

YORK COUNTY TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMISSION

MINUTES
June 10, 2019
12:00 Noon
Andrea's Italian Restaurant
Yorktown, Virginia

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Present</u>
Thomas M. Slaughter, Chairman	Citizen – District 5	X
Eddie M. Abisaab	Citizen – District 4	X
William Andersen	Citizen – District 1	X
Ronald O. Fowler	Citizen – District 2	X
Martha A. Haley	Citizen – District 4	X
Spindler Krause, Jr.	Citizen – District 3	
Michael F. Smith	Citizen – District 1	X
Timothy C. Cross, Staff Liaison/Secretary	York County Planning Division	X
Sheriff J. D. "Danny" Diggs	York County Sheriff's Office	
Leilani Gantt	York County Youth Commission	X
W. Chad Green	York County Board of Supervisors	X
Carl L. James	York County School Division	
Landyn Kopczynski	York County Youth Commission	X
Stephen P. Kopczynski	York County Dept. of Fire and Life Safety	
James T. Lash	York County School Division	
Angela Biney	Virginia Dept. of Transportation (VDOT)	
Jason Flood	National Park Service	X
Dwight A. Jenkins	Virginia Highway Safety Office	

MEETING CONVENED

Chairman Slaughter called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM. The March 11, 2019 minutes were approved unanimously.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Slaughter reported that there are two vacancies on Commission. He explained that Lisa Church completed her term and had indicated that other obligations prevent her from serving another term, while David Westcott resigned from the Commission, stating that he has accepted a position with Prince William County that would make it impractical for him to continue to serve.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2019-2020

Chairman Slaughter and Mr. Abisaab were unanimously elected to the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Ad Hoc Committee on Sidewalks and Crosswalks Report

Chairman Slaughter stated that a report from the ad hoc Sidewalks and Crosswalks Committee, consisting of himself, Mr. Abisaab, Mr. Andersen, and Ms. Haley, was included in the agenda package. He stated that the report includes a series of recommendations for potential near-term sidewalk projects that could be paid for with Capital Improvements Program (CIP) funds. He explained that in identifying these projects, the committee focused on connecting residential and commercial development as well as crosswalks to promote pedestrian mobility and safety. Chairman Slaughter stated that the committee's next effort will be to identify possible longer term sidewalk and bikeway projects for consideration as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan update, which is currently underway. Mr. Fowler noted one of the recommendations in the committee's report, which states that "All road improvement projects should give consideration to the placement of sidewalks on one or both sides of the roadway, especially in commercial and multi-family developments." He expressed concern about applying this to "all" road improvement projects, stating that while sidewalks are appropriate in some areas, they are not appropriate in others, and he expressed concern about the cost as well as the need to preserve the County's rural character. In response, Chairman Slaughter noted that the recommendation is to "give consideration" to sidewalks and not necessarily to require them in every road project. Mr. Green added that a lot of the sidewalks being built are developer-funded facilities that are required as a condition of development approval. He stated that the Board of Supervisors does not want to lose the rural character and that there is no plan to retrofit sidewalks into existing subdivisions. Mr. Abisaab stated that sidewalks are needed for safety, noting that he sees a lot of people walking in the street. Chairman Slaughter asked the members to contact a member of the committee if they have any suggestions, and Mr. Green encouraged people to take the online Comprehensive Plan survey on the project website at www.york2040.com and attend the last of four public outreach meetings on the Plan to be held later today from 5:00 to 8:00 PM at the Yorktown Library.

Committee Chair Vacancies: Motor Vehicle Safety/Legislative Policy and Publicity

Chairman Slaughter noted the various committee chair vacancies and asked for volunteers. Mr. Smith volunteered to chair the Legislative Policy and Publicity Committee. There were no volunteers to chair the Motor Vehicle Safety Committee.

Report on Virginia Highway Safety Office Meeting

Ms. Haley stated that she had attended a recent meeting on seat belt surveys sponsored by the Virginia Highway Safety Office. She reported that federal law requires every state and US territory to conduct a seat belt survey every year and to develop a new set of survey sites every five years. Virginia's current sites, she stated, are set until 2022. Ms. Haley stated that the surveys began June 2nd following the "Click It or Ticket" campaign, which was conducted from May 20 through June 2, and that the surveys will be conducted seven days a week from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM for fifty (50) minutes at each site. She explained that the surveys are targeted for fifteen (15) major areas of the state where 85% of traffic fatalities occur, and one of these is the "York County Aggregate" area, which includes Hampton, Newport News, York County, Poquoson and Williamsburg. Ms. Haley also spoke about various seat belt use trends, noting that seat belt use in the York County area dropped slightly from 86.9% in 2017 to 86.4% in 2018, and she added that women are more likely to buckle up than men. Mr. Andersen asked if the surveys include motorcyclists, which he felt would skew the data. Ms. Haley responded that they do not.

Vision Zero

Chairman Slaughter read from a Wikipedia article about "Vision Zero", which he said is a multi-national road traffic safety project that started in Sweden and aims to achieve a highway system with no fatalities or serious injuries involving road traffic. He explained that a core principle of the vision is that life and health can never be exchanged for other benefits within the society, rather than the more conventional comparison between costs and benefits, where a monetary value is placed on life and health, and then that value is used to decide how much money to spend on a road network towards the benefit of decreasing how much risk. He stated that Vision Zero is based on an underlying principle that it can never be ethically acceptable that people are killed or seriously injured when moving within the road transport system. Chairman Slaughter asked if the members feel Vision Zero should be pursued in York County,

and there was general agreement that it should. He said he would like to invite someone from VDOT to the September meeting to talk about what VDOT is doing to implement Vision Zero. He also asked the members what role they think the Commission should play in Vision Zero. Mr. Abisaab responded that the Commission can promote the vision through education and public awareness. Mr. Fowler stated that the focus should be on the younger generation since older citizens are less likely to change their behavior. Ms. Gantt commented on a DUI crash reenactment exercise that was conducted at her school, which she found to be very effective at raising the students' awareness; Ms. Kopczynski agreed that the exercise had a big impact. Mr. Fowler added that the mobile speed radar signs are useful for getting drivers' attention but that it would not be feasible to have one on every street. Mr. Fowler suggested focusing first on the County's most dangerous intersections. Mr. Green suggested that perhaps Vision Zero can be incorporated into the Commission's mission statement. He stated that Vision Zero is a lofty goal but one that we should strive toward.

REPORTS

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

There was no report.

Virginia Highway Safety Office (VAHSO)

Mr. Cross stated that Mr. Jenkins was not able to attend the meeting but did send him some information to share with the Commission. Mr. Cross reported that statewide, as of today, there have been four fewer traffic fatalities and six more pedestrian fatalities compared to the same period last year.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Committee.

There was no report.

Legislative Policy and Publicity Committee

There was no report

Motor Vehicle Safety Committee

Chairman Slaughter summarized VDOT's response to several of the Commission's recent safety recommendations, stating that VDOT would be making various improvements to the intersection of Peniman Road and Route 199, relocating the STOP bar at Seaford Road and Back Creek Road, and refreshing the centerline markings and adding edge line markings along Allens Mill Road. Regarding the Commission's recommendation for a left turn lane on Denbigh Boulevard at the entrance to RIP's convenience store, Chairman Slaughter reported that VDOT determined that it is not warranted.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:47 p.m.

Timothy C. Cross
Staff Liaison/Secretary