Givens, Vanita Smith, Donald Braman, Kelly O’Connell, Edward Brickner, Gene Catania, John Getsie, Adam Grippo, Audrey Hall, Chris Henry, David Hiscox, Brandon O’Brien, Eyvonne Parker Bair, Sandi Bianco, Don Bridge, Steve Shore

- I. **Call to Order** – Motor Carrier Advisory Council (MCAC) Chairman Christopher Smith called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and informed participants the meeting was being recorded.
- II. **Chairman’s Remarks** – Chairman Smith informed the attendees that Sharon Geanuracos, Joe Ciotto, and Lt. Donald Bridge, have retired. Their replacements are as follows: Eyvonne Parker-Bair for Sharon, and Cindy Zuberlis for Joe. Lt. Bridge’s position has not yet been filled.
- III. **Approval of the February 4, 2021 Minutes** – Chairman Smith asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There weren’t any requests for changes. Vanita Smith motioned to approve the minutes, and Cindy Zuerblis seconded the motion.
- IV. **Review of the Legislative Session of the General Assembly** - Chairman Smith began with the state agencies.

DMV –

- Eyvonne Parker-Bair turned over the update to Attorney Michelle Givens who briefly touched on statutes 14-25C (student transportation vehicles), 14-29 (increased insurance limits), 14-44 (drug & alcohol clearinghouse), 14-44K sec.15, 14-44 sec.16 (commercial learner’s permit) 14-44K sec 17 (human trafficking, and 14-276a sec 30,31(distance learning for school bus and STV operators.
- A Law Enforcement Bulletin will be sent explaining the legislative changes.

DESPP – Sergeant Asselin reported that some troopers are attending truck training.

DEEP- Paul Farrell

- Reported that the two legislative initiatives DEEP proposed, (TCI) and adopting CA regulatory standards for HDD vehicles), did not pass. He is not sure what will happen with TCI next session.
- Provided updates on grant programs related to electric vehicle infrastructure.
- Joe Sculley asked Mr. Farrell about the VW “thing” with regard to whether or not clean, newer diesel vehicles will be eligible. Mr. Farrell said all projects will be accepted/analyzed. DEEP is finalizing scoring criteria and dollar amounts available.

DOT – David Hiscox and Don Braman

- Mr. Hiscox discussed proposed legislation re; statutes concerning going over a bridge with posted weight limits. Don Braman spoke about permit enhancements.

Motor Carrier Industries

Connecticut Bus Association/CT School Transportation Association – Jean Cronin

- The Bus Association is still waiting for motor bus regulation revisions from DOT.
- They are working with DOT on bus routes.
- Asked about the motor bus certification pending lawsuit. Ms. Cronin would like to work together with DOT while the lawsuit is working its way through the court system.
- There is concern about paratransit organizations and DOT re; opening up to Uber and Lyft. Ms. Cronin wants to make sure the same rules apply for all entities.
- UPASS program – would like better coordination between DOT and the industry.
- Electrification of buses – Would like DOT and DEEP to work with the bus industry.
- Expressed concern about Senate bill 931 and the impact on buses with regard to heaters and requirements. Paul Farrell from DEEP asked Ms. Cronin to send him information on the auxiliary heating issue.
- The industry supports the catalytic converter initiative and the increased insurance requirements.
- With regard to COSTA; they are looking forward to online background checks, they support online operator retraining, and are concerned about the Extend Stop Arm (section 8 of Senate Bill 231).

Energy Marketers Association – Chris Herb

- “Extreme” concerns over passage of the cannabis bill.
- The industry is already experiencing considerable tightness in the driver population.
- He stated, for the record, passage of the bill is likely to create additional pressure on the motor fuel side, affecting the availability of drivers.”
- Would like CT to convey to the Feds that the impairment of the driver, not what was in their system three to five weeks ago, is the issue.
- Asked that CT invest in a university study to create an impairment test that treats drivers fairly.
- Commented on grants from DEEP and asked Jean Cronin if she would like to discuss fuels that lower vehicle emissions.

Motor Transport Association of CT – Joe Sculley

- Pleased with the DOT industry friendly developments.
- Working with DRS on outreach to members.
- Would like DMV to allow CDL drivers to renew license online. Kelly O’Connell, from DMV, will look into this matter.
- Would like large fleets to have the ability to register their vehicles in house.
- Commented on VW grant; the association does not oppose electric vehicles but thinks the plan should be open to any vehicle power source that can improve emissions.
- With regard to Bill 931; respectfully submitted that, as written, the bill unintentionally accomplishes the opposite of what it is trying to do (there is not a definitive answer to what the emission reductions would be). Questioned why the bill is being rushed. Paul Farrell from DEEP would like to have an off line conversation about the mandates.

Shore Associates – Steve Shore

- Endorsed Joe Sculley’s comment about allowing large fleets to do their own registrations.
- Stated there are issues with various DMV systems that are not being coordinated i.e.; title lien issues and the CELTIC system. He would like an audit of the systems. Chairman Smith then asked if Mr. Shore communicated these short comings to the appropriate individuals at the DMV. Mr. Shore insists he has. Kelly O’Connell stated that she has been working with the vendor, and every time system was tested it worked fine.
- Mr. Shore asked for updates on the CT Mileage Tax Bill. Joe Scully informed him that the bill passed.

- Mr. Shore would like DRS to know that the IPC system currently being used is good, and the new system they are migrating to, which is a clone of the MA system, “is less than desirable to my input tax people.”

Connecticut Farm Bureau – Joan Nichols

- A few farmers had an issue when renewing vehicles that had a farm plate. Apparently, the tax exemption permit was missed and the vehicles were not renewed. The information will be passed on to the folks in the registration unit.

U.S. DOT Federal Motor Carrier Safety Association (FMCSA) – Chris Henry and Ed Brickner

- Chris Henry reported that the number of crashes in Connecticut is trending lower than in the rest of the country.
- He thanked Joe Sculley and the DMV for putting a stop to a bill that would have CDL permit holders put into a pre-trial diversionary program that would have been a violation of federal statute.
- Mr. Brickner reported on grant programs, moving forward with medical certificates, entry level driver requirements, and the electronic integration rule, which will take effect 6/23/25.

Innovative Technology Deployment/Commercial Vehicle Operations (ITD/CVO)- Iliana Rodriguez

- ITD – They are wrapping up requirements for the virtual weigh stations, and plan to issue an RFP late summer or early fall.
- CVO Portal – Gave stats, and reported that the dynamic buttons added to the portal are being tested.

Connecticut Motor Vehicle Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) – Don Bridge

- Reported on MCSAP grants and traffic enforcement.
- PRISM – IRP is working on this.
- If a company has a Federal Out of Service order they are not issued IRP plates. This also applies to regular commercial carriers.

V. Council Recommendations

- Chairman Smith stated that with regard to the progression of the virtual weigh station program, he wants to look at statute 14-270 which mandates the hours of the fixed

scales, and have everyone to think about how resources can be deployed more efficiently. He will be discussing this with agency leadership.

- Joe Scully asked the Chairman to explain his statement about deploying resources more efficiently.
- The Chairman explained that currently the statute mandates the days and number of shifts the weigh stations must be manned. With the virtual weigh stations, the focus will be on the carriers that are in violation. He also stated that he would like to have “a little more permissive wording” in 14-270, and there will be a transition period once the VWS go up and data comes in. When that happens the DMV will need flexibility to deploy limited staff more efficiently. In his opinion, it is something that would be helpful all the way across the board.
- Chairman Smith also explained that there is a problem filling positions. He will be having discussions with agency leadership.

VI. Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 2:09 pm.