

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

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SUBJECT: SR-166 TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 21, 2009

On January 21, 2009, the SR-166 Safety Task Force held a meeting at the Community Development Department in the city of Santa Maria. Those in attendance were:

Lieutenant Matt Olson	California Highway Patrol, Santa Maria Area
Officer Dan McIntosh	California Highway Patrol, Santa Maria Area
Courtney Kienow	Office of Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee
Mayor Lupe Alvarez	City of Guadalupe
Bob Snoddy	Kern COG
Fred Luna	SBCAG
Deb Larson	Caltrans
Frank Sullano	Caltrans
Frank Flores	Caltrans
Darci Buliavac	Automobile Club of Southern California
Jack Owen	Guadalupe Fire Department
Gil Armijo	Office of 5 th District Supervisor Joseph Centeno

1. Introductions

- The meeting began with Lieutenant Olson welcoming everyone in attendance and thanking them for their presence. All members introduced themselves.

2. Old Business

- The Yotocoyote Festival Planning Committee apparently changed their plans and Northstar Ranch in the Cuyama Valley will no longer be the site of the event. A new location has not been confirmed and no one has heard from the group.
- Fred Luna discussed the success of the Measure A election and what it means for SR-166. He reported the Measure passed by 79% of the vote, which extends the ½ cent sales tax for 30 years. This sales tax should fund projects in both the North and South county, including approximately 2-3 million dollars for safety projects on SR-166. Additional information can be found on the SBCAG website.
- Lt. Olson discussed the issue of a Press Conference. It was determined that none of the SR-166 collision and enforcement 2008 statistics had been released to the press to date. Courtney Kienow reported that Assemblyman Blakeslee recently sent out a monthly E-

newsletter containing an article on SR-166 with some preliminary statistics. Jack Owen will head the planning for the press conference. The theme will be “Drive Safety Home”, and the increased safety on 166 would be highlighted, including statistics from 2008, the highway safety improvements, and the new CMS board. The press conference will be held on Friday, February 13th at 2:00 pm.

3. Subcommittee Report

- **CMS Sign Board:** Fred Luna discussed the newly acquired CMS board for SR-166. The sign was put into service late September/early October. The board is stored at the Cuyama Caltrans yard. It is will used for holiday periods and events such as rodeos and fairs, and any other event that could affect traffic on SR-166. Frank Sullano of CalTrans deployed the CMS on New Years Eve and Martin Luther King weekend. To date the board has only been programmed manually, but this will change when the remote programming software is provided to the Caltrans Transportation Management Center in San Luis Obispo.

ACTION ITEM: Frank Sullano recommended that a list of specific messages and dates be developed in order to best utilize the board. This will be created by Lt. Olson and committee representatives.

4. Caltrans Report

- Deb Larson distributed a handout containing SR-166 Project Updates. The various projects that were discussed are as follows:
 - ***Gifford Creek Safety project.*** – The project is in the design stage; construction estimates were twice the anticipated amount due to \$1.6 million for structures. Estimate for listing will be 2011/12.
 - ***Russell Avenue Traffic Signal*** – In design. Ready to List (RTL) 12/09
 - ***Hwy 166 @ 101 Northbound Ramps*** – Signage and flashing beacons will be added at the intersections. To be constructed in the summer of 2009. .
 - ***Suey Creek Left Turn Channelization and Passing Lane*** – Project has been completed; however there is a continuing problem with falling rock from the hillside cut at Suey Creek. A solution is being investigated.
 - ***Cuyama Pavement Rehabilitation*** – Completed; includes wider shoulders and left turn channelization at the elementary and high schools.
 - ***Centerline Rumble Strip*** – Scheduled: 6 ½ mile portion of SR-166 that qualifies for the safety project aimed at reducing cross centerline collisions.
- It was reported that an oil company had originally planned to access their Huasna property via Arroyo Grande, but are also considering using Alamo Creek Road from SR-166. If their prospects prove viable perhaps the company would contribute to the construction of turn lanes at that location due to increased truck traffic.
- Frank Flores inquired about the ditch relocation project for SR-166 between Santa Maria and Guadalupe. It was discussed that land had not yet been purchased and there were currently no funds to support widening of the road.

- Additional discussion took place regarding the approved new gravel pit and the existing application for the current gravel pit expansion along the Cuyama River. Increased truck traffic will result at the intersection of SR-166 and SR-33. The realignment of that intersection was discussed.
- In conclusion, it was reported that \$45 million has or is being spent on SR-166 projects since 1999. A map of previous and current projects was provided.

5. CHP Report

- Lieutenant Olson reported on SR-166 traffic collision statistics for 2008, which reflect a substantial reduction in collisions, injuries and fatalities over 2007:
 - Overall traffic collisions are down 38%.
 - Fatal collisions are down 75%.
 - Fatalities are down 75%.
 - Injury collisions are down 12%.
 - Injuries are down 31%
 - Property damage collisions are down 44%
 - DUI collisions are up 20% (6 vs. 5)
- CHP's Office of Traffic Safety grant ended on December 31, 2008, which provided 2133 hours of overtime for enhanced patrols on SR166. The results prove that safety grants of this type can have a substantial positive impact on highway safety. The statistics include:
 - 2, 235 total citations issued
 - 1, 641 of these were speed violations
 - 75 were seat belt/restraint violations
 - 6 DUI arrests
 - 30,000+ patrol miles driven.

6. Roundtable

- Bob Snoddy thanked the committee for their work to obtain safety grants. He was appreciative of the fact that the members of the committee all have the same goal of saving lives.
- Gil Armijo reported that the 8.5 million dollar bridge project on Tepusquet Road will result in a 7-9 minute response time savings for the Fire Department. He discussed future realignment projects involving Santa Maria Mesa Road and Foxen Canyon Road, and Tepusquet Road at the location of a past FedEx truck collision.
- Gil also discussed the construction of the new Cuyama pool, which is well supported by the youth in the Cuyama Valley. The final cost will be approximately 2.2 million dollars.

7. Action Items

- A Press Conference would be held on Friday, February 13th at 2:00 pm on SR-166 at Wineman Rd.

8. Next Meeting Date and Time

- **The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, 2009, at 1330 hours.** Final confirmation of the location of the next meeting will be forthcoming.

(If any corrections to these minutes are needed, please contact Lt. Matt Olson).