

Governor's Snowmobile Council
January 4, 2023 DRAFT

Present:

Pat Poulin, Chairman
Star Poulin, Governor Appointee
Jeff Haplin, Governor Appointee
Gary Nolan, VAST LE Committee Chair
Jacob Metayer, VT Dept of Public Safety
Kenny Gammell, Governor Appointee
Dick Jewett, Governor Appointee
Jeff Halpin, Governor Appointee
Jenna Reed, Fish & Wildlife
Shannon Fassett, Vermont DMV
Michael Smith, Vermont DMV Coordinator

VAST Staff Present:

Cindy Locke, Executive Director
Matt Tetreault, Trails Administrator
Ken Brown, Trails Manager/LVRT
Mandy Dwinell, Office & Programs Manager

Guests:

Stan Choiniere, Safety Committee
Mike Mutascio, Northeast

The meeting was convened at 3:04PM via Zoom by Pat Poulin.

Approval of Minutes

**Dick Jewett moved to approve the November minutes as presented; Jeff Halpin seconded.
MOTION CARRIED.**

Approval of Minutes

**Star Poulin moved to approve the December minutes as presented; Dick Jewett seconded.
MOTION CARRIED.**

November SSTP Financial Report, Matt Tetreault

The report from November was in the December Board of Directors' meeting packet.
Usual expenses such as admin, postage, and basic operating expenses.

Agency Reports

Vermont State Police, Jacob Metayer

Snowmobile Safety Courses: In-person: 50 students & online: 406 students as of 01/04/2023, with every student passing the course. There is some missing data from a recent course and will be included in next month's report.

Received an inquiry from NBC News requesting footage of snowmobiling: riding, safety & demonstration. They also contacted VAST and spoke with Cindy Locke regarding snowmobiling & safety. Cindy shared footage from the VAST website. Jacob shared there was a recently a club inspection day in Derby with 25 trailer inspections completed. Jeff Halpin inquired about a possible inspection day at Kenyan's Field and will connect further directly with Jacob.

Fish & Wildlife, Jenna Reed

Hardwick Police Dept(PD) tentatively has a training scheduled for Jan. 18th at 2pm, weather dependent, with location TBD. Invited Newport PD, as they had requested more information on safety and procedures regarding snowmobile safety.

Windham County Sheriff's Dept is a newer Law Enforcement Agency and recently completed a safety training.

Sheriff's Association, Mark Anderson – President of VT Sheriff Association & Windham County Sheriff

N/A

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

N/A

Department of Motor Vehicles, Mike Smith

DMV report: 17,788 registered sleds as of 1/4/2023.

2022: 18,310

2021: 17,162

2020: 17,224

2019:17,241

2018: 17,506

2017:18,184

Snow Bikes:

Discussion regarding snow and electric bikes.

Mike shared attorney reviewed the statute doesn't fit the definition of a snowmobile as it includes pedals and pedals required to start.

Jenna shared in the chat: "Snowmobile" means a self-propelled vehicle intended for off-road travel primarily on snow, having a curb weight of not more than 793.783 kg (1,750 lbs.); driven by track or tracks in contact with the snow; and steered by a ski or skis in contact with the snow. The maximum width of a snowmobile shall be no more than 48 inches. An all-terrain vehicle converted to operate with tracks shall not be considered to be a snowmobile.

Discussion on conversion bike and its definition.

State statute defines a snowmobile as including a track and ski.

Forest, Parks & Recreation, Claire Polfus

N/A

VAST

State Funded Equipment Grant Program, Cindy Locke

No changes, hoping to hear more within the next few weeks.

VAST TMA Sales, Cindy Locke

17,886 TMAs sold to date vs 19,328 TMAs sold to date for the 2022 season.

Early Bird TMAs = 2023: 16,149; 2022: 18,341; 2021: 15,435

2022 was an anomaly year for Early Bird TMAs

Law Enforcement Committee, Gary Nolan

Hopefully with the unseasonable weather, hoping to complete more of the LVRT.

Cindy hasn't heard back from Orange or Franklin County Sheriff's Dept. and will continue to follow up with the departments.

VAST Safety Committee, Stan

Focus has been on the preparation for the Military and First Responder Day on January 21st. Decision made by Monday 1/9 regarding postponing or canceling the event due to weather.

Roger has been working on completing the presentation for the dispatchers.

Safety Ambassador's new logging system went live recently as an electronic method for a more efficient recording method. Cindy shared that the new platform is user-friendly, with reporting and is well received by the Safety Ambassador.

5 landing zones were approved in Plymouth, 10 total within the state.

SSTP Trail Report, Matt Tetreault

Due to the recent rain and unseasonable temperatures, some trail aspects may have to restart the process.

Legislative Report

House Report, Brian Smith

N/A

Senate Report, Jane

N/A

Annual funding for Southern VT Wilderness Search and Rescue, Paul Doucette

N/A

Insurance Card Requirement/DMV Bill?, Jane

N/A

Appointee Reports

Northwest, Pat

Checking for down trees, water, and trail conditions. Over 84 hours logged within the last 2 weeks on clearing trees and trails. Resetting stop and stop ahead signs due to high winds.

Northeast, Ken

A lot of trees are down due to the recent storm.

Central, Jeff

Cleaning up and clearing trees, particularly in the Barre and Huntington area. Work on getting trails prepped and ready. Reminder to obtain landowner permission

South, Dick Jewett

Week of a good storm, some down trees with lots of water. Forest & Parks asked for a gate to be closed until more snow we

Discussion on 710 trail. The club is working on communicating more openly with VAST and landowners. Daily work happening in the area with Doug Jacobs and Ivor. VAST has requested new landowner forms be redone and sent to VAST. The club has been putting out hay bales and remediation.

Next meeting is Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at 3pm via Zoom.

Motion to Adjourn:

Dick Jewett moved to close the meeting at 3:55pm; Mike Mutascio seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Mandy Dwinell
VAST Office & Programs Manager