

Governor's Snowmobile Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Saturday August 15th, 2026

Chair Bruce Hintz called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

Council members present: Bruce Hintz, Al Nagel, Dave Kennedy, Todd Wilkinson, Todd Sprang and Gary Ulmer were present.

Council Members Present on Zoom: Scott Erstad

Not Present:

Game, Fish, and Parks (GFP) members present: Jeff Vanmeeteren, Al Nedved, Pat Buscher, Shannon Percy and Ryan Raynor.

Agenda Adoption

A motion was made by Wilkinson and seconded by Sprang to adopt the agenda.

Motion Carried.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Kennedy and seconded by Hintz to approve the minutes of May 16th, 2026; meeting as presented. **Motion Carried.**

Open Forum

Weaver provided an update after recently attending the International Snowmobile Congress. Weaver reminded the group that South Dakota will be hosting this conference in 2028 in Rapid City.

Council Member Terms

Raynor stated GFP recently found out Todd Wilkinson and Bruce Hintz had terms that expired on June 30th. Raynor stated this was addressed through department administrators, and we fully expect both members to be reappointed to the council.

East River Update

Raynor stated we'll talk more in depth about the equipment during the budget discussion later in the meeting, where he provided an update on the equipment transfer.

After the May meeting it was discussed whether park staff could help place signs where it made logistical sense. The operations team discussed this as an option and felt a seasonal or volunteer whose park schedule allowed that flexibility wouldn't be a problem. Club members would have to be with them as they wouldn't know the signing guidelines. Raynor stated if clubs need help from their local parks, to reach out to him, then he'll coordinate with staff in the area.

Raynor told the council he plans on installing 5 or 6 traffic counters across eastern trail systems. This has been discussed for years to help figure out trail use and would provide valuable data just as it does in the hills. Raynor stated he hasn't figured out which trail systems will get these but understands he has some challenges to make

sure these counters aren't tripped by wildlife, or placed where they'll easily get buried, or count vehicles on the road instead of snowmobiles in the ditch.

FY 2027 East River GIA Applications Finalized

Raynor reminded the staff of the individual grants shared back in May, which included 13 total grants, 10 using state owned equipment and 3 using privately owned equipment, 863 miles, 1,325 grooming miles with a total grant request of \$356,635. Raynor stated with the next agenda item, we'll delay the vote on approving these applications so we can discuss the reimbursement rate increases.

26-27 GIA Requests	
Club	Total
Aberdeen	\$27,555
Beresford	\$27,706
Brookings	\$42,832
Clear Lake	\$37,149
DeSmet	\$39,338
Huron	\$13,465
Milbank	\$25,434
Miller	\$23,478
Mitchell	\$8,782
Poinsett	\$29,303
Siouxland	\$21,472
Sisseton	\$35,873
Watertown	\$24,248
Webster	\$0
Totals	\$356,635

GIA Reimbursement Rate Increases

Back in May, Raynor was asked to collect quotes from local contractors on placing signs in the right-of-way. Raynor was able to get a quote from Mertz Fencing out of Webster for \$6.50 per sign and Vosika Fencing out of Aberdeen for \$20,000 for 80 miles.

After collecting this information, Raynor talked to various Webster club members to understand if additional dollars from higher reimbursements would help them recruit folks to help sign. 1 major point stood out to the club, which was if we pay a contractor that amount, why can't we be paid that? All agreed and realized we needed to revise the signing formula so clubs could pay out more for this specific task.

Raynor shared a list of last year's expenses, including new reimbursement rate increases for various categories, including 2 new categories. Both Maintenance, Repair and Grooming for state owned equipment would be increased from \$13/hr to \$18/hr. Grooming for privately owned equipment was increased from \$72/hr to \$75/hr.

The signing formula was changed to be based on a tiered system to make it fair for everyone. The reimbursement formula is based on the number of signs/mile, \$3/sign and total trail miles in the sponsor's proposal. If the sponsor's total trail miles fall within 0-50 miles, 1,000 signs are used in the formula. If the sponsor's total trail miles fall within 51-100 miles, 1,500 signs are used in the formula. Finally, any sponsor with a trail network over 101 miles, 1,750 signs will be used in the formula. An example for an 88-mile trail proposal is: 1,500 signs X \$3.00/sign = \$4,500

Raynor presented 2 new reimbursement categories as Vehicle Mileage and ATV/OHV use while placing and removing signs. Raynor shared a few examples of the formulas, but the council agreed to change the vehicle mileage based on the tiered mileage system now approved for signing and keep the formula shown for OHV use.

The formula for vehicle reimbursement is based on the sponsor's total trail miles falling within 0-50, 50 miles is used in the formula. If the sponsor's total trail miles fall within 51-100, 100 miles is used in the formula. Any sponsor with total trail miles 100 or more, actual trail miles will be used. Other segments of the formula include the state reimbursement rate for a personal truck which is .91 cents and 15 vehicle rotations. An example of an 88-mile trail proposal is: 100 miles X .91/mile X 15 rotations = \$1,365.

For the ATV/OHV category, a flat rate of \$15/hr, which is based on Federal reimbursement rates along with actual trail miles is used. This formula is \$15/hr X total trail miles = total reimbursed. An example of an 88-mile trail system is: \$15/hr x 88 miles = \$1,320.

Sprang stated I can support this, but the clubs need to make sure the money goes towards the individuals and not the club accounts, especially signing, vehicle mileage and OHV use. GFP agreed. Sprang then stated he knows a lot of clubs have healthy check books and so it's not just a money issue.

Wilkinson stated he's not in favor of paying contract related pricing to the clubs. He got into this sport a long time ago because it was volunteer based, not to make money. He then stated if we get to the point where we must pay contractors to place and remove signs, the heart for this program is obviously lost, and we'd be better off shutting it down. If the eastern side can't be volunteer based, it just won't work anymore.

Raap gave some historical context and explained volunteer clubs are changing, and this is a labor issue. Most of the folks who fund the program live east river and we should support them, even with a hybrid system. Raap stated the Siouxland club almost didn't have a trail system and felt we needed to pay much higher rates.

Wilkinson stated the only reason our club exists is because of the trail. If we go back to where everything is funded, the same effect will take place, and we'll wipe out the nucleus of why we are doing that. If we must use contractors to operate the GIA program, it's the beginning of the end for this program.

The consensus from the council was that it must be volunteer based and using contractors east river is not supported.

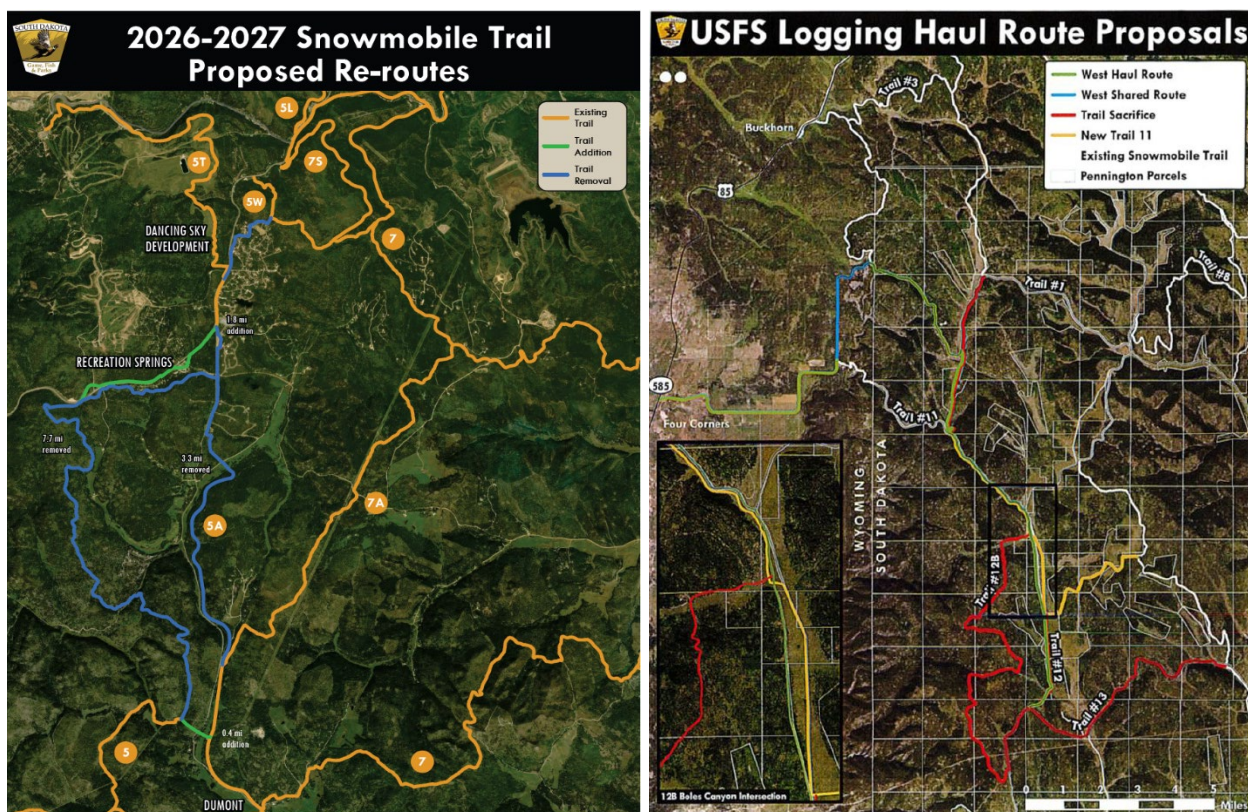
***These formulas were created after the meeting and shared with the council by email, where the council also approved all grant applications based on these new reimbursement rates and categories.

Wilkinson made a motion to approve the 2026-2027 GIA package, seconded by Ulmer. Motion Carried.

Black Hills Update

Percy shared both reroutes, pictured below. Percy stated he's working with DOT on trail 5A down to Recreational Springs Resort, shown in green. Percy reminded the council which areas on the map Kaschmitter owned and where we are pursuing easements.

The 2nd map shows the trail system down in the southwest by the moon area. These changes are due to logging and are hopefully the final year of logging in the area.



Kaschmitter Easements Update

Percy shared a map that reflects the lots we are pursuing permanent easements, including 8 different landowners plus the Kaschmitter property. Percy stated Al's provided a lot of help coordinating with Kaschmitters and we've had a lot of changes that we continue to communicate about. The final appraisal is being completed soon on the Kaschmitter property and Percy will be reaching out to the 8 landowners to share their appraisal estimates.

Wilkinson asked what the worst-case scenario looks like? Percy stated you'd have to take trail 7, all the way around and we all know it doesn't hold any snow. We wouldn't have access to 5T (Terry Peak Resort) and Recreational Springs Resort.

Economic Impact Study Update

Raynor stated this has been a very frustrating process as he's reached out to USD multiple times in the past few weeks and made no connections. Raynor will continue working towards updating this survey with USD for the 26-27 season.

Wilkinson stated if you can't do a multiyear average, I'd skip a year as the numbers they'd return from the industry survey would be terrible with last year's snow conditions. Raynor agreed.

Trail Use Survey Update

Raynor stated GFP has a final product from the RRC Snowmobile Trail Use Survey with over 50 pages of information. This is much larger than what we had anticipated and means a lot of information in this document is yet to be reviewed in detail as we look for the highlights prior to this meeting.

Percy and Raynor shared a few pages from the document reflecting actual counts of both residents and nonresidents, demographic information, specific trail use through heat maps and much more.

Raynor stated he'll be working on printing this document professionally, so it can be shared with the snowmobile community. Percy and Raynor will do a breakout session at the convention providing more detail and we'll also introduce this document to the GFP commission.

Wilkinson asked if were able to see off trail use from their heat maps? Percy stated it's minimal with this study. Raynor stated now that we've done this, to ask for that information more specifically, down the road and enter into a new contract over a good snow year, was discussed with RRC.

FY 2026 Budget Review (July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026)

The snowmobile program spent \$792,662 during FY26 and revenue earned totaled \$913,424. The snowmobile trails fund increased from \$631,354 to **\$752,116** as of June 30th, 2025.

Total Revenue Earned in FY26 Included:

Gas Tax:	\$432,985 (14,619 Registered Snowmobiles)
\$10 Snowmobile License:	\$ 71,133
3% Registration Tax:	\$219,653
\$40 5-Day Temporary Permit:	\$ 1,960
Interest:	\$ 35,723
Charges for Sales/Services:	\$ 58,100
Other:	<u>\$ 15,190</u>

Total: **\$913,424**

Raynor stated the revenue earned in Excise Tax is one of the lowest numbers we've received since the late 90's.

Total Expenditures in FY26 Included:

Fulltime Salaries:	\$141,846	Contractual Services:	\$104,424
Seasonal Salaries:	\$ 65,713	Supplies & Materials:	\$108,117
Benefits	\$ 53,470	Grants:	\$126,231
Travel:	\$ 43,893	Capital Assets:	\$149,508

Total: \$792,662

Capital Assets Purchased:

Raynor shared with the council the slide below to remind them what was purchased under capital assets and what RTP dollars were spent in FY26. This slide also shows what GFP plans on purchasing in Capital Assets and how much will be spent through snowmobile and RTP funds for FY27.

FY25 Capital Assets \$264,000				
(July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025)	Project Exp.	Actual SNMB Exp.	RTP Authority	RTP Actual Exp.
Trail Groomer	\$306,551	\$66,551	\$240,000	\$240,000
Tracks x 2	\$16,000	\$15,666	\$0	\$0
Easements	\$149,658	\$0	\$119,726	\$42,300
Total	\$472,209	\$82,217	\$359,726	\$282,300
FY26 Capital Assets \$264,000				
(July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026)	Project Exp.	Actual SNMB Exp.	RTP Authority	RTP Actual Exp.
Trail Groomer	\$315,394	\$63,394	\$252,000	\$252,000
Track	\$20,000	\$7,433	\$0	\$0
Easements	\$18,146	\$0	\$14,517	\$0
Forrestry Head	\$40,000	\$37,811	\$0	\$0
Lease Payment	\$40,870	\$40,870	\$0	\$0
Total	\$434,410	\$149,508	\$266,517	\$252,000
FY27 Capital Assets \$264,000				
(July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026)	Project Exp.	Projected SNMB Exp.	RTP Authority	RTP Actual Exp.
Trail Groomer	\$322,764	\$0	\$0	\$0
Easements	\$0	\$65,984	\$329,921	\$0
MISC. Equipment	\$14,016	\$14,016	\$0	\$0
Radios	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$0
Total	\$356,780	\$100,000	\$329,921	\$0
		Total RTP for Easements-3 Grants	SNMB Funds Spent To Date	
FY25* Total Motorized RTP Authority \$359,725		\$464,164	\$10,575	
FY26* Total Motorized RTP Authority \$266,517				
FY27* Total Motorized RTP Authority \$329,921				

FY 2027 Budget Preview (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027)

Raynor shared the projected numbers for both revenue and expenses, which are shared below. Raynor reminded the council of the number of registered sleds, along with Gas Tax are the only real numbers shown in FY27.

Projected Revenue:

Gas Tax:	\$318,815 (9,109 registered sleds)
\$10 Snowmobile License:	\$ 80,000
3% Registration Tax:	\$300,000
\$40 5-Day Temporary Permit:	\$ 20,000
Interest :	\$ 35,000
Charges for Sales/Services:	\$ 5,000
Other:	<u>\$ 10,000</u>

Total FY27 Projected Revenue: \$768,815

Projected Expenses:

Fulltime Salaries:	\$225,000	Contractual Services:	\$125,000
Seasonal Salaries:	\$100,000	Supplies & Materials:	\$140,000
Benefits:	\$ 85,000	Grants:	\$200,000
Travel:	\$ 50,000	Capital Assets:	\$100,000

Total FY27 Projected Expenses: \$980,500

Raynor stated he'll end up updating the grants expense category after he sees how the new reimbursement rates and categories impact that category.

FY27 Projected Capital Assets:

Raynor gave a detailed overview of projected snowmobile expenses in capital assets, including allocated RTP funds for this grant cycle. Raynor stated our intent is to dedicate the full 30% of motorized dollars allocated to the snowmobile program by the RTP council, to easements. This means, we will not be pursuing the purchase of a groomer this year. We felt allocating those dollars towards the easements is a much higher priority, then allocating those dollars toward a groomer when we barely put any hours on groomers across the state last year.

Wilkinson agreed that the easements are a higher priority, and this is the perfect year not to purchase a groomer due to low snow conditions across the state.

Finally, Raynor showed the total dollars allocated towards permanent easements, over FY25, FY26 and FY27 federal grant cycles. This breakout is attached below with the rest of the capital asset info.

Wilkinson asked if we could use diversified monies for easements, if they came back above and beyond what we currently have dedicated to us. Nedved stated no because

those dollars must be dedicated to projects that are multi-use, and these easements are for snowmobile trail use only.

Wilkinson asked if we could go over whatever the appraisal amount is. Nedved stated no, we must follow yellow book appraisal with no wiggle room from those expenses. Wilkinson then asked if we don't get agreements done this year, could we use the same appraisals for next year? Nedved stated appraisals typically have a shelf life of 6 months, but Federal Highway would have final say.

Raap asked what Federal Highway Administration was saying about RTP expiring? Percy stated we met with them a few months ago and they didn't seem concerned.

FY 2028 Budget Recommendation (July 1, 2027 to June 30, 2028)

Projected revenue for specific categories are shared below.

Projected Revenue:

Gas Tax:	\$341,250 (projected registered sleds of 9,750)
\$10 Snowmobile Licenses:	\$ 80,000
3% Registration Tax:	\$300,000
\$40 5-Day Temporary Permit:	\$ 20,000
Interest :	\$ 35,000
Charges for Sales/Services:	\$ 60,000
Other	<u>\$ 10,000</u>

Total FY28 Projected Revenue: \$856,000

Projected Expenditures:

Full Time Salaries:	\$225,000	Contractual Services:	\$125,000
Seasonal Salaries:	\$100,000	Supplies & Materials:	\$140,000
Benefits:	\$ 85,000	Grants:	\$160,000
Travel:	\$ 50,000	Capital Assets:	\$140,000

Total FY28 Projected Expenses: \$1,020,500

Budget Authority for FY26 and FY27

Full Time Salaries:	\$256,192	Contractual Services:	\$148,645
Seasonal Salaries:	\$170,574	Supplies & Materials:	\$184,750
Benefits:	\$102,587	Grants:	\$312,500
Travel:	\$ 64,359	Capital Assets:	\$264,000

Toal FY27 & 28 Budget Authority: \$1,503,607

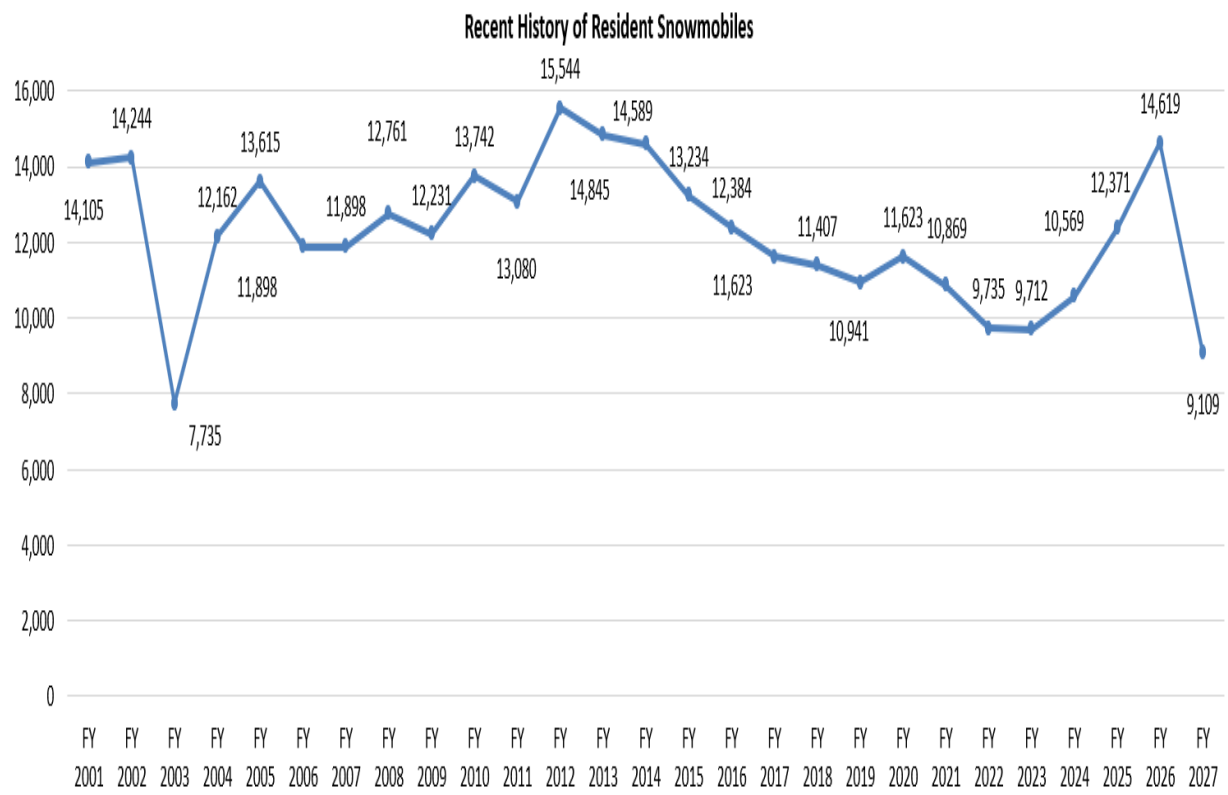
REVENUE								
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	PROJECTED	PROPOSED	
	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	
REGISTERED SLEDS	9,735	9,712	10,569	12,371	14,619	*9,109	9,750	*FY93 - 7,569
Gas Tax	\$340,725	\$339,920	\$369,915	\$432,985	\$511,665	\$318,815	\$341,250	
\$10 Annual License	\$87,696	\$89,986	\$81,407	\$79,030	\$71,133	\$80,000	\$80,000	
3% Excise Tax	\$260,486	\$365,772	\$372,992	\$256,036	\$219,653	\$300,000	\$300,000	
\$40 5 Day Temporary Permit	\$4,040	\$19,160	\$2,600	\$16,240	\$1,960	\$20,000	\$20,000	
Revenues from Use of Money	\$15,635	\$8,431	\$22,456	\$37,195	\$35,723	\$35,000	\$35,000	
Charges for Sales and Services	\$3,756	\$19,108	\$100,171	\$84,729	\$58,100	\$5,000	\$60,000	
Other Revenue	\$151,956	\$11,510	\$7,080	\$1,950	\$15,190	\$10,000	\$10,000	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$864,294	\$853,887	\$956,621	\$908,165	\$913,424	\$768,815	\$846,250	
EXPENSES								
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	PROJECTED	PROJECTED	Budget Authority
	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY27 & FY28
FT Salaries	\$153,275	\$210,080	\$162,133	\$223,860	\$141,846	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$256,192
Seasonal Salaries	\$45,702	\$140,123	\$19,909	\$103,351	\$65,173	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$170,574
Benefits	\$56,855	\$87,062	\$59,461	\$84,770	\$53,470	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$102,587
Travel	\$35,828	\$47,316	\$32,759	\$32,369	\$43,893	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$64,359
Contractual Services	\$96,702	\$125,900	\$99,779	\$135,476	\$104,424	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$148,645
Supplies and Materials	\$116,252	\$262,292	\$120,348	\$196,614	\$108,117	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$184,750
Grants	\$110,519	\$169,216	\$166,444	\$120,263	\$126,231	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$312,500
Capital	\$77,484	\$175,908	\$145,925	\$82,217	\$149,508	\$100,000	\$140,000	\$264,000
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$692,617	\$1,217,897	\$806,758	\$978,920	\$792,662	\$1,025,000	\$1,065,000	\$1,503,607
NET (Receipts less Expenses)	\$171,677	(\$364,010)	\$149,863	(\$70,755)	\$120,762	(\$256,185)	(\$218,750)	
BEGINNING CASH BALANCE	\$744,579	\$916,256	\$552,246	\$702,109	\$631,354	\$752,116	\$495,931	
ENDING CASH BALANCE	\$916,256	\$552,246	\$702,109	\$631,354	\$752,116	\$495,931	\$277,181	

While discussing the FY27 and FY28 fund balances, much discussion took place about the new expenses that would occur due to the new reimbursement rates. **Wilkinson** asked Raynor to project what that expense would be, so we had an idea. Raynor felt this would impact both fiscal years between \$55,000 to \$60,000. Hiles agreed as her math came out to \$57,000. Raynor felt he could project an additional \$60,000 per fiscal year or \$120,000 total to show as a reflected expense and what that impact does to our projected fund balances.

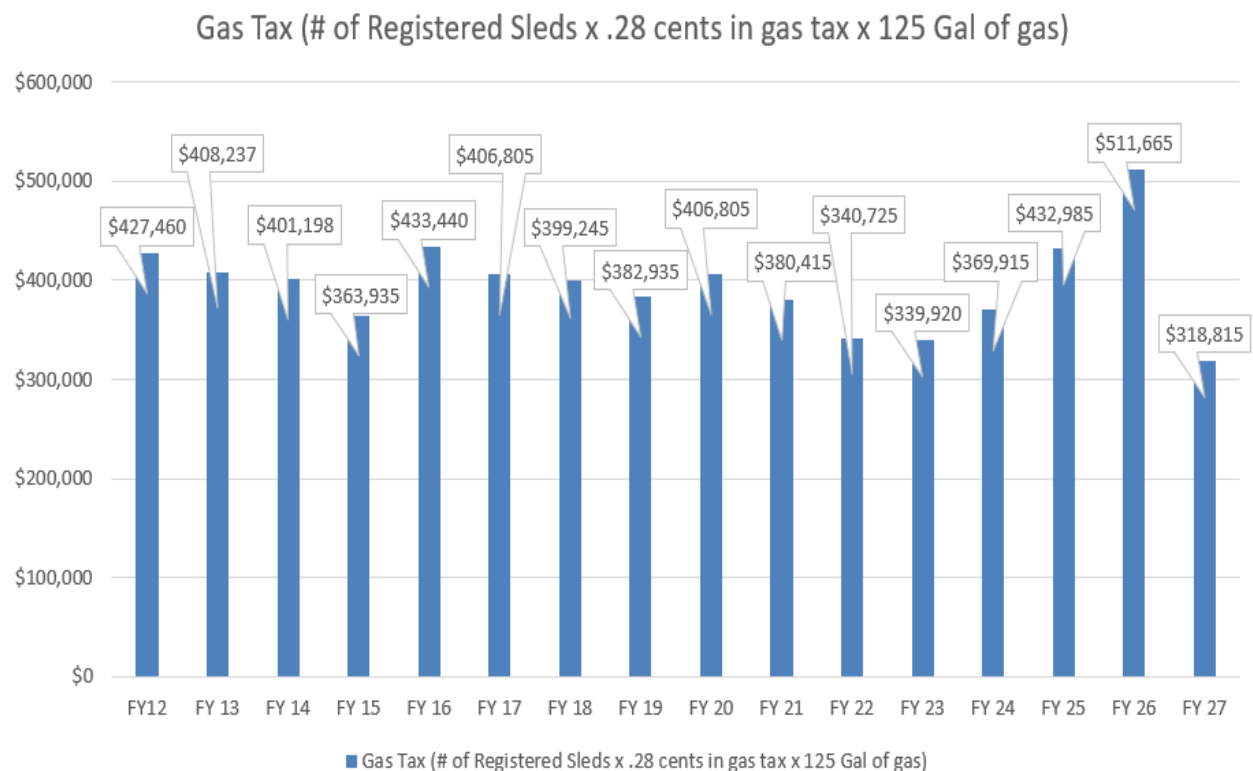
*****Budget Condition Statement attached, just above, is not what was presented during the meeting, but what was approved by email from the council after updates to expenses were provided based on projected Grant In Aid reimbursement rates.**

Wilkinson made a motion to approve the FY27 and FY28 budgets with the adjusted fund balances based on this discussion. Motion seconded by Sprang. Motion Carried.

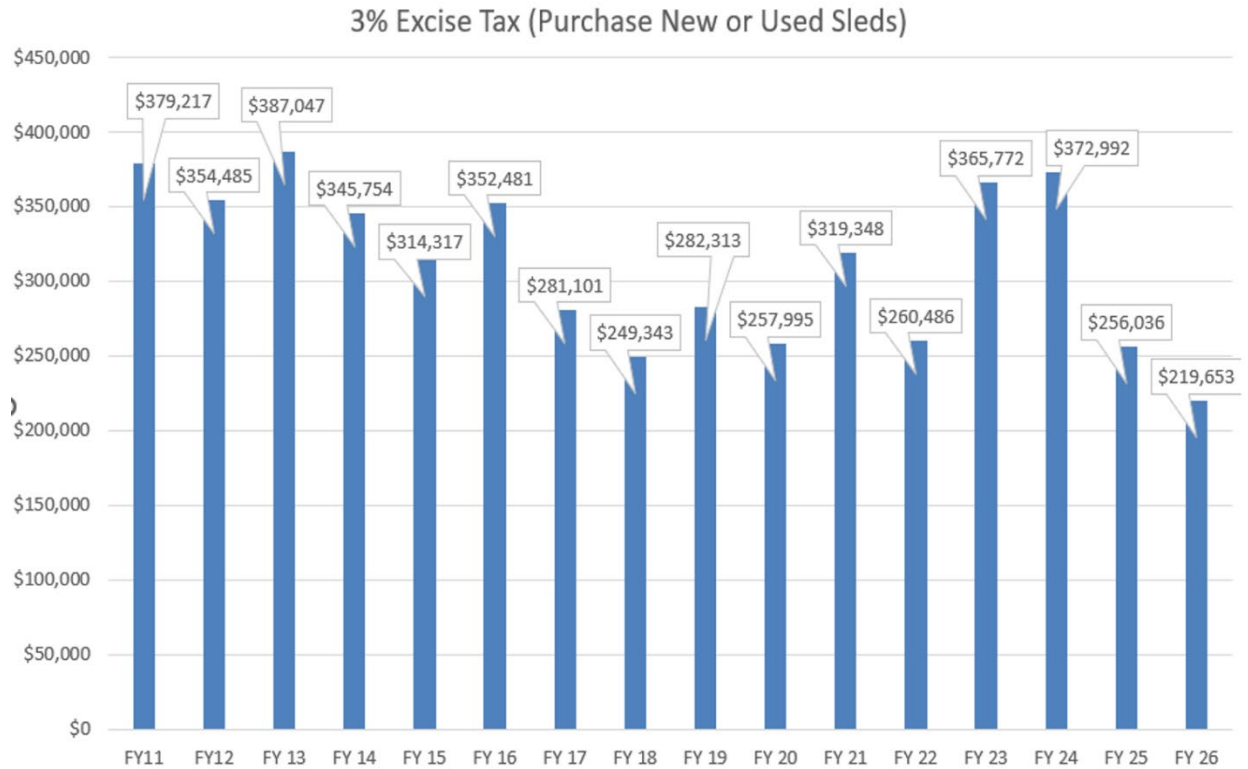
Graph below was shown to the council with number of registered sleds.



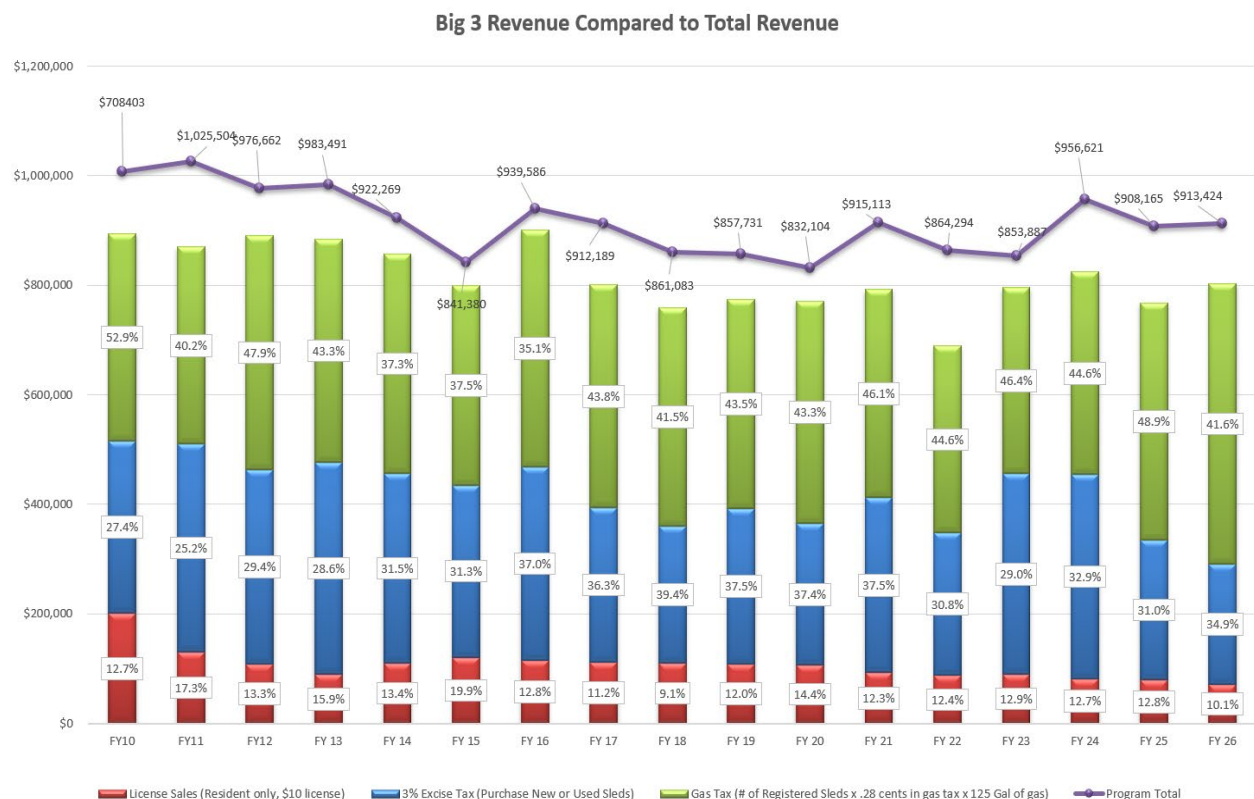
Graph below was shown to the council with revenue earned through Gas Tax.



Graph below was shown to the council with revenue earned through 3% Excise Tax.



Graph below was shown to the council with revenue earned through the Big 3 revenue categories.



Election of Officers

Elections were not completed as were performed last year for 2-year terms.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Friday, December 4th, 2026, in Aberdeen. This meeting is held in conjunction with the SD Snowmobile Association Association's Annual Convention held at The Best Western.

Director of Parks Division Jeff VanMeeteren gave a final statement to the council stating Ryan will be reaching out to an existing Parks division Marketing contractor to pursue a snowmobile-related marketing contract. GFP has never had a Marketing plan and we look forward to developing this.

Adjournment

Nagel made a Motion to adjourn and was seconded by Wilkinson at 11:43 a.m.
Motion carried.