

**Seattle School Traffic Safety Committee
John Stanford Center, Room 2765
March 29, 2019 Minutes**

STSC Attendees

- ✓ Richard Staudt (SPS)
- ✓ Mary Ellen Russell, Chair (parent volunteer)
- ✓ Shanti Breznau, Secretary (citizen-at-large)
- ✓ Margaret McCauley (pedestrian safety advocate)
- ✓ Kevin O'Neill (SPD)
James Wells (Metro)
- ✓ Mitchell Lloyd (SDOT)
- ✓ Marilyn Firman (citizen-at-large)
- ✓ Lee Bruch (citizen-at-large)
- ✓ Rachel Osias (citizen-at-large)
- ✓ Yvonne Carpenter (SPS transportation crossing guard manager)

Other Presenters/Public

- ✓ Stephen Jones (SPS transportation bus manager)
- ✓ Bruce Skowrya, Interim Director of Transportation

Public comment

None.

March 1, 2019 Minutes: Approved

This is Shanti's last meeting. Thank you Shanti! We will miss you.

Stephen has attended the first transportation innovation think tank, and said it was productive. There are several more scheduled, including one on the 15th that Mary Ellen has been invited to.

The formal deadline for the Statewide grant has passed, but Stephen believes they can still apply.

STSC e-mail access for sending as well as receiving set-up, Mitchell sent out the annual report to stakeholders and public last week.

No new member applications were received. With Shanti leaving one position is open.

Action: _Stephen and Margaret will coordinate on finishing grant application.

Action: _ Stephen will forward Council of Great City Schools report to the committee when it is available.

Action: _Richard will ask about what kind of incentive might be most appreciated at schools for hands up survey.

Action: _Shanti will send the Annual Report to Sam Zimbabwe.

Action: _All committee members will get out the word on the open committee position.

SDOT update – Detailed Survey Results, Loyal Heights Update, Mitchell Lloyd

SDOT replaced and revised 13 signs around Loyal Heights Elementary in March. This will pull parking back from intersections and hopefully improve traffic at drop off.

Action: _Mitchell will follow up with Loyal Heights principal in a few weeks to see if signage has improved traffic, and whether further improvements are needed.

Mitchell shared the initial quantitative results of the Safe Routes to School Racial Equity Assessment Survey. Qualitative results are still coming, hopefully within a month.

Kevin asked whether the ability to purchase a bike came back as a significant reason for not biking to school, and whether a program similar to the one that buys beds for low income people could address that. Mitchell said that could help, but there are other related barriers, including the ability to store and maintain a bike.

Action: _ Mitchell will share digital copy with Mary Ellen for records. The full report will be shared when it is available.

Crossing guard update, Yvonne Carpenter

Lost a guard at Broadview Thompson, but have a new applicant. Losing 1 at Wedgewood, but another is in training for that position. A guard at Madrona has moved to Kimble. Net 0 this month. Yvonne got several calls this month since the most recent round of laminated flyers went up. There are currently 71 crossing guards with 3 subs.

Lee posted a flyer at the Hearthstone this month. Is planning to post at several in Greenwood. Yvonne says the central area could have open positions too, would benefit from posting flyers.

Action: _ Mary Ellen will forward flyer to Rachel and Kevin for distribution.

Traffic study Director's rule update, Lee Bruch

There have not been any notices published regarding the director's rule. Yesterday Lee got email from councilmember Johnson's staff with contacts at SDOT, SDCI. Lee emailed them and is waiting for a response.

Action: _Lee to continue watching for updates, notify the committee when the comment period is advertised.

Annual Report – City Council presentation outline, Margaret McCauley

Presentation to City Council will be on April 16th 2:00 PM. Committee members are also meeting with Fred Podesta to discuss report immediately after committee meeting.

Stephen is concerned that some of the report may be outdated in light of the recent restructuring in schools transportation. He wishes that the timeline had allowed for higher ups at schools such as Fred Podesta to review prior to distribution. Lee pointed out that for next year we should send the report to Fred Podesta prior to release with a deadline for providing input.

Richard and Marilyn will attend the City Council presentation in the audience.

Action: _Mary Ellen will send out draft presentation for review.

Action: _Shanti and Rachel and Yvonne will share any photos that can be shared. Pictures of crossing guards, bike education programs, and walking and biking kids would be very helpful.

Action: _Mitchell will find out how much time is being allotted for the City Council presentation.

Student collision at Robert Eagle Staff, Richard Staudt

A student was struck by a car. The principal said it was crossing at 90th & Stone, however when Richard viewed video it appeared to be at 90th, ½ block off stone. The police officer who did a report indicated it was at a crosswalk at 1330 N 90th, near Stone. Kevin says that neither the student nor the driver said anything about the RFB, and it is unclear whether the student pushed the beacon. It was sunny that morning, the driver said the windshield was fogged. The vehicle was travelling east bound at a low speed, 5-10 MPH. The student was hit by the driver's side of the vehicle. The student was in the middle of the crosswalk when hit. The student has a broken leg, is back at school.

Since it seems that the beacon wasn't flashing, it might be helpful to remind the students to push the button and use the rapid flashing beacon.

Kevin pointed out that the biggest issue here is the combination of slanting morning light and a fogged windshield.

Richard suggested sending out reminders to students to use rapid flashing beacons. Rachel added that a reminder to be a defensive walker could be valuable. Mary Ellen suggested that a communication could be sent to parents reminding them to clear windshield and drive carefully around schools. Marilyn is concerned that messaging along those lines might further discourage parents from allowing kids to walk.

Lee brought up the fact that an appearance of safety, such as on 90th as compared to Aurora, can cause people to stop being cautious and that can actually make it more dangerous.

Kevin said that he would prefer to see communication specifically aimed at drivers, on the radio news etc., reminding people that school is in session and to drive carefully. He would like to see SDOT's "think of the impact you make" signage posted.

Action: _Mary Ellen will call Seattle Times reporter to talk about this issue.

Rachel shared the idea that google might add school time info to maps, similar to how they now highlight speed traps, red light cameras. It would be great to see google flag roads and temporary reduced speed limits during school drop off and pick up hours.

Action: _Stephen will bring this idea up at tech oriented Transportation meeting.

New Captain, Sean O'Donnell, would like to come to an STSC meeting soon.

Action: _Kevin will contact SPD's communications person about sending out reminders to clean windshields and be aware of morning visibility, etc., on Twitter.

Action: _Kevin is planning to visit Robert Eagle Staff and talk to the child who was hit. He will ask the principal if this is appropriate.

Rachel and Margaret would like to raise the visibility of this committee to ensure we are contacted about issues like this collision. Richard is always notified of issues with collisions, so the committee is unlikely to miss issues involving collisions.

Daylight Saving Time

There is a bill proposing permanent daylight saving time moving forward at the state level. The committee has previously pushed to move bell time later to increase the portion of the year that kids walk to school in daylight.

Shanti said that at her school when the elementary school time moved earlier several families dropped out of the walking school buses.

Changing to permanent Daylight Saving Time, with current bell times, would mean walking in complete darkness between October and February.

The issue is that morning commute time lines up with morning rush hour, which makes it more dangerous.

Bell times for older kids were moved later specifically to better align with teenagers' sleep cycles. If permanent daylight saving time is adopted it would effectively move those times one hour earlier again. It might necessitate moving all start times back an hour, which would be resisted because of its impact on after school activities.

Bruce brought up that the calendar for next year has already been set. It would be too late to change bell times for next school year.

Action: _Marilyn will develop first draft of School traffic committee letter to send to Seattle state legislators. We'll send the letter to the superintendent and school board. We will draft the letter and send it to Bruce. He will distribute it to higher ups at schools.

Action: _Richard will inquire if Cliff (SPS lobbyist) can help get this issue into the discussion at the state level.

Meeting Schedule – 1st or 2nd Friday, Mary Ellen Russell

Next meeting will be 4th Friday in April 26th. Starting in May, we will change meetings to the 2nd Friday of the month to avoid conflicts with holidays, midwinter break. May meeting will be May 10th.

Action: _Mitchell will post change to 2nd Friday of the month on website.

Secretary position

Rachel will take over secretary role in May. Rachel will miss April meeting.

Teleconferencing for absent members during meetings would be possible, but only with enough advance notice to reserve the more popular conference rooms.

Action: _Kevin will remind Walt to send speed camera stats out.

Future Topics:

- SDOT detailed survey results

- Crossing guard recruitment process – How to keep things from stalling when Yvonne is unavailable, increase pay to match bus monitors
- School staff training as crossing guards for backup
- Follow up with Lee regarding development of Director's Report
- Open committee position
- Speed Camera update with year over year comparison
- Several schools have unqualified people directing traffic and crossing students. How to communicate with schools to prevent this?
- SDOT's complete assessment anticipated for early summer 2019. Dongho will return to give full assessment
- Pilot project for school road closure
- Follow up on Loyal Heights.
- Look through walk boundary decision spreadsheet for intersections that SDOT should review for improvements.
- Bishop Blanchett traffic concerns
- Lee will follow up with Robert Eagle Staff PSTA about Aurora crossing at 90th that is currently a YVYC project
- Additional metrics for benchmarking our progress, i.e. number of missing crossing guards and number of missing sidewalks within ¼ mile of schools.
- Possible to find funding for walking school bus leaders/ bus train leaders to have a paid position similar to crossing guards. In lower income portions of the City, where crossing guards are easier to recruit, this might be attractive position.

Next meeting: April 26th.

Meeting with Fred Podesta, Chief Operations Officer, 3/29/2019

Margaret McCauley, Marilyn Firman, Richard Staudt, Mary Ellen Russell, Lee Bruch, Kevin O'Neill, Bruce Skowyra, Mitchell Lloyd, Stephen Jones.

Fred would appreciate having some real time updates to the annual report included in our council presentation, particularly with respect to bus performance which has improved since last fall.

District agrees with the goals highlighted in the report, but needs time to consider policy responses which may not exactly match report suggestions.

Action: _Stephen and Bruce will get updated bus info for presentation to City Council.

Fred will consider whether there are items that he would like to have raised in the Council presentation and get back to the committee.

Talking about stop paddle funds, Bruce said his understanding was that the majority of the funds go to processing fees, which does not match our understanding from talking to Denise (SPS accounting). Stephen is going to follow up with Denise to get a breakdown of future costs.

Action: _Stephen will follow up with Denise to get a clear breakdown of stop paddle funds.

Fred was supportive of the idea of bringing up the issue around OSPI's formula for funding. He said the district has a lot of lobbying to do around funding and needs to set its priorities, but in the mean time we can raise the issue with City Council, Mayor's office, etc. Fred said if the City is interested in helping fund, recruit, or support crossing guards then SPS would be very open to that.

Fred brought up that the partnership with the City around transportation could be tighter. There is an overlapping user base going to community centers near schools, etc., that might be leveraged to provide better transportation for both user groups.

Fred spoke to King County Metro talking about ways to partner better, they suggested School Pool. Fred is planning to follow up with the county about School Pool.

Fred will be working with the school board on transportation issues in late May.