

State of Vermont

Agency of Transportation

One National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05633-5001
www.aot.state.vt.us

[phone] 802-279-9599
[fax] 802-828-2640
[ttd] 800-253-0191

To: Travel Information Council Members
From: Toni May
Date: July 17, 2019
Subject: Minutes of the 311th Meeting of the Travel Information Council

DATE: July 17, 2019
TIME: 9:30 A.M.
PLACE: TSMO Conference Room, 2178 Airport Rd, Berlin, VT
PRESENT: John W Kessler, Chair Designee, Travel Information Council
Francis Heald, Member TIC (Recreation)
Lisa Lang, Member TIC (Lodging)
Elizabeth Kennett, (VIA phone) Member TIC (Agriculture)
Leslie Welts, Assistant Attorney General (replaced John Dunleavy)
Bruce Nyquist, AOT
Toni May, TIC (staff)
Richard Cleveland, (staff)
Ian Degutis, Traffic Operations Engineer

Mr. Kessler called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m.

1. Review and act upon a motion to approve the minutes of the 09/12/18 meeting

Motion: Frank Heald made a motion to approve the minutes

Second: Beth Kennett

Vote: Passed

2. Goodrich's Maple OBDS exception review:

Reason for review:

Exception to the rule may no longer be warranted due to the completion of the rebuilding of the highway in the area

Review concluded the project vastly improved the visibility of the business; recommended removal of the OBDS

Business's reasons why OBDS should remain:

Had to relocate on premise sign/now difficult to see

Posted SL is 50 mph but traffic goes much faster

Issue with location of passing lane

Wants to apply for OBDS on VT 215

Thoughts/Discussion:

Discussed Watch for Turning Vehicles signs.

Project only completed 1 month ago, need documented history before considering installing those signs

Council agreed they should apply for an OBDS on VT 215

Motion: Frank Heald made a motion to sustain the decision by the DC and remove the OBDS.

Second: Beth Kennett

Vote: Passed

3. Stowe Cider OBDS exception review

Reason for review:

District Committee reviewed the applications (unknowingly), prior to the permanent on-premise sign being installed. Once the permanent sign had been installed, there was no longer a visibility issue.

On-premise sign might be installed within the highway ROW and may not be on the same premises as the business.

Thoughts/Discussion:

Need to research if sign is on the same premises as the business

West Branch Gallery sign is on the same sign structure. On or off premise for them?

Due to questionable on-premise sign, did not set up account for annual billing.

Staff comments:

Toni sent a letter to the business notifying them of the issue. Said it would be addressed at the TIC's upcoming meeting.

Business contacted Toni to discuss. Toni explained the rules, told business owner he could attend meeting if he wanted to.

Motion: Frank Heald made a motion to table the issue until we have all the facts & the review is complete

Second: Lisa Lang

Vote: Passed

4. Rule Review requested by Michael Obuchowski status

Reasons for review:

Make sure rules are current & not obsolete

Because of the rule making process, best to group any Rules (within the agency) together so they can be done at the same time.

Thoughts/Discussion:

After researching other state government rules, John Kessler chose the current format. Said it was more common to categorize by sections. One Rule; different sections.

Determined how the sign control unit would be referenced

Section 3D; TIC established committees:

Currently have districts where we don't have district committees; language should be worded to say it's an appointed committee or a designee.

All language should be consistent with each section

Some council members brought up the lack of TIC meetings. Said it's important to keep council members interested in participating. Toni May said between not having a full council over the last several years and everyone's busy schedules, it's extremely difficult to get a quorum. She pointed out the only way we had a quorum for this meeting was to call Beth Kennett and see if she could participate by phone.

Toni mentioned we should start thinking about what to do about the district committees. Richard Cleveland covers most of the districts; he would like to retire sometime in the not so distant future.

Motion: Frank Heald made a motion to adopt the Rules as amended.

Second: Lisa Lang

Vote: Passed

Staff Reports

Follow up discussion about status of Green Mountain Distillers off premise sign:

Toni said the sheriff served the sign removal notice and the business removed the sign in question, but another sign has been put up in its place.

The council briefed new Assistant AG, Leslie Welts on the contentious relationship between the agency and the business.

Motion: Frank Heald made a motion to initiate the process to sign an order for the removal of the sign at the business's expense and to see if the agency wants to explore a penalty for the lack of compliance with numerous, prior notices that have been sent to the business.

Second: Beth Kennett

Vote: Passed

New legislation passed allowing banners over state highways:

Toni gave each council member a copy of the new exemption in state statute

Problems with the legislation:

Doesn't say who authorizes the banners or who installs them.

No indication about size or content. (cannot go by the guidelines for an on-premise sign since it's not on premise)

Comments:

Will likely require a section § 1111 permit from the district. Theresa Gilman in ROW will likely be included in the process.

Motion: Frank Heald made a motion to adjourn

Second: Lisa Lang

Vote: Passed

The meeting adjourned at 12:15