

Seasonal Traffic Backup Counter Measures Group Meeting

October 13, 2015, 2 PM - Southern Shores Pitts Center

Attached are:

1. List of meeting attendees
2. List of initiatives previously discussed at April 30, 2015 meeting and reviewed at today's meeting (#s of the initiatives indicated are shown below in ()).
3. NCDOT Saturday traffic counts on Wright Memorial Bridge (going and coming) during the three months June, July, August 2015.

MEETING NOTES:

Southern Shores Mayor Tom Bennett opened the meeting and greeted the group. Absent were Currituck BOC Chairman Paul O'Neal and Dare County Commissioner Jack Shea.

Southern Shores Town Manager Peter Rascoe recommended a review of the initiatives discussed at the April 30 meeting and implemented this summer.

Group discussion proceeded generally as follows:

- Kitty Hawk Police Chief Joel Johnson described the *joint law enforcement agency presence* (#4) to keep the main US 158-NC 12 intersection manned on days of each summer weekend. Chief Johnson commented the cooperative effort did work administratively between the participating agencies. However the effort ended up requiring two officers during peak times to adequately handle the traffic load. He recommended that the NCDOT signs for *Do Not Block the Intersection* (#2) be larger and set back further from the intersection if possible. It was noted that NCSHP Troopers participated in the joint effort as well but they would have to leave when called. This effort will continue to have manpower challenges. ... Mayor Bennett and other overall meeting comments indicated the effort received positive comments as "working". Kitty Hawk Mayor Gary Perry commented that traffic volume travelling south through Kitty Hawk seemed the same this year, and he noted it was a good summer. .. Some discussion about smart phone apps contributing to traffic in certain locations.
- Discussion of NCDOT's "*No Right Turn on Red*" signs (#1) produced the comment from law enforcement that they were largely ignored by drivers.
- *Lane Assignment Signage* (#3) placed by NCDOT west of Wright Memorial Bridge - discussion produced comments that this seemed to have some positive effects on traffic separation along US 158 prior to the intersection.
- *Traffic Signal System* (#5) was explained by NCDOT officials Jerry Jennings and Jason Davidson. The system's timing and operation were reviewed throughout the summer – but, it was noted that when traffic comes to a halt due to volume, the system is not effective. ... Jerry and Jason produced results of NCDOT Saturday traffic counts on Wright Memorial Bridge (going and coming) during the three months. It was noted these counts do not determine north-bound or south-bound traffic after the bridge is crossed west to east. Southern Shores Police Chief David Kole commented that is Department's counts would seem to indicate a higher number of vehicles travelling NC 12 north. ... Jerry also commented that DOT could compile some data on counts on US Highway 64 to hopefully determine if traffic increased on that route as an

entrance to the Outer Banks. Kitty Hawk Police Chief Joel Johnson commented he saw increased travel on US 64 during his travels and the State Highway Patrol had indicated such as well. ... NCDOT also commented that summer crash data along US 158 and NC 12 would be compiled soon.

- *Traffic Cameras (#6)* – all implemented by NCDOT for the summer and working. Can't really determine if online use by public had any effect on traffic reduction at peak times.
- *Travel Times on Message Boards*, placed by NCDOT in Currituck County (#7). These were implemented. Noted that there is no indication of effect on traffic reduction at peak times.
- *Portable Message Board announcing Alternate Traffic Route (#8)* activated by NCDOT during peak travel times, placed on US Highway 168 north of Sligo. Noted that there is no indication of effect on traffic reduction at peak times.
- *Marketing (#9)*. Jerry did note that the Dot website was fully functioning as well as the NC12 Twitter feed. He noted that the OB Visitor's Bureau was promoting its own website page indicating alternate routes to the Outer Banks. Southern shores Town manager Peter Rascoe noted he had continued to dialogue with the OB Visitors Bureau about its alternate route effort, and that the Town of Southern Shores had sought to promote the alternate route of I-95/ US 64 as the preferred route for southern beach visitors. Peter noted he had met several times with Outer Banks realtors association Property Management/rental managers' Group in dialogue regarding that group's members marketing alternate routes in early and ongoing communications with rental visitors. Peter noted he would continue the same dialogue throughout the off-season.
- NCDOT Board Member Malcolm Fearing initiated group discussion on the Mid-Currituck Bridge efforts, noting that it is the solution for the mass volume of vehicle traffic headed to Currituck County. Malcolm is confident the bridge will be built and urged public/grass roots involvement in keeping public pressure on the project. It was noted that the Southern Environmental Law Center has file Public records requites with several area local governments regarding efforts for the Mid-Currituck bridge.
- Kitty Hawk Mayor Gary Perry revisited the noted manpower challenge for the US 158-NC 12 intersection on summer weekends. He noted that Kitty Hawk may be able to provide some retired officers for the traffic control at less expense. The idea was discussed that the intersection manpower initiative might qualify for some grant funding form the Outer banks Visitors Bureau was brought up. Peter Rascoe asked if the Police Chiefs might get him some estimated manpower expense numbers, so that he could possibly dialogue with the OBVB on that possibility.
- Southern Shores Town Manager Peter Rascoe brought up that complaint calls to the SS Town Hall continue to primarily pertain to the increased traffic on interior streets during seasonal weeks. For clarification and amplification purposes, Peter asked if NCDOT and Kitty Hawk could again comment on the previously discussed matter of "No Left Turn" signs at the east-bound side of the US Highway 158 and S. Dogwood Trail intersection. NCDOT reminded that any such regulatory sign would have to apply to all Southern Shores residents as well. And any enforcement of the sign would require a law enforcement officer in the intersection during the regulated period. Southern Shores Police Chief David Kole added that responding firemen

living in Martin's Point and southern Currituck would be inhibited by such a sign. And Kitty Hawk Police Chief Joel Johnson and Kitty Hawk Mayor Gary Perry both noted the intersection is in Kitty Hawk's jurisdiction, and Kitty Hawk could not supply the manpower required to enforce such a sign. Southern Shores Mayor Tom Bennett noted the Town of Southern Shores still has citizens who want South Dogwood Trail blocked for "resident use" only, which, if ever done, would itself cause a back-up at the main highway intersection.

- Discussion confirmed the group will plan to meet again early spring of 2016

The meeting of the group adjourned at 3:15 pm.

October 13, 2015

End of Season Review of Summer "Seasonal Traffic Backup Counter Measures" Efforts

Attendees:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>email</u>
1. Peter Rascoe	Southern Shores	prascroe@southernshores.nc.gov
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