

Governor's Snowmobile Council

February 5, 2025

Present:

Jacob Metayer, VSP
Claire Polfus – Forest Parks & Recreation
Stan Choiniere - Governor Appointee
Mike Mustachio – Governor Appointee
Jim Hill – Governor Appointee

Jeff Halpin – Governor Appointee
Cindy Locke, VAST Executive Director
Patty Companik – VAST President
Shannon Fassett – Vermont DMV

VAST Staff Present:

Mandy Dwinell, Programs & Trails Manager
Matt Tetreault, VAST Trails Administrator
Tina Bedard, Office Manager

The meeting was convened at 3:04 PM via Zoom by Cindy Locke.

Approval of Minutes

Stan Choiniere moved to approve the January minutes as corrected; Jim Hill seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Approval of SSTP Financial Report of December Matt

Jeff Halpin Moved to approve the SSTP Financial Report for December as presented; Stan Choiniere seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Agency Reports

Vermont State Police (VSP), Jacob Metayer

For the online safety courses there were 699 courses taken online and 54 for in person for a total of 753 participants. Last week there were 250 online participants that completed the online course. Last year the total at this time was 882.

Discussion on Train the trainer. Jake will be sending Cindy a description soon.

Jake discussed the possibility of a summer course with old and new instructors. There seems to be a lot of interest.

Jacob reports 1 crash that was off trail in Morgan. The person hit a rock; speed may have been a factor.

Fish & Wildlife, Jenna Reed

Not Present

Sheriff's Association, Marc Poulin –VT Sheriff Association & Washington County Sheriff

Not Present.

Police Chiefs & Southern VT Wilderness Search & Rescue, Paul Doucette

The Southern Vermont Wilderness Search and Rescue Team is fully operational in the southern part of the state. Wilmington, Dover, Bennington and The Vermont Warden Service have all been

conducting active patrols. Participation is mostly on weekends. They have conducted a couple of night patrols and patrols during the week.

People seeing the police at night work very well for us. They have run into a few illegal muffler violations. Normally there are a few per year. During the \$25.00 weekend, five muffler violations were issued on Saturday. They do educate people and write the Vermont Civil Violation Complaint.

We anticipate 8" of snow tomorrow and more on Sunday. Keep the snow coming and the patrols will continue. Everyone wants an inspection decal. Some people don't understand they can't obtain a decal with a temporary Pass.

This year is so much better than the last three years.

I am very appreciative of the Vermont Warden Service as they are always willing to conduct patrols.

Department of Motor Vehicles, Shannon Fassett

As of 1/31/25: 15,768 snowmobiles registered and \$404,824 revenue

1/31/24: 17,671 snowmobiles registered and \$450,521 revenue.

Forest, Parks & Recreation, Claire Polfus

FPR Program Move Forward Vermont event happening at the State House Wednesday 2/12

Reminder of Outdoor Recreation Day is Wednesday 2/12

RTP Grants are closed, will be connecting with the ranking committee soon.

VAST

Update

TMA sales as of today are 17,761.

Ride for \$25.00 sales doubled this year. Last year was 207, this year was 428. All the proceeds for ride for \$25.00 go directly to the clubs.

Discussion on how many 3-day passes or ride for \$25.00 passes turn into full season passes. Cindy will see about getting a report.

Law Enforcement (LE) Committee, Gary

Gary was not present. Cindy said she knows LE has been out. 5 muffler violations were reported during the Ride for \$25 weekend.

VAST will send more safety check stickers.

VAST Safety Committee, Stan

The big topic right now is the "What 3 Words" app. They are still in the process of creating a sign. The committee would like colors that make it easy for everyone to read, including color blind people. The committee is still planning on going to trade shows, club events, etc. to promote safety and safety awareness.

Discussion on VAST being picked for the business of the month by the Central Vermont Economic Division. Cindy and Mandy will be at the Dick Page Ride in and Chicken BBQ.

Discussion on Stan doing videos to promote safety, and possibilities of others helping that are Safety Ambassadors.

SSTP Trail Report, Matt

85% of the state is open, hoping after the next few storms we will have 100% open.

Legislative Report

House Report

Not available.

Cindy sent out letters for appointment. Jim Casey was suggested.

Senate Report

Not available.

Cindy sent out letters for appointment. Pat Brennon was suggested.

Discussion on the AOT making changes so there would be a possibility that VAST could get signs through them.

Appointee Reports

Northwest, Jim

More and more trails are opening. Nothing else to report.

Northeast, Mike

90% of trails are open. Some are closed due to logging. There was an accident previously discussed that was in Morgan. There was another crash in Pittsburg with injuries.

Mike would like to remind everyone that you do not have to move to where your phone says it has service to dial 911. There are towers put in all over VT just for 911 calls or texts.

It has been noted that only about half of the events are being updated on the website and county directors should remind clubs.

Central, Jeff

Trails are in good condition. A lot more will be open with the incoming storms.

South, Stan

A high percentage of the trails are open now, hoping it will be 100% soon.

Weston bridge has been put in and is accessible now.

A landowner is still giving trouble over the town owning a 4th class road. The landowner put up a gate and locked it. Stan said that with the town's permission they have cut the locks a few times and hope that it doesn't keep happening as it could be a safety hazard.

On February 15 there is a kids ride club event in Chester as a reminder to everyone.

Motion to Adjourn:

Mike Mustachio moved to close the meeting at 4:01 pm; Jeff Halpin seconded. Motion carried.

Next Meeting: The next Governor's Snowmobile Council scheduled meeting will be March 5, at 3:00 pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Bedard
VAST Office Manager