

Vision Zero Council – Inaugural Meeting

8.19.21 Meeting Minutes

10:00am-12:00pm

This virtual public meeting was hosted on zoom.

Meeting was called to order at 10:02am

The following Council Members were present: Chairman Garrett Eucalitto – DOT, Jonathan Slifka - Department of Aging and Disability Services, Kevin Manzolillo – Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Commissioner Sibongile Magubane – Department of Motor Vehicles, Susan Logan – Department of Public Health, Commissioner Beth Bye – Office of Early Childhood.

Absent was: Laura Stefon – State Department of Education

Other Attendees: Aaron Swanson, Diana Palmer, Amy Lopez, CT-N, Melanie LaPenta, Thomas Wamser, Thomas Regan – Lefebvre, Kevin Burns, Anthony Cherolis, Craig Yannes, Kate Rozen, Kevin Manzolillo, Douglas Hausladen, Meghan Portfolio, Robert More, Robin Comey, Aaron Goode, Amy Watkins, Arpan Bagui, Cindy Harrison Kaethe Podgorski, Lorena Mitchel, Mark Carlino, Matt Stoutz, Patrick Mellon, Jane Garibay, Joseph Balskus, Alex Dahlem, Amy Watkins, April Chaplin, Giovanni Zinn, Holly Parker, Jane Tkach, Jeff Peel, Jordan Force, Neil Olinski, Roland Lemar, Sarah Roy

- Committee Chair, Department of Transportation Deputy Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto welcomed the Council and public and introduced himself. He thanked State Representative Roland Lemar, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, for being of a champion of all issues for protecting all user users of our transportation system. He also thanked State Senator Will Haskell and the entire Transportation Committee in the General Assembly for creating this statewide Vision Zero Council. It was noted that the statute PA 21-28 took effect in July 1st and the General Assembly gave a pretty tight deadline to have our first meeting. Garrett introduced and thanked Aaron Swanson, who will be the staff lead of the Council and Diana Palmer, Special Assistant to the DOT Commissioner’s office.
- Garrett noted that the statute had a couple agencies listed, and then requested that we invite others, so we tried to think about it holistically about which agencies should be a part of the discussion about protecting individuals in the transportation system.
- Council members present introduced themselves.
- P.A. 21-28 overview was given by Aaron Swanson. It was a fairly broad safety bill really looking at improving Roadway Safety for all roadway users. This act is what establishes the Vision Zero Vision Zero Council, and it gives us guidance as to where we need to focus our attention and our activity, and ultimately our goal of establishing a statewide policy to eliminate all traffic fatalities. On or before February 1, 2022 and annually thereafter, the council shall submit the statewide policy, and interagency approach in any other recommendations to the Joint Standing Transportation Committee of the General Assembly.

- Garrett - The next item on the agenda is a mission statement. Aaron, Diana, and I thought that we should talk about having a mission statement for our council. Looking at what other communities have done, they either have a mission statement or a goal other than just eliminating traffic fatalities and injuries, which obviously should be the overarching goal here. My suggestion given the time the timeline we have here is Aaron and Diana can do some research, pass along to committee members. Some examples of what other communities have adopted, maybe there's some international examples for us to consider, and then they can work to craft a draft that we as the council can begin to edit, and eventually in a future meeting adopt and accept by vote.
- There were no objections to crafting a mission statement. Aaron and Diana's first task after this meeting will be getting started doing that research, that will then be shared with council members, and then we can begin to craft our mission statement.
- Next discussed was committee organization. If you look at the statute to establish this council, it specifically says is the council shall consist of DOT, public health and emergency services, public protection or their designees, and any other commissioner of a state agency or such commissioners designee invited to participate by DOT public health and DESPP. So, the council, technically is limited to state agencies, but it does provide us the opportunity to establish committees to advise the council. I would like to see subcommittees formed with specific areas of focus, which will include members of the public, other stakeholders and outside organizations. We will set up an online form, where members of the public could input their information, volunteer to participate on a certain subcommittee. And then, depending on how many submissions we get we would go through the process of looking at those submissions that were entered.
- Susan Logan DPH agreed and commented that it is a good idea to get suggestions from our council members and the other people on this call to lay out some of the ideas for subcommittee areas of focus.
- DMV there are people in the communities that are interested in public safety. Right now the only tool we have is speed bumps and hopefully we will have other options through this process. I do think the neighborhood organizations should be a key part of the work that we do.
- Jon Slifka - I agree with the idea of focus groups, I think there's a lot of valuable information we can learn from that. And I think depending on the direction that we go. We can get a lot of input from the disability community, and I'm sure the aging community as well. Online access can be a challenge for some of the some of the disabled or aging groups, I would like to see some in person access for those communities.
- Garrett – Each agency that is represented on this council prepare background information and/or a presentation to share with the group on what their agency already does in this area. . It would be a good thing is to have a brief presentation from each agency on our work in this space where we're currently working where our partners are and I think that might help us narrow down the focus of those subcommittees.
- Garrett - next steps and schedule, we have such a tight deadline to have our first statewide policy to the General Assembly by February 1,2022. We will have to meet more frequently between now and then and then settle into longer times between meetings going forward. Our next meeting will be early October. At our next meeting we will have mission statement research to share. We are going to try to do hybrid meetings in person and virtual as much as

possible. We are going to create a website and an email address dedicated to this council where all of the agendas, links and recordings will be posted along with other relevant information.

- Garrett - I want to make sure people are aware, we're beginning an advertising campaign around the new pedestrian and bike safety laws. You can view the website is www.thepedestrianrules.com This is the type of thing where we're going to have this council provide input on these ad campaigns in the future.

Public Comment Section/Question & Answers

- Sarah Roy noted that, were there any discussions of road design changes that are in support of Vision Zero efforts. No today is an organizational meeting.
- Sarah had another question, curious about how this committee will support communities, implementing the new laws, which will enable communities to set their own speed limits on municipal roads.
- Garrett - That is a great question. I know the Office of the State traffic ministry, see traffic administrator is going to be hosting and doing a virtual q&a for communities, for municipal public works employees and municipal traffic enforcement employees through the UConn Traffic Center
- Holly Parker. On the failure to support the element of HB, 5429, that would have allowed the use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices within maintenance work zones and establish a pilot program to use automated traffic enforcement safety devices in school zones is disappointing
- Anthony Cherolis asks will CT DOT be setting official fatality reduction goals that decrease from year to year?
- Yes, Tony i Good to hear from you. I agree with you. That is something that I have spoken to leadership at the Federal Highway Administration about their current process that they direct us how to do that, and to use a five year moving average, it, I don't think it's appropriate.
- Aaron Good asks How will the council be working with municipal leaders to expand awareness about the new laws. Will the council coordinate with regional councils of governments, will there be training of police officers and the State Attorney's Office on how to enforce the new laws. Sure
- Gannon Long, glad to see this meeting happening. Jaywalking should not be enforced as a crime, glad you will try not to have in person meetings at DOT HQ. The Hartford Public Library is a good option. Would be good to have DOT work with the groups trying to lower speed limits. Are there seats for the public on the council?
- Garrett – no only state agencies can be on the council but the public can participate in the subcommittees we will create.
- Sarah Roy Are you going to expand the complete streets policy? Garrett yes we can look at it.
- Anthony Cherolis – oversize and overpowered vehicles are problems, would you support increasing fees or imposing limits on these vehicles? Garrett most of that is controlled on the federal level.
- Sarah Roy will you be focused on forward thinking transportation planning, instead of, oftentimes falling back on outdated engineering solutions usually designed for moving vehicular traffic as quickly as possible. Thanks Sarah. Yeah, I think, again, that this council really is focused on all aspects of creating a policy for the state, that's solely focused on traffic engineering

because none of us on this council are engineers, we certainly will have engineers, advising the council through some of our committees but all of us are policy thinkers, and we'll certainly look at that.

- Members, any closing remarks
- Garrett – for the next meeting we will be sending a follow-up email to all of you with more information and to schedule the next meeting of this group. We will create our website and get materials to the members before the next meeting.
- One last public comment from Kate Rozen – can the state's attorney's office be included on the Council? Yes we will reach out to them.
- Chairman Eucalitto makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Susan Logan. All voted yes.