**Meeting Minutes**

Governor’s Snowmobile Advisory Council

February 14, 2020 ~ Holiday Inn Hotel, Spearfish, SD

**Call to Order**

Chairman Gary Ulmer called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**Roll Call**

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

Members Absent: Todd Wilkinson, Scott Erstad

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

**Adoption of the Agenda**

Kennedy 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 Sprang to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2019, meeting. **Motion Carried.**

Percy introduced a few more members in the Audience including Steve Kozel and Bonnie Jones from the Black Hills National Forest and Al Nedved and Matt Snyder from Game Fish and Parks. Raynor also asked Kirsten Vanderhamel to introduce herself as well as the YHETI representative on the board.

**Public Comment Period**

No comments were made during this meeting.

**Legislative Update**

Senate Bill 90 was a bill that would have created a small structure and large culvert fund in the statewide Gas Tax law. As written this bill did not impact the Snowmobile portion of the law. This bill did not leave committee and was deferred to the 41st day.

**Black Hills Update**

Percy gave a brief update on the snowmobile season stating it had been a busy season so far. Percy shared some trail counter numbers through January, comparing last year to this season. Last season we had just over 39,600 and this year counters were just over 70,200. Percy stated we started on December 15th and been running solid since. He also mentioned how he’s seen a lot of kids snowmobiling this season, which is great to see.

Percy stated we did have one more differential go out but stated tracks have been the big issue this season. The deteriorated tracks are always on our oldest tuckers and they are all on the left rear. Percy contacted Tucker to see if any issues with designs happened at that time these tracks were manufactured.

Percy did thank the Mitchell club for allowing the use of their tucker, to help offset his groomers being down.

Percy stated he is working with a landowner and DOT on a section of Trail 7 to continue keeping the snowmobile trail on this section. The landowner is frustrated due to the ATV damage. DOT is now going in front of the DOT commission to close that road ditch to ATV traffic. They would then be able to write citations to ATV’s caught in the ditch. Snowmobiles would be exempt from this closure and would still be allowed in the ditch.

**Fat Tire Bike Update**

Percy stated he is tracking complaints about FTB, including from the public, GFP rangers and groomer operators. At this point, he has not seen as much traffic as in years past. Even night traffic has dropped. Al Nagel asked about creating a FTB permit? Percy stated he was contacted by a member of the FTB community who asked us about how to donate to the program. We believe they are trying to do a Go Fund Me page to donate those dollars to the snowmobile program. Raynor stated they could talk to administration about possible changing the $20 Snowmobile Motorcycle Pass to also include the FTB.

John LaFramboise asked if RTP could be used to help the FTB community? Raynor stated that is an option worth pursuing. Raynor stated, Randy Kittle, the RTP coordinator has received an equipment application two years in a row from the Spearfish Biking Club and both applications did not meet the Buy America credentials RTP now has. Members of the audience felt they did not have the volunteer support, to truly take on equipment grooming consistently and will continue to rely on the snowmobile program to groom their trail. Bonnie explained that the Grooming Alliance of Spearfish, known as GAS, has the goal to groom other sections of trail, not rely on snowmobile trails.

**East River Update**

Raynor stated all clubs have groomed multiple rotations up to this point, except for Beresford who just hasn’t had enough snow. For the 2nd straight year, most of eastern SD has seen more clubs grooming and grooming more consistently than the historical norm. He’s heard lots of great and excellent trail conditions from the Coteau Des Prairie system, Aberdeen, Milbank, and Sisseton. Raynor stated clubs like Huron, Redfield, De Smet, Madison have been more hit and miss.

Raynor stated the groomer in Webster has been down due to major repairs caused by dropping one track through a frozen section of ditch. While pulling the groomer out, damage was caused to the track, leaf spring, transfer case mounts, door and seals that caused around $10,000 in labor and parts. At this time, we are still waiting on some parts to get shipped.

Raynor also stated that Aberdeen put on a brand-new track on at the beginning of the season, and the Huron groomer is currently on Purple Wave being auctioned off.

**SDSU Veteran’s Affairs Snowmobile Ride**

Raynor gave a brief update on the 2nd Annual SDSU Veteran’s Affairs ride. Raynor stated members of the Brookings club donated their time to help with the event, along with several members of GFP. 8 members from the Army, 5 from the Army NG, 4 marines, 5 Airforce NG, 1 Army Reserves attended. Out of the number who attended, 10 were still actively serving, 4 actively serving and deployed multiple times.

Raynor also thanked the clubs who continue to donate for the event. Those donations continued to trickle into SDSA.

**FY 20 Budget Review:**

Raynor shared a budget summary with the council which showed expenses through February 01, 2020. **Total expenditures** for the snowmobile program total **$431,571** out of $1,376,225 budget authority.

* Salaries and Benefits - $133,733
* Travel - $13,219
* Contractual Services – $42,389
* Supplies and Materials – $95,490
* Grants - $53,011
* Capital Assets - $93,729

**FY ’20 Revenue Report:**

Raynor gave a brief review of revenue received through January 31st, 2020:

* Gas Tax - $406,805 (11,623 registered sleds for FY20 which runs July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020)
* License Fees - $52,028
* 3% Excise Tax - $79,400
* Interest - $21,585
* Other - $7,902
* **Total - $567,720**

**Safety Report**

Raynor mentioned 14 accidents had been reported with 0 fatalities. These numbers are down from the previous year and 50% of the accidents were rentals, which is also down.

1 accident has been recorded in the Webster Area.

Raynor mentioned that a couple safety courses had taken place from Aberdeen and De Smet. Aberdeen had 12 attend with 9 certified and De Smet had 3 attend with 3 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 south through the back-door parking lot coming to our first junction at 1s. We’ll be taking a right at 1s, to 1, Jump on trail 12 to the pit stop at 12 B and 12, which includes a shelter. Back up 12 to 13 until we get to trail 1. Then take trail 1 to the backdoor again. Percy reminded people that Trailshead sleds need to stay on the trail.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 2nd,2020, at the Capitol in Pierre.

**Adjournment**

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