



Texas Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting Minutes May 24, 2018

Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Gibb Gilchrist Building, Room 102

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Highlights

- Opening Remarks and New Member Introduction
- FY 2019 TxDOT Projects
- 2018 Motorcycle Safety Forum Recap
- 2019 Motorcycle Safety Forum; Establishing a Forum Planning Group
- Moving Forward with Motorcycle Safety: New Initiatives
- DPS Motorcycle Program Updates and Discussion: Sunset Review Committee Recommendations
- Adjournment

Opening Remarks and New Member Introduction.

Chris Beireis opened the meeting at 10:10 a.m. and invited attendees to introduce themselves to the group.

FY 2019 TxDOT Projects

Jude Schexnyder reviewed the TxDOT Safety Grants projects that have been selected for the coming fiscal year. These include a continuation of the Motorcycle Safety Outreach project that helps to support this Coalition, and a continuation of an FY18 project that is developing a training program for engineers on mitigating risks to motorcycle riders in work zones. A project that is still being considered is one that will examine ways to reach out to unlicensed riders to get them trained and licensed.

Members discussed some of the challenges connected with convincing unlicensed riders to get trained, especially if they have been riding for a long time. Also discussed was the challenge of communicating and promoting the importance of responsible riding behaviors in addition to the importance of skills training.

2018 Motorcycle Safety Forum Recap

Michael Manser reviewed highlights from the Forum. This year's attendance was down, with 53 attendees. Presentations included an update on motorcycle training in Texas from DPS, reviews of

motorcycle safety research, and a presentation on crash analysis. Attendees also participated in group discussions to brainstorm ideas for reducing drinking and riding.

Meeting attendees followed up on the Forum recap with a discussion of the challenges of effectively reducing drinking and riding, and ways to change attitudes within the riding community regarding responsible alcohol use.

2019 Motorcycle Safety Forum; Establishing a Forum Planning Group

Cody Stewart reviewed feedback and recommendations received from 2018 Forum attendees, and asked for volunteers to serve on a Forum Planning Group for next year's Forum. The Planning Group will provide guidance to TTI staff on selecting topics, speakers, and activities for the 2019 Motorcycle Safety Forum. An email will go out to the TMSC contact list inviting interested volunteers to contact Cody.

Potential topics mentioned in the Forum evaluations included emerging technologies pertaining to motorcycles or motorcycle gear, brainstorming on another topic related to crash causes and countermeasures, and a presentation on one or more particular riding skills.

Moving Forward with Motorcycle Safety: New Initiatives

Mike Manser asked the group for input regarding motorcycle safety topics that TTI should pursue with new research and outreach initiatives. The group suggested drinking and riding and unlicensed riders as two priority issues, and also reviewed topics that were brainstormed at a previous TMSC meeting for encouraging riders to get trained, incentivizing safe riding, etc.

Suggestions for project topics included:

- Strategies for improving training/licensing rates;
 - promote lifelong learning among riders;
 - correlate training rates with crash reductions among the motorcycle rider population;
 - develop a video module on impaired riding to be included in motorcycle training;
- Examination of the components, structure, and outcomes of the Maryland Motorcycle Fusion Center to see if something similar could be developed in Texas.

Potential metrics for determining the long-term effectiveness of efforts in these areas include looking at trends over time in fatalities for unlicensed riders and/or impaired riders.

DPS Motorcycle Program Updates and Discussion: Sunset Review Committee Recommendations

John Young presented the Sunset Review Committee's recommendations regarding the motorcycle training program. The initial recommendation from the Committee was to move motorcycle training out of DPS and into the Texas Department of Licensing and Registration (TDLR), but State Senator Kirk Watson spoke against the recommendation, and several other people at the public hearing supported

his position. The committee's recommendations will need to be addressed in a formal response and Senator Watson is working on that response; the Senator is looking for input from the motorcycle training community about what should be included in that response. Suggestions for recommendation to Sen. Watson included:

- Keep the motorcycle training program at DPS rather than moving it to TDLR.
- Maintain a dependable annual operating budget for the motorcycle training program, sufficient to keep operating the training program at current levels, including purchases of capital items (like training motorcycles). This is currently \$880,000 minimum per year for the basics, preferably \$1.5 million per year to ensure some flexibility for variable expenses such as motorcycle purchases and training enhancements (scholarships, equipment, etc).
- Identify exactly what resources the legislature wants the training program to furnish to instructors. Jude suggested recommending the formation of a Governor's Advisory Council to examine this question.
- Expand the Rider Coach conference, offer ongoing professional development workshops.

The time limit for public response to the hearing is May 30.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.