

Virginia Statewide Directional Signing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2022

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Video Conference Call

1. Introductions

Rick Burgess served as Chair in place of Ray Khoury.

Committee Members Present:

Name	Organization
Michael J. O'Connor	Virginia Petroleum and Convenience Marketers Association (VPCMA)
Robert Melvin	Government Affairs for the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging and Travel Association (VRLTA)
Jeremy Bennet	Director of Governmental Affairs for the Virginia Association of Counties
Matthew Springer	North Carolina Department of Transportation

Committee Members Not Present:

Name	Organization
Raymond J. Khoury	Virginia Dept. of Transportation
Karen King	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Val Guffy	Virginia Tourism Corporation
Shepherd Cronemeyer	Virginia Agribusiness Council
Kristan Havard	Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association (VHTA)
Martha Mitchell Meade	American Automobile Association (AAA)
Dale Bennett	Virginia Trucking Association (VTA)
Leighton Powell	Scenic Virginia Incorporated
Beck Stanley	Virginia Agribusiness Council
Lawrence Land	Virginia Association of Counties

VDOT Support Staff:

Vanloan Nguyen	VDOT - Traffic Engineering Division
Rick Burgess	VDOT - Traffic Engineering Division
Lewis Bridgforth	VDOT - Traffic Engineering Division
Al Bryan	VDOT - Traffic Engineering Division
David Alley	Spy Pond Partners, LLC.
Maria Matteliano	Spy Pond Partners, LLC.
Brad Beardslee	Spy Pond Partners, LLC.

Directional Signing Program (DSP) Staff:

Tyler Starr	Directional Signing Program
Trevor Hershey	Directional Signing Program
Todd Pitcher	Directional Signing Program

Guests:

Christopher R. Nolen	McGuire Woods
Tracy Baynard	McGuire Woods

2. Previous Meeting Minutes: October 20, 2021

Copies of the previous meeting minutes were distributed for review prior to the meeting. Meeting minutes have been reviewed and approved by the committee members.

3. IDSP Status of Participation in the IDSP (Logo, TODS, SGS and GMSS):

IDSP (Program activity)

- a) Trevor Hershey presented the status of participation in the Logos, TODS, SGS, GMSS and Historical Marker programs.
- b) Rick Burgess had an additional comment: Historical Markers and their messages are reviewed and approved by DHR before they are installed on State Right of Way by DSP.

4. General Assembly Activity

a) Update on HB1740

- i. Rick Burgess provided the Transmittal Letter that was sent to Terry Austin, Chair of the House Transportation Committee. The letter informed the committee that VDOT had completed the study on HB1740. Rick thanked all the committee members who provided feedback on the bill and its ramifications.
- ii. Rick Burgess presented the HB1740 document on file. The document conveyed the findings of the study to the House Transportation Committee. VDOT did not receive any response to the letter and/or document. The Transportation Committee tabled HB1740; therefore, no action will be taken by legislators regarding the proposed bill. HB1740 is now considered a closed subject.
- iii. Rick Burgess summarized the conclusions of the document. The rotational process integral to HB1740 would have been detrimental to the IDSP as a whole, disrupting core Logo customers. The Bill would have transformed the focus of the Logo program from a Specific Travel Service Signing Program for the travelling public to an advertising platform. Meeting members had no questions or further comments regarding HB1740.

b) Update on HB391, HB430, HB897, HB950, SB391S1

- i. Background was provided by Rick Burgess. All of these bills were associated with marijuana legislation and mostly concerned outdoor advertising; however, since the IDSP was mentioned, an appropriate response was provided. IDSP customers/businesses potentially affected by this legislation are qualifying hemp or marijuana associated agricultural businesses.

- ii. IDSP involvement: There are legal age restrictions for accessing marijuana products; therefore, businesses selling these products do not serve all members of the travelling public. For this reason, the IDSP does not provide marijuana businesses with directional signing services. Tobacco shops, vape shops and casinos are similarly excluded from the IDSP, except for associated facilities that are open to the general public such as restaurants, hotels, etc.

c) Budget Amendment 453:

- i. Background was provided by Rick Burgess. This budget amendment is related to the Lewis and Clark Legacy Trail of Virginia as well as Historical Markers. The amendment proposed to allocate \$117,000 of the General Fund to pay for administrative costs and to fabricate and install 8 historical markers, 8 supplemental plaques, and 8 trail blazer signs along the designated Lewis and Clark Legacy Trail. Additionally, the funds were intended to cover an administrative position.
- ii. Updates by Al Bryan: Al spoke with Margaret W. Crosson, the Director of the Virginia Lewis and Clark Legacy Trail, Inc. At the time, Ms. Crosson still had not heard back from the sponsoring legislator about what was to happen regarding the proposed amendment. The assistant director of DHR reached out to the sponsor (Delegate Austin) regarding the legislation. No explanation was provided as to how the funding was to be allocated. Currently there is no mechanism by which a private foundation can receive funds directly from the General Assembly. Steve Clinton, member of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors, informed VDOT that the allocation could be transferred to the county to administer the project.

5. Open Discussion:

a) Comments from IDSP

- i. Rick Burgess: VDOT efforts have been focused on supporting established businesses throughout the COVID transition. Some businesses that would normally be compliant with IDSP program requirements are being given additional time for dining room re-openings and rehiring staff lost due to COVID restrictions. VDOT continues to support these business as they continue to approach full functionality.
- ii. Trevor Hershey: DSP continues to serve current participants and consider applications from new customers as long as it is the stated intent of the business to emerge from the current (COVID) situation to full compliance of IDSP criteria.
- iii. Rick Burgess: Reported on a new "Google Street View" initiative as it relates to HB1740. Participating and waitlisted businesses will be given an opportunity to achieve greater visibility to the motoring public. The service provided through DSP will update Google Street Views for signs related to the IDSP. Drives of all Virginia roadways will give updated views of all signs and participating businesses in the IDSP system. The Google Street View initiative will provide VDOT views of the physical location and condition of all assets. This will contribute valuable information for asset maintenance and planning purposes.

b) Comments from other meeting attendants

- i. Michael J. O'Connor: Expressed appreciation of IDSP financial considerations given to businesses during COVID. Question: Where does VDOT stand on the excess revenue or "Rainy Day" fund? Is this fund being replenished? What is the long term goal?
- ii. Rick Burgess responded. VDOT will have a better picture of this once the fiscal year is completed. The goal is to keep this fund at 10% or under. Last year, the fund exceeded this level and COVID relief was provided to participants to help them through the crisis while maintaining the program. Currently there have been no changes in fees. Revenue and expenditures from the IDSP are all on track. The IDSP has budgeted to proceed with planned initiatives to enhance the program. Enhancements to the IDSP Management System have given VDOT greater oversight of the program, holding the contractor to a higher standard through in depth Performance Tracking Reports. The Spy Pond team has been instrumental in assisting with the enhancement of the IDSP Management System. Through Google Street View, VDOT is providing enhanced street views of waitlisted customers' businesses and alleviating concerns expressed in proposed legislation such as HB1740.
- iii.

c) Closing Comments from Rick Burgess

- i. Karen King was not able to attend today. She had expressed concerns over revisions made to the MUTCD and was planning to present information at this meeting. The changes involved the limit of one structure (two signs) per location for the SGS program. The new regulation would allow up to 2 structures with 2 panels per structure. Dee Audet is now a Division Administrator. Rick expressed his gratitude and appreciation for all of her efforts throughout her years of service in the IDSP. Lewis Bridgforth will be presenting IDSP Financial Updates at future meetings.

6. Next Meeting Agenda Items

- Status of the participation of the IDSP programs
- IDSP Financial Report
- Legislative issues affecting the IDSP

7. Next Meeting Date:

- November 2, 2022
- May 3, 2023