

**Minutes  
Township of Falls  
Neighborhood Traffic Advisory Committee**

**January 8, 2024**

**Members in Attendance:**

Amy Gallagher  
Ian James  
Robert Leary  
Ariane Presser

**Members Absent:**

Leon Thompson

**Also in Attendance:**

Lt. Martial Belinsky, Township of Falls Police Department  
Sgt. Raymond Fanelli, Township of Falls Police Department  
Derrick Kennedy, Remington & Vernick Engineers, Inc. (RVE)  
Phil Szupka, Falls Township Resident

Lt. Belinsky opened the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

The minutes from the December 11, 2023 meeting were approved with no changes.

Lt. Belinsky passed out some sample signs he printed for review. He said he prefers signs with bright colors because they grab more attention. He likes the “SLOW” sign the most. Ms. Gallagher asked if we wanted to order multiple signs or just stick to one sign. Lt. Belinsky has to check out the pricing and see what the Chief approves of (price wise). Mr. Szupka added that drivers get used to seeing the same sign and then it loses impact.

Lt. Belinsky said we were supposed to do a speed study at Chelsea and Devon Roads, but after having the speed machine out there for a few days, they found that the batteries had died. So, the officer will redo the study.

Lt. Belinsky introduced Sgt. Ray Fanelli, head of the new Traffic Safety Unit. He has been with Falls Township for almost 27 years. He previously was in the army on a traffic safety unit in Fort Hood, Texas. He always took an interest in the safety aspect of police work. We have 2 speed trailers and one speed spy. The speed trailers tell you your speed when you drive by it. The speed spy is a gray box that most people don’t know what it is. It records data. He will use this for pre and post enforcement data collection. Right now, it is on Tyburn Road and will be there for one week. It can only collect data going in one direction. Then we are going to take that data and determine if it justifies doing enforcement in that area. That would be considered a harm reduction area. On days when we have extra manpower, or if the chief assigns overtime details,

the officer(s) would be reassigned to the Traffic Safety Unit. They would then be assigned to the harm reduction area.

Sgt. Fanelli looked at 2 years of data from PennDOT and Falls averages one reportable accident per day. A reportable accident is one with injuries or towing of vehicles. These accidents are concentrated more at intersections than straightaways. These intersections will be designated as harm reduction areas.

Regarding the two speed trailers, one is older, and one is newer. The older one is the one Sgt. Fanelli wants to use in areas where the speed limit is 25mph and under. He wants to prioritize schools, senior centers, large gatherings, areas where there are complaints, etc. The newer machine is for 35mph and up. This one could be turned and display a small message, such as "WIPERS ON, LIGHTS ON".

Sgt. Fanelli is also going to do a weekly safety message on the township website. They will be under two minutes long. They could be environmentally based, first responder safety, criminally based (drinking and driving), or anything he wants to reinforce for the month.

Sgt. Fanelli reported that on Friday, a 13-year-old student was grazed getting off the school bus. She crossed behind the bus and a vehicle disregarded the stop arm. Lt. Belinsky and Sgt. Fanelli immediately asked for a social media blurb to be put out regarding the school bus safety laws and a .gif of when you're allowed to pass and when you must stop. Sgt. Fanelli would like a message board to display safety/informational messages. The driver of the vehicle was cited for failure to stop for a school bus with red flashing lights, careless driving, and operating a vehicle without an inspection.

Mr. Kennedy said as the township traffic engineer, RVE has the ability to do larger speed studies for a fee.

Mr. James asked what the average cost of a citation was. Sgt. Fanelli said there is no average. The minimum is \$25.00 but with all the fees, it can end up at \$125.00.

Lt. Belinsky said the first complaint we received regarding "Across the street from the Giant right by the Burger King" was determined not to be in Falls Township.

The second complaint received was regarding "Corner of Devon and Chelsea Roads". The complaint is speeding and rolling through stop signs and accidents there. The complainant would like a 4-way stop sign installed. Lt. Belinsky asked Mr. Kennedy about this, and Mr. Kennedy said they could take a quick look, but it has to meet certain conditions. Lt. Belinsky will pull the crash data for this intersection.

In regard to "Other Business", Mr. Phil Szupka spoke about the PennDOT town hall meeting about the Oxford Valley Road reconstruction. He's concerned about the extra traffic through Austin Drive or Trenton Road. The intersection is going to be completely closed for about three months and total construction will be 2 years. He was concerned about how the emergency

vehicles and truck traffic are going to be rerouted. Lt. Belinsky said construction is a year away so we should start looking into this.

Mr. Szupka also noted that he has lived on Austin Drive for many years now but as the houses turn over, the number of cars and trucks per family has grown. These houses were made for 1 – 2 vehicles at best. This is a blue-collar neighborhood with many people running their own businesses. This requires trucks and vans. They are being parked in the street with the family cars being parked in the driveways. There is a township ordinance that states if the GVW is over 14,000 pounds, they shouldn't be parked in the street. Maybe we have outgrown the neighborhoods, but he is glad to see everyone is prosperous. Sgt. Fanelli said it is much easier to plow if the roads are free of vehicles. Mr. Szupka thanked the committee for their time and for listening.

There was no other business, so the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.