

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission
Minutes of May 5, 2011

Bozzuto's Incorporated Training Facility
155 Schoolhouse Road, Cheshire

Attendance: Members: Kevin Maloney, Richard Schreiner, Mort Katz, Russ St. John, Bill Kelaher, Dick Carpenter, Ed McAnaney, Alan Sylvestre, Robert Rodman, Ron Kilcoyne. **Ex-officio members:** David LeVasseur (OPM), Fred Riese (DEP). **ConnDOT staff:** Dennis King. **Guests:** John Mosko, Bob Hemingway, Tom Halpin, Bob Hamilton (all from Bozzuto's), Joe Hartwig (HART).

Chairman Maloney called the meeting to order at 1:37 pm and thanked Bozzuto's, Inc. for making their facility available and discussing their driving training program and equipment.

Featured Speakers

Kevin then turned the meeting over to John Mosko, Bob Hemingway, Tom Halpin and Bob Hamilton of Bozzuto's. John Mosko, Director of Risk Management, welcomed the Commission and introduced the other members of the team.

Tom Halpin, Manager of Safety and Accident Investigation, and a former Connecticut State Trooper for 22 years in his previous life, gave a brief overview of the scope of Bozzuto's business. Bozzuto's is a 60-year, old family-run firm in the wholesale grocery distribution business. The firm operates in 12 states out of two warehouses in Cheshire, one half of the former Stop and Shop warehouse in North Haven, and a small facility in Allenton, PA. The Bozzuto's fleet currently consists of 234 power units and 500 trailers, and it logged over 15.6 million miles last year. The firm has 880,000 square feet of warehouse space at its Cheshire facility.

Driver training and safety are very important concerns at Bozzuto's. These concerns led the firm to start a driving enhancement school for its drivers, while offering the training to other companies and entities also to defray some of the costs.

Bob Hemingway explained that Bozzuto's only offers driver training to drivers who already have CDLs. Most driver training courses are 2-3 hours in duration with the exception of the 8-hour defensive driving course. Thirty-eight individual training modules are available which can be combined in various ways to customize training for the needs of any firm. Typically, the training consists of classroom work, videos, computer work and time on the driving simulator.

Bozzuto's has seen a very substantial decrease in accidents and incidents since the driver training program began. Another effect of the program is that drivers are now much more likely to own up to incidents such as damaging a trailer while backing up. For instance, a driver may admit that he did not follow the accident-preventing GOAL procedure to get out and look

before backing up. Class size is typically 2-10 students at a time in order to provide adequate simulator time for all students.

Another new initiative described by Hemingway is a 90-day SMART DRIVER pilot program whereby 25 trucks have been outfitted with cameras that show what is going on in front of the cab and what goes on inside the cab. This program is now in its third month. The cameras take 30 second videos whenever a trigger button is either pressed manually by the driver or triggered automatically by exceeding a certain speed or by other actions. The video clip will consist of the last 15 seconds before the button was activated and the 15 seconds after that point. Seat belt use and cell phone use have been the two major safety issues thus far. The videos are being used in a non-disciplinary way to coach drivers toward safer behavior. Often the drivers did not even realize that they were engaging in a certain behavior or practice that increased accident risk.

The videos have improved driver behavior dramatically. The clips are also very helpful with insurance claims to exonerate drivers by providing evidence that other vehicles were responsible for accidents such as by showing abrupt lane changes or braking on the part of car drivers which caused an accident.

Following this talk, many Commission members took turns on either of the two driver training simulators. A wide range of road and weather conditions can be simulated to test driver awareness and reactions to surrounding conditions.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 7 meeting were approved as written.

Comments from the Public

None.

Comments from Operating Entities

Fred Riese mentioned that tolling options are being investigated as a way to finance the completion of Route 11 from Salem to Interstate 95. He expressed that the low volume of traffic on this road as well as the availability of the non-tolled, parallel Route 85 would make tolling appear to be a very unlikely solution to raise sufficient funds to build this road. Nevertheless, ConnDOT will be hiring a firm to analyze this option.

Kevin reported that last night's New Milford public hearing was well attended and robust. The extension of passenger rail service to New Milford was the dominant topic, with almost all speakers expressing support.

New Business

Fred mentioned that he had just talked to Tom Cheeseman earlier today. Tom had just received notification about the loss of \$138,000 in State dial-a-ride funding for his district, one of four systems affected by the deletion of this line item in the State budget. Tom was very concerned as to what this would mean for the continuation of the dial-a-ride service.

Rick Schriener related that Al Naudus of the Greater New Haven Transit District will be our speaker for the June 2 meeting to discuss the District's accessible taxi program and the hydrogen hybrid vehicle the District is testing.

Chairman Maloney adjourned the meeting at 3:12 pm.