

Governor's Snowmobile Council

January 8, 2025

Present:

Pat Poulin, Chairman
Jacob Metayer, VSP
Claire Polfus – Forest Parks & Recreation
Stan Choiniere, Governor Appointee
Gary Nolan, VAST L/E Committee Chair

Jeff Halpin – Governor Appointee
Cindy Locke, VAST Executive Director
Patty Companik – VAST President
Jenna Reed – Fish & Wildlife

VAST Staff Present:

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

The meeting was convened at 3:05 PM via Zoom by Pat Poulin.

Approval of Minutes

Stan Choiniere moved to approve the December minutes as presented; Gary Nolan seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Approval of SSTP Financial Report of November Matt

Stan Choiniere Moved to approve the SSTP Financial Report for November as presented; Gary Nolan seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Agency Reports

Vermont State Police (VSP), Jacob Metayer

4 Classes have turned in the roster.
42 in person participants, missing one roster still.
Online there were 169 participants. for a total of 211.

Discussion on train the trainer. VAST will add something to the enews to see who is interested in teaching. There will be no cost to VAST if a train the trainer class is held. Jacob wants to make sure interested parties are aware that they would have to pass a record check. Jacob will be sending Cindy a write-up.

Discussion on trail map/app.

Fish & Wildlife, Jenna Reed

Wardens have been on the trails. Over 100 inspections have been done. At least 20 warnings were issued. The issues that have been brought up are dealer plates. They are not being displayed appropriately, or at all, or being used inappropriately. Tickets will be issued for this. Jenna is sending fine costs for tickets.

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

Not available.

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

Woodford has been groomed, some clubs have not yet.
The special persons ride, and hot dog roast is in process of being planned.

Department of Motor Vehicles, Shannon Fassett

Not present. A report was sent:

As of 12/31/24 14,227 snowmobiles have been registered, the revenue \$366,189.

Forest, Parks & Recreation, Claire Polfus

FPR has been busy with the full application development, and RTP grants. They have been busy with other projects.

Discussion, Jeff Halpin stated that at the Washington County meeting it was a complaint that people were riding closed trails with no TMA.

Sno-Bike Discussion

If wardens find people have questions or want to ride sno-bikes they will be told to refer the parties to clubs. If the clubs find there is enough interest, they should start a petition.

Discussion on water bars on state lands that are on snowmobile trails. It was discussed that clubs can contact the FPR person in charge of their area and they can work together.

VAST

Update

VAST sales as of today: 14,449. 87 more than yesterday. 500 below what we were last month.

Discussion on snowmobilers riding on VAST trails before the season opens on 12/16/2024.

Law Enforcement (LE) Committee, Gary

Hardwick Police were out one day and did 16 inspections. There were a couple of failures to display TMA.

No patrols yet in Morrisville.

L/E contracts have all been turned in.

Windsor is now covering part of Orange County.

VAST Safety Committee, Stan

Met last month. Working on new programs and developing a pilot program for safety.

Looking for a creative name to call the program to draw more interest.

Still in process of creating a sign for trails for the "What 3 Words" app. It will include a QR code so the riders can download the app on the trail.

The committee would like an off-trail riding video to be shown before a TMA is purchased. It explains the negative effects off-trail riding can create. It will be brought in front of the board.

SSTP Trail Report, Matt

Woodford, Island Pond, higher elevation trails are doing okay. Other clubs are seeing water on the trails where it hasn't been seen before. It is hoped that when we get a good amount of snow that won't be a problem.

2024 Vermont Snowmobile Regulations Update – Pat/Cindy

This is still being worked on.

Legislative Report

House Report

Not available.

Senate Report

Not available.

Appointee Reports

Northwest, Jim

Not present.

Northeast, Mike

Not present.

Central, Jeff

Jeff claims they are getting 3-4 inches of snow every night.

Loop trail will be done by Saturday.

This area is seeing more water so they would like to put in culverts instead of water bars.

Discussion on Vintage TMA's. It was said this needs to be discussed in a board meeting.

The Worcester bridge has been hard for the club to handle so the county is taking it on to repair.

South, Stan

The Route 100 bridge will be worked on this month. Chester was being sued for the 4th class rd. on Route 12 to be given to a citizen. It was ruled by an attorney (10 days ago) that the town will not be giving up 4th class roads.

Discussion on the L/E snowmobile training. The training will be at the police academy in Pittsford.

Appointee Coverage Areas – Pat

Northwest – Jim Hill

1. Grand Isle
2. Franklin
3. Chittenden
4. Addison

Northeast – Mike Mutascio

1. Orleans
2. Essex
3. Caledonia

Central – Jeff Halpin

1. Washington
2. Orange
3. Lamoille

Southern – Stan Choiniere

1. Rutland
2. Windsor

3. Bennington
4. Windham

Motion to Adjourn:

Matthew Tetreault moved to close the meeting at 4:30 pm; Gary Nolan seconded. Motion carried.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Bedard
VAST Office Manager