

**Vermont Traffic Committee
Minutes of Regularly Noticed Meeting Held
September 11, 2024**

The Vermont Traffic Committee met on Wednesday September 11, 2024. Secretary Flynn called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm at the VTrans Dill Building in Berlin, VT, and online via Microsoft Teams. The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 pm.

Attendees:

Secretary Joe Flynn, Agency of Transportation
Commissioner Wanda Minoli, Department of Motor Vehicles
Lt. Paul Ravelin, Vermont State Police, Department of Public Safety
Evangeline James, Assistant Attorney General

Ian Degutis, VTrans Traffic Operations Engineer, Traffic Committee Coordinator

Joel Clark, Selectboard Chair, Swanton
Brian Savage, Town Administrator, Swanton
Constance Pell, Attorney, Chester
Al Fortin, Vermont Highway Safety Alliance
Paul White, Vermont State Highway Safety Office

Samuel Ahearn, VTrans Traffic Operations
Kristin Driscoll, VTrans Traffic Operations
Marcos Miller, VTrans Traffic Operations
Sarah Ramsay, VTrans Traffic Operations
Josh Taylor, VTrans Traffic Operations
Brad Woods, VTrans Traffic Operations

Commissioner Minoli motioned to approve the minutes from the previous two meetings on March 27, 2024, and June 12, 2024. Lt. Ravelin seconded the motion. The Traffic Committee voted unanimously to approve previous meetings minutes.

Agenda Items Discussed

- **Swanton, VT-207, Speed Limit**

Mr. Degutis explained this request on VT-207 is to reduce the existing 50-mph speed limit to 40-mph for the entire length of VT-207 in Swanton from St. Albans to Highgate. He explained what the 85th percentile speed and 50th percentile speed are and that Federal Highway Administration guidance says speed limits should be set within 5-mph of the 85th percentile speed.

An engineering study was conducted including six speed studies which showed relatively good compliance with the posted speed limit. The crash study is for 5 miles of roadway which showed 33 crashes, 12 of which included injuries. This is a long section of road which explains the high number of crashes. A couple locations have had historically higher values, but this segment is not a high crash segment based on the past 5 years of data.

Traffic Operations' recommendation is to retain the existing speed limit as the speed studies show relatively good compliance. Some signage improvements have already been made and other modest improvements will be made.

Mr. Clark and Mr. Savage has some concerns including the 85th percentile, speeds, buses and bus stops, commuters, vegetation and narrow shoulders. They feel that the speed limit should still be lowered to 40-mph and the greatest area of concern is close to the location of speed study 1. Commissioner Minoli asked about high crash location criteria. Mr. Degutis explained the different metrics for designating high crash locations having to do with segment length, traffic volume, and number of crashes. Lt. Ravelin stated that most of these crashes indicate other causes such as lack of attention and failure to obey the signs instead of speeds. Lt Ravelin also noted enforcement actions is also relatively low fraction related to speed.

Secretary Flynn asked if a section within the request area which might warrant a reduction instead of the whole area, which Mr. Clark was open to and suggested a point in the vicinity of the curve near milepoint 1.77. Mr. Degutis talked about the natural transitions where roadway character might encourage drivers to change their speeds. Secretary Flynn asked if the committee would consider reducing the speed limit from 50-mph to 40-mph in the area of the curve near Hazard Rd, with the transition location to be determined by Traffic Operations. Mr. Degutis also noted that if the speed limit is reduced in Swanton, it may make sense to look at the short segment of VT-207 in St. Albans as well.

Commissioner Minoli motioned to reduce the speed limit on VT-207 from 50-mph to 40-mph in the town of Swanton beginning at the St. Albans town line extending to a point somewhere in the vicinity of milepoint 1.85 to be determined by VTrans in consultation with the town, and to reduce the speed limit in St. Albans from US-7 to the Swanton town line. Lt. Ravelin seconded the motion. The Traffic Committee voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Degutis will reach out to the town of St. Albans and if there is significant concern he will bring this item back to the committee.

Additional Agenda Item:

- **Traffic Committee Administrative Rules**

Ms. James gave an update on the ongoing effort to update the Traffic Committee administrative rules. There were two items which have been changed based on committee review at the last meeting. All the changes that were discussed at the last meeting have also been made. There will be no changes to Rule 14.053.002 as there will be some statutory changes by the Treasurer's Office which should make this rule null. There have been no substantive changes to what the rules were trying to accomplish, and changes mostly include clarification.

Lt. Ravelin motioned to approve these changes. Commissioner Minoli seconded the motion. The Traffic Committee voted unanimously to accept the motion.

- **Ratify Minutes 2022-2000**

In March of 2024, the Traffic Committee ratified its actions for 2023. While the Traffic Committee believed it had provided proper notice for its meetings to the towns and its residents in advance of the meetings so that they could attend the meeting which discussed their request, it is unclear whether notice was publicly announced for special meetings. Given that the Traffic Committee is unclear whether meetings before 2023 were regularly noticed or special meetings, they will now ratify the meeting minutes for all meetings from 2022-2000 and all actions to ensure all actions are valid and binding as of the date of the original action or decision. Mr. Degutis listed the meeting dates for each year from 2022-2000. At each of these meetings, for any requests within the Committee's purview, after reviewing all the information, the Committee made a determination which can be found in the meeting minutes located in Appendix 1 and incorporated herein by reference.

Commissioner Minoli motioned to ratify the minutes of the Traffic Committee meetings from the years 2000-2022 and have the ratification reach back to the time of the original Traffic Committee action. Lt. Ravelin seconded the motion. The Traffic Committee voted unanimously to approve this motion.

- **Ratify All Actions of Traffic Committee**

To ensure any actions taken by the Traffic Committee are binding Lt. Ravelin motioned to ratify all actions ever taken including any rulemaking reaching back in time to the original date of the action taken by the Traffic Committee. Commissioner Minoli seconded the motion. The Traffic Committee voted unanimously to accept the motion.

Lt. Ravelin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Minoli seconded the motion. Secretary Flynn adjourned the meeting at 2:21 pm.

Minutes prepared by Joshua Taylor, VTrans Traffic Operations, and submitted via Ian Degutis, Traffic Operations Engineer/Traffic Committee Coordinator.

These minutes were approved on 12/11/2024.