

Motor Carrier Advisory Council
Microsoft Teams Meeting
June 22, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Chief Chris Smith, Sandra Bianco, John Getsie, Commissioner Tony Guerrero, Cindy Zuerblis, Michelle DiLone, Kelly O’Connell, Christopher Herb, Ed Brickner, John Blair, Jean Cronin, James, Polites, Lt. Evelyn Stender, Michele Moroni, Adam Grippio, Audrey Hall, Steve Shore, Donald Braman, Mark Dicocco, Paul Farrell, Eric Johnson, Bret McDaniel, Wade Packer, David Hiscox, Paul Kritzler, Jose Romero, Lt. Abraham Rosario, Megan Portfolio, Stacy Manware, Sgt. John Acampora, Patrick Mellon

- 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** – The Chairman acknowledged the appointment of Commissioner Guerrero as the new commissioner of the DMV, he also recognized the two new Deputy Commissioners Ben Arsenault and Millie Torres-Ferguson. Commissioner Guerrero acknowledged the council and stated he was looking forward to seeing the concerns that may come up and how they are addressed. Chief Smith also acknowledged Jim Polites who is the new Legislative Liaison and that he will be reporting on new legislation that will affect the Motor Carrier Industry.
- III. **Approval of the January 26, 2023, Minutes** – Chairman Smith asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes from the last meeting. There weren’t any requests for changes. David Hiscox motioned to approve the minutes, and Paul Farrell seconded the motion.
- IV. **Review of the Legislative Session of the General Assembly** - Chairman Smith began with the state agencies.

Dept. of Motor Vehicles, Legislative Review – Jim Polites

- No big showstoppers for DMV but a few things of interest were Agency Bill 994 Public Act 2340 some provisions worth mentioning was that they did move the date out for required driver record checks with the federal drug and alcohol clearing house for both CDL and CDP’s that was to keep on conformance with what the federal government was doing.

- Another provision was to prioritize CDL skills testing this is something that the Commissioner and the DMV team are very much aware of and are very much supportive of.
- Another issue that the legislators thought important enough to include was for DMV to look into the nationwide school bus driver shortage by February 2024 and report back to the Transportation Committee.
- Another legislation that was named was moving the CDL licensing period from four years to five years. This was not a DMV recommendation but was also in the legislation.
- Legislative Bill 6796 was passed and that was the discussion of the catalytic converter theft prevention. DMV and DESPP is named asking both agencies to continue efforts with other states to try to manage the catalytic converter black market issue.

Dept. of Economic and Community Development – No Attendee

Dept. of Emergency Services and Public Transportation – Sgt. John Acampora

- John added he is new to the group and has nothing to add at the moment. Looking forward to working with everyone in the future.

Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection- Paul Farrell

- No legislative updates from last session that would affect this group.
- One grant application that DEEP just submitted is for federal funding that would support the development of four hydrogen stations in Connecticut for medium and heavy-duty trucks and start moving away from fossil fuels and towards electrified and alternative fuels in the freight industry.
- EPA clean school bus program, the second round of funding for 2023 is open and will close on August 22 for anyone interested in participating in that. DEEP will be putting together a webinar in early July to provide information to interested parties.
- The second round is looking more at entire fleet conversions to 2025 buses or larger. These larger projects are easier to manage.
- A \$20 million dollar school bus grant program to fill the gaps for those who were awarded funds under the EPA Clean School Bus grant program.
- DEEP is required to develop another grant program for \$10 million dollars for medium and heavy-duty commercial vehicles. We are waiting to adopt the California emissions standards for medium and heavy-duty vehicles that are authorized under Public Act 22-25.
- DEEP will be proposing regulations to reduce tailpipe emissions for medium and heavy-duty vehicles that will make them 90% cleaner than the 2007 federal standards. If adopted this year, these regulations will be implemented with the 2027 model years. Full implementation probably 15 years after that. A rule that requires an increase component of vehicles produced by manufactures be electrified and that will depend on

the class of vehicle, the smaller the car the higher the percentage of electrification. No one is required to purchase these vehicles, but the requirement will be on the manufacturer to build them and offer them for sale.

- PURA has an open docket for medium and heavy-duty electric vehicle charging infrastructure charging in fracture that is similar to the light duty docket.

Dept. of Revenue Services – No Attendee

DOT – David Hiscox

- There is no legislation affecting commercial vehicles at this time.

Judicial – Stacey Manware

- Nothing to Report

UCONN – Eric Jackson

- Working in a project with truck parking in the state and finishing up the literature on that.
- Students working on a Commercial Vehicle study survey of drivers to try to understand some of their parking issues in the state.

Motor Carrier Industry

Connecticut Bus Association/CT School Transportation Association – Jean Cronin

- Jean thanked Commissioner Guerrera for attending the COSTA meeting this past week and for speaking to the group, everyone was happy to see him and welcomed his message.
- Acknowledged this being Jim Polites from DMV first session, he did a great job.
- Keeping an eye on the Vision Zero bill regarding open containers. We are following that closely to make sure it doesn't pick up passengers on the charter buses, the provision was removed from that bill before passage.
- DOT Bill 904 which expanded membership to what was the Connecticut Rail council its now the Connecticut Public Transportation council and expands membership to add public transit bus member.
- Livery changes, not impacting motor bus industry, more for limousines. They are watching section 32 for target reduction of CO2 emissions. The Commissioner of DOT will be setting up limits by October 1,2030 which will include new bus purchases. Legislation was passed last year that requires DOT to be purchasing zero emissions buses as of January 1, 2024. Electric buses do not operate so well on the commuter bus runs. Concerned about implications that the Department can't buy anymore diesel-powered vehicles after January 1. Met with DOT and voiced concerns.

- House Bill 5001, (IDD Bill) support services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DOT has lots of provisions for setting up local transportation services for these folks and we look forward to working with them on these provisions.
- COSTA and school bus industry. Senate Bill 1081 which ended up being DMV Senate Bill 994 GPS on school buses. This will allow DMV approved mobile electronic devices for navigation purposes on school buses. That will be effective July 1,2023. These devices need to be approved by the department before they can be installed into the school buses.
- DMV Study on school bus driver shortages and the CDL four to five year extension was not there provision it was brought up by some legislators but they are happy to work with them regarding these issues.
- Senate Bill 1154 that would allow the Commissioner of DMV to do background checks on school bus drivers at times of renewal. Not opposed to this but it may cause the background system to be inundated with requests and we don't want to leave delays or have drivers pulled off the road because they could not get their background checks done on time. If we were to have a system that retained finger-prints that would greatly help this situation.
- Bill 6796 regarding catalytic converter thefts anything that DMV and DESPP can do to reduce thefts would be great. These thefts are not only expensive but inconvenient because buses have to be taken out of service when they occur.
- DOT Bill 904 to increase penalties for commercial vehicles on the parkway. We were watching this closely because of the exemption in there for type 2 buses but that did retain.
- DOT carbon dioxide reduction targets school buses have a band aid to go all electric by 2030 for municipalities and 2044 for all other municipalities. Municipalities are not paying attention to this. Concerned that the deadlines will not be met by 2030, also not sure there is enough money to fund these buses they are approximately \$350,000 per bus so we will be working on this also.
- Working with Chris Smith and his staff to get school buses inspected by August 31. Also to have the school buses registered on line.

Connecticut Construction Industries Association – No Attendee

Connecticut Energy Marketers Association – Chris Herb

- Concerned for immigrants Russian and Ukrainian who are coming to take their CDL tests, they are passing the driving part of the test but because an interpreter is not allowed for the written part of the test many of them are failing the written part. Chris is looking for that to be changed and allow an interpreter to be allowed for the written tests as this is not helping the driver shortage in the nation.

- Written summary from Paul Farrell regarding the transition to the carb rule and what was written regarding it. Paul will provide an overview of the regs and timelines.

Connecticut Food Store Association – No Attendee

Connecticut Farm Bureau – No Attendee

Motor Transport Association of Connecticut – John Blair

- Acknowledged Chief Smith and the Commissioner for always being so supportive of MTAC
- Thanked officers who participated in the Truck Driving Championship. (Lt. Evelyn Stender and Insp. Courtney West). Also thanked everyone else from other state agencies who participated in the event
- Acknowledged that this was his first session. He started in October of last year, no major issues happened in the session for MTAC this session.
- Gave input regarding Red Light cameras and appreciated the legislature for helping out

Shore Associates – Steve Shore

- Nothing to report

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

- Chief Smith congratulated Ed Brickner on his new position as Division Administrator for the Connecticut offices of FMCSA.
- Ed commented on the Skill test information that was brought up by Chris Herb earlier in the meeting stating the 383.133 B5 specifically stated that interpreters are prohibited and neither the applicant nor administered or examiner may communicate in a language other than English during a skills test and that is not something that can be changed at a local level.

Innovative Technology Deployment/Commercial Vehicle Operations (ITD/CVO) – Kelly O’Connell

- Waiting to hear if the 2023 grant application that was submitted is approved or denied.
- Projects we are currently working on with other ITD grants are the Virtual weigh station and the truck parking information management system which are all moving forward.

Performance Registration Information System Management (PRISM) – Kelly O’Connell

- Automation of federal out of service, currently reviewing the technical aspects and looking at the data so we can match the records. We hope to have this completed by the end of August beginning of September and that will alleviate the manual process and the suspensions will be put out automatically.

Connecticut Motor Vehicle Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) – Lt. Stender

- CVSD is continuing to work on the Commercial Vehicle Safety plan. The following is some statistics on how we are effectively using that federal funding
- 10,000 commercial Vehicle Inspections since the start of January, with limited staff this is very impressive.
- Continued using the Drive wise program saving the industry approximately \$100,000 a month for the drive wise by-pass at the weigh stations, which equated to about 1000 hours saved for driver for not having to come into the stations
- Greenwich weigh station is up and running it's been a long time coming and were glad to have it open again
- DOT has installed some tire screening technology which is very innovative and has identified several flat tires in the last week.
- School Bus inspections the numbers are about 7900 inspections done, we are on point for where we should be in the year for that, there should be no issues in completing them all in the next two months.

V. Closing Statements

- Chairman Smith asked Commissioner Guerrero if he had any comments regarding the meeting. Commissioner Guerrero stated it was good to hear from the council members. He also addressed Chris Herb regarding the issue of immigrant CDL written testing.
- Chris Smith reminded the group that the purpose of the council is to make recommendations. Next meeting will take place four weeks after the beginning of the new 2024 session. He asked they email him with any recommendations.

Chairman Chris Smith -Motion to adjourn - Paul Farrell, so move motion, Cindy Zuerblis Second.

- The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.