**Meeting Minutes**

Governor’s Snowmobile Advisory Council

February 12, 2021 ~ Holiday Inn Hotel, Spearfish, SD

**Call to Order**

Chairman Dave Kennedy called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Members Present: Bruce Hintz, Dave Kennedy, Al Nagel, Todd Sprang, and Gary Ulmer.

Members Present via Zoom: Todd Wilkinson

Members Absent: Scott Erstad

Game, Fish and Parks Staff Present: Matt Snyder, Shannon Percy, and Ryan Raynor.

**Adoption of the Agenda**

Nagel made a motion to adopt the agenda as proposed. Hintz seconded. **Motion Carried.**

**Approval of the Minutes**

A motion was made by Nagel and was seconded by Ulmer to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2020, meeting. **Motion Carried.**

**Legislative Update**

Raynor stated while 4 bills were introduced that impacted public meetings such as this one, nothing would significantly change based on his interpretation. Raynor stated if passed, the GFP legal advisory would direct the department how to proceed forward.

Raynor also stated no bills were introduced that would impact the snowmobile gas tax.

**Black Hills Update**

Percy gave a brief update on the snowmobile season stating it had been very slow start to the season. Traffic has been down due to low snow conditions. Due to the low snow conditions, many vehicles and side by sides have been found on the trail but was happy to report that no differentials have gone out.

Percy reminded the council about current talks with the private landowner Kaschmitters about current snowmobile trail locations and future development in the same area. On top of this issue, people are buying up property throughout all of Black Hills with the idea of living year-round. This means some Snowmobile Trails on existing Forrest Service roads which aren’t plowed, may have to be plowed in the future as private development grows.

Percy introduced a few more members in the Audience including Steve Kozel and Bonnie Jones from the Black Hills National Forest.

Steve Kozel stated the Black Hills has seen accelerated sales of property in the past year. These purchases are for primary living quarters or residential development purposes, not the seasonal housing we’ve grown accustomed too. Years ago, the FS got easements on roads that went through these private properties. However, in the easements, it just states public access, not specific or exclusive use. Each case is unique as the easements from the early 1900’s up to the 1960’s, were written differently. You also have the issues with adjoining private properties. Steve said this is a huge issue when it comes to its potential impact of the snowmobile trail system. The FS is trying to due it’s due diligence, with their property management folks so they can understand what they can or can’t do.

Gary Ulmer asked about the recent report about the UTV/OHV summit that made the news. Kozel stated they have been in OHV management permitting for a decade now and the growth continues to skyrocket providing more challenges then when the program was implemented. The goal of this summit is to bring around 100 different people, entities, and organizations together to help solve a variety of problems the Forrest Service now faces.

Percy stated 4 people from GFP will be part of the discussion.

**East River Update**

Raynor stated it’s been a slow grooming season for the 15 clubs who participate in the Grant in Aid program. Very few clubs have any grooming rotations and most that have groomed are in the Coteau Des Prairie system, including Clear Lake and Brookings. Other clubs with one or two rotations all season long, includes the Siouxland and Milbank clubs.

Raynor also stated that the Siouxland club will need put on a new track before the end of the season, and the Miller groomer is currently on Purple Wave being auctioned off.

Raynor shared with the group that at state convention, a member of the Beresford club gave a demonstration of an adaptor he built which attaches to rebar. With the help of a Heavy-Duty rotary drill, you can easily drill a snowmobile sign into frozen ground. While a video was sent to Raynor, he stated he can share that video with the snowmobile community so they can understand what this adaptor does. It is Raynor’s intent to come to the May meeting, with quotes of rotary drills with larger amp hour battery quotes along with a quote of what the adaptor will cost. Raynor has no doubt it will cost $10,000 and more to make sure all 15 clubs have one rotary drill, 2 batteries and 1 adaptor.

**SDSU Veteran’s Affairs Snowmobile Ride**

Raynor reminded the council this event was cancelled by the SDSU Covid-19 Affairs Committee. Raynor reassured the SDSU Veteran’s Affairs Office the commitment that GFP and the Snowmobile Community has to the event, and we all looked forward to it next year.

**Kalkomey Online Snowmobile Safety Course**

Raynor stated there have been a lot of recent discussions about providing the snowmobile safety course online, mostly due to Covid-19 concerns. After discussions with Kalkomey Enterprises, who currently provides the materials necessary for a safety course, he learned the department already has a contract with Kalkomey. Online courses include hunter education, boating education, cross bow education and more. Raynor is currently working with Kalkomey, to sign a MOU which will be connected to the department related contract. Raynor will be working with the YHETI’s and the SDSA Safety committee, to provide a more detailed look, of how this course will look at the May meeting.

**FY 21 Budget Review:**

Raynor shared a budget summary with the council which showed expenses through January 30, 2021. **Total expenditures** for the snowmobile program totaled **$497,768** out of $1,386,351 budget authority.

* Salaries and Benefits - $141,639
* Travel - $20,478
* Contractual Services – $20,384
* Supplies and Materials – $60,358
* Grants - $50,678
* Capital Assets - $204,231

**FY ’21 Revenue Report:**

Raynor gave a brief review of revenue received through January 31st, 2021:

* Gas Tax - $380,415 (10,869 registered sleds for FY21 which runs July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021)
* License Fees - $60,597
* 3% Excise Tax - $109,422
* Interest - $24,152
* Other - $6,295
* **Total - $580,881**

**Safety & Accident Report**

Raynor mentioned 16 accidents had been reported with 0 fatalities. Percy stated most have been minor accidents with only 1 have a bodily injury so far.

Raynor mentioned that a couple safety courses had taken place both from the Siouxland club. Between both courses, 11 people attended, and 11 people were certified.

**Governor’s Snowmobile Ride**

Percy gave a brief description of the ride selected for tomorrow’s event, which included leaving Hardy Camp, and going north on 1 through Trailshead. Percy stated this was the best trail route for snow conditions and it has improved sense he selected it. Trail 1 will be taken all the way to the warming shelter at Schoolhouse. We’ll have a warming shelter, burn barrels to help keep people warm. After leaving the shelter, we’ll take 4A to the east, and then back on trail 4. Due to the cold temperatures, a couple vehicles will also be at the shelter, where if they don’t want to ride anymore, we can bring them back by vehicle.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 15th,2021, at the Capitol in Pierre.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Ulmer and was seconded by Nagel to adjourn at 7:08 p.m. **Motion Carried.**