



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

Chair's Message

MESSAGE 2020-#4
June 24, 2020

Gene Hawkins
NCUTCD Chair

Thanks to everyone who participated in the virtual meetings last week. Preliminary indications are that the meetings mostly went about as well as we could have hoped for. The information in this message provides some follow-up to the June 2020 meeting and information about future meetings.

June 2020 NCUTCD Meeting

- **Meetings and Formats:** There were at least 11 virtual meetings associated with the NCUTCD, including the 7 technical committees, the Board, and some task forces. Participation in the meetings varied from the mid-30s to the high-50s. Virtual meeting software for technical committee meetings included WebEx (4 meetings), Zoom (1 meetings), Teams (1 meeting) and Skype (1 meeting).
- **Meeting Participation:** Participation in our virtual meetings ranged from a low of 35 to a high of 58 during the times that I was participating.
- **Chair Thoughts:** I attended all of the technical committee meetings, listening in on the meetings for various periods of time, sometimes being logged into more than one meeting at a time. I was impressed at how well our members adopted to the virtual meeting technology.
- **Meeting Summary:** Since there was no Council meeting where technical committee chairs could report on their activities, we are preparing a “virtual meeting summary” in place of the summary of our normal Council meeting. That summary will be posted on the NCUTCD website in the next week or so and will include reports from all the meetings that would normally have reported during a general session.
- **Future Implications:** While the virtual meetings seemed to have gone well, they do represent a compromise of our normal consensus-building process. In particular, we have not tried to establish NCUTCD policy through a virtual meeting (Council meeting). I know that our members are looking forward to resuming the face-to-face meetings and the many benefits that format offers. Having gained value from the forced virtual meeting format, some of the technical committees (and/or their task forces) may want to conduct more of their business activities using this format. At this time, the NCUTCD intends to resume face-to-face meetings as our normal practice.

NCUTCD IT Issues

Our webmaster, Marc Jacobson, and Executive Secretary, Richard Moeur, have been working very hard this spring to improve and enhance our IT capabilities. One of the lynchpins of this effort is the transition to an on-line digital database of our members. The on-line database is the basis for the listserves and access to member-only features of the website. All members need to log into the database and check their membership

information, especially the email address. The Executive Secretary is no longer responsible for revising database entries for our members.

MUTCD NPA

The broader NCUTCD membership was not able to hear an FHWA report due to the lack of a General Session. However, FHWA MUTCD Team members made reports to all of the technical committees. The general message conveyed in those remarks is that there is significant activity occurring “behind the curtain” toward the publication of the NPA. An update to the MUTCD remains a top priority for the agency, and specifically for Administrator Nason and Secretary Chao. Due to regulations related to the release of rulemaking information, they cannot say when they expect the NPA to be published. They also are not able to say how long the comment period will be once it is published. Once we are notified that the NPA has been published, we will begin work on developing our docket comments. As I have stated previously, we will do so in a manner that is consistent with our consensus-building process.

January 2021 NCUTCD Meeting

- **Format:** The January 2021 meeting will be a face-to-face meeting unless circumstances are such that we are forced to cancel the face-to-face format. Even if we have a face-to-face meeting, there are likely to be changes from past practices, which could even include elimination of snacks (perish the thought!). Physical distancing demands could limit participation in the General Sessions.
- **Dates:** January 27-29, 2021 (the meeting could be extended through Saturday to deal with the NPA if needed).
- **Known Conflicts:** The TRB Annual Meeting is January 24-28, 2021. The ATSSA Convention and Traffic Expo is January 29-February 2, 2021. The conflict with the TRB meeting was created when TRB decided to move up their meeting to the prior week after we had signed a contract with the hotel. The week prior to our meeting is inauguration week.
- **Location:** Crystal City Hilton, Arlington, VA
- **Expected Recommendations:** The following represent a preliminary list of proposals that will be sent to sponsors later this summer for review and comment. The list and proposal titles are subject to change.
 - ♦ **Edit:**
 - 20B-EDIT-01: Speed Terminology
 - ♦ **RW:**
 - 20B-RW-01: Mounting height of signs on freeways and expressways
 - 20B-RW-02: BRT/Busway
 - 20B-RW-03: Electronic display
 - ♦ **GMI:** None
 - ♦ **Markings:** None
 - ♦ **Signals:**
 - 20B-SIG-01: Pedestrian push button locations
 - 20B-SIG-02: Leading pedestrian intervals

- ♦ TTC:
 - 20B-TTC-01: Typical Application refinement and stopping sight distance
 - 20B-TTC-02: Typical Application coordination
 - 20B-TTC-03: Shoulder work
 - 20B-TTC-04: Shoulder lane revision
- ♦ RR:
 - 20B-RR-01: Grade Crossings Near Circular Intersections
 - 20B-RR-02: Advance Warning Pavement Markings at Grade Crossings
- ♦ Bikes:
 - 20B-BIK-01: Buffered bike lane/separated bike lane extension markings
 - 20B-BIK-02: Separated bike lane definition
- **Previous Recommendations:** In addition to the proposal we anticipate sending to sponsors later in the summer, there were three proposals that were distributed in Spring 2020 that could be taken up by Council in January 2021.
 - ♦ RW-01: STOP/SLOW Paddle LED Lights
 - ♦ RW-02: Speed Advisory Signs for Changes in Horizontal Alignment
 - ♦ GMI-01: Publicly Accessible Off-Street Parking General Service Signs
- **Virtual Format (if necessary):** If we cancel the face-to-face format, we will conduct virtual meetings, including a virtual Council meeting. At this time, I want you to be aware of the following possible changes if we have to go to a virtual environment. These are preliminary thoughts at this time and are subject to change as we evaluate the June meeting and prepare for the January meeting.
 - ♦ Participants may have to register for the meeting, the same as if it were face-to-face, although the actual registration fee may be different.
 - ♦ Virtual participation could be limited only to those that have registered. This would require some type of authentication method for participation.
 - ♦ Participation may be limited only to those that can log in through a computer.
 - ♦ Requests to attend a virtual technical committee meeting as a non-member would have to be submitted to the TC chair well in advance of the meeting to ensure proper consideration of the requests. TC chairs have full discretion in determining which non-members can attend.
 - ♦ There would be at least one General Session. The format could be different in that verbal comments may be limited only to Council members. Audience members may have to submit comments through the chat feature. There could also be a limit to the number of individuals that could participate in the General Session, including participation to only Council members.
 - ♦ The General Session could be divided into parts, where a large number of individuals could participate during the time that reports are given, with comments/questions submitted through the chat feature. A separate session would convene for considering proposals submitted to Council for approval and that session might be limited to only Council members and technical committee chairs.
 - ♦ The bottom line is that meeting in a virtual environment to establish NCUTCD policy will likely be significantly different than what we have done in the past. We will do our best to make it as inclusive an environment as possible, but may have to put restrictions in place to be efficient in how we conduct our business.

Future NCUTCD Meetings

I want to share some information about dates and locations for future meetings. Of special note is that our January meetings for 2021-2024 will be held at the end of the week of the TRB Annual Meeting. The Board made this decision to avoid requiring members to travel on dates that ranged from January 2-4.

- **June 2021:** The meeting will be at the Founders Inn in Virginia Beach, VA on June 9-11, 2021.
- **January 2022:** The meeting will be held Wednesday-Friday (1/12-14/2022) at the end of the week of the TRB Annual Meeting.
- **June 2022:** The meeting is likely to be held in Seattle, WA. Dates and a hotel have not yet been selected.
- **January 2023:** The meeting will be held Wednesday-Friday (1/11-13/2023) or Thursday-Saturday (1/12-14/2023) at the end of the week of the TRB Annual Meeting.
- **January 2024:** The meeting will be held Wednesday-Friday (1/10-12/2024) or Thursday-Saturday (1/11-13/2024) at the end of the week of the TRB Annual Meeting.

NCUTCD Leadership Biography

Name: Tom Honich

NCUTCD Positions: I currently am serving as the chair of Guide and Motorist Information (GMI) Technical Committee beginning this service January of 2016, preceding this I served as vice chair of GMI beginning this service January of 2015. I became a member of GMI at the June 2011 meeting in Boise Idaho, having attended the two previous National Committee January meetings as a visitor.

Where you live: I live in Jefferson City, MO having moved here in 1994 from St. Louis when I began working for the Missouri Dept. of Transportation.

Professional Positions: I have worked my entire professional career for the Missouri Department of Transportation. I started with the department in April of 1994, working in the Signing and Marking section of the Central Office Maintenance and Traffic Division. My role involved maintaining state wide signing and marking policies, coordinating state wide quality improvement efforts as well as working on striper specifications and acquisitions. April of 1995, I transferred to the local MoDOT district office in their Traffic section where I was involved in all aspects of traffic studies and ultimately supervised the district signal and lighting crews. I returned to Central Office Traffic (Maintenance and Traffic had become individual divisions by this time) in April of 2003, again working in the signing and marking section. July of 2005 I was promoted to State Sign and Marking Engineer with the primary duties of maintaining state policies for signing and marking, coordinating state wide contracts for materials for these efforts as well as overseeing the operations of the state sign production center where all signs for operations were fabricated. September of 2018 I was promoted to Traffic Liaison Engineer, the position I currently hold, where I am over Signing and Marking as well as Traffic Safety efforts within the Division.

Professional Affiliations: Member of ITE, NCUTCD and a member and chair of the GMI technical committee. I was a board member of the Highway Alliance Credit Union (central Missouri Dept of Transportation / Missouri State Highway Patrol CU) for 18 years, chairman of the board for the last 15 years, having just stepped down from that role July 2020.

Family Information: Glenna and I have been married for 20 years. We have one son, Jack, who graduated from high school this year (2020) and will be starting college at Drury University in Springfield, MO studying architecture.

Interests: My family operated a Christmas tree farm in for over 35 years, while we stopped selling trees 5 years ago, we continue to grow a small number of trees for family and friends. We are focusing our efforts on the farm to long term hardwood timber stand improvement and harvesting, far less labor than growing Christmas trees as we all get older. I enjoy wood working and welding and generally creating things with my hands. My wife, son and I also enjoy traveling and hope to see more of the country in the following years.

Transportation History: My entire career in the transportation industry has been with MoDOT. I have been fortunate to work in central office setting state wide direction as well as in the district being out in the field “playing in traffic for the good of the cause” as former supervisor always said. Most of my career has been spent in the traffic division primarily focused on signing and marking, however, while in the district I also was heavily involved in signal operations and maintenance. During my time in the district I also cross trained in construction for a year where I was involved in projects ranging from surface preservation and overlays to major river bridge construction. My current role focuses my attention on making sure our policies are up to date, provide clear guidance that contain the history of how we got where we are today as well as being a resource for the state on these topics. I also focus on developing and providing training for our engineers and field crews on safe and quality signing and marking installations.

Advice for Young Professionals: My advice would be to find a job and subject you can be passionate about, something that is far beyond just a job, but a career you have real interest in. My choice in positions within MoDOT have been driven by my passion and interest, it makes your career far more interesting and enjoyable. Once you find that passion, connect with other who share the same passion through organizations like NCUTCD, pooled fund groups, etc. and build those national networking ties. These relationships become invaluable to advance beyond what is taking place in your back yard and become resource of peers across the country who share your passion.