

## TRC Takeaways

Vicky Tebbetts, Chair, March 15, 2018

Via teleconference, 9:00 - 10:00 am.

*Notes and available content from the March 15 meeting of the Travel Recreation Council.*

### Actions Items from Meeting:

ACTION ITEMS	OWNER(S)	DEADLINE	STATUS
Contributions from Vermont businesses to Welcome Bags for Stay2Stay campaign.	All tourism destinations	May 1	Contact Wendy Knight, Commissioner Www.VermontVacation/StaytoStay
Steve is working the social media channels for Vermont tourism right now, as VDTM hires a new Communications Director – if you have content feel free to send it along.	All tourism destinations	Ongoing	Contact Steve Cook, Deputy Commissioner
VDTM's Elements Await campaign – reports are available to help inform one's Spring/Summer marketing.	All tourism destinations	Ongoing	Contact Steve Cook, Deputy Commissioner
Summer marketing campaign plan – Steve will email to TRC upon request.	Steve Cook	May 1	To be distributed
Survey regarding health and safety regulations for VDTM to explore reducing the regulatory burden for licensed lodging properties.	Licensed lodging properties	April	To be distributed by VDTM

## Meeting Summary:

1. VDTM – Wendy Knight, Commissioner
  - Staffing changes at the Department: Kathleen Kolva, Sales Director, is resigning; Phil Tortora, Director of Communications, moved to Vegas. Working on hiring replacements now.
  - Discover New England: Karen Ballard will fill in for the Sales Director at the DNE Summit. Others will be representing Vermont as well.
  - Stay2Stay: VDTM is launching the Stay to Stay Weekend program in three regions: Rutland, Bennington, Brattleboro. The 3-day lodging package is for out-of-state visitors interested in relocating to Vermont. They will combine weekend getaways with guided and pre-arranged relocation excursions hosted by local chambers and/or young professional networks.  
[www.VermontVacation/StaytoStay](http://www.VermontVacation/StaytoStay)
2. Legislative Update – Wendy Knight, Commissioner
  - Legislation to support the Agency’s ThinkVermont agency-wide innovation fund has momentum. It would supply \$400,000 to help grow the economy, some of which could be used for marketing.
  - Legislation requiring short term rental registration has passed from Senate Economic Development, and as written, is not supported by the Administration because it requires new fees and taxes. The Administration favors voluntary municipal registration instead. VDTM is working with lodging partners to find parity by reducing the regulatory burden for licensed lodging properties. They will be sending a survey about health and safety regulations to lodging properties soon. Also, Willie, Paula and other members suggested outreach to town clerks via the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and/or the Town Clerks Association to determine small town’s capacity in light of registration legislation.
3. VDTM Staff Reports
  - Vermont Life: Steve reported that Jeff Buckman, formerly of the *Boston Herald*, will sell advertising for Vermont Life. Positions, reporting structure, tactics and opportunities are aligning with VDTM, which is overseeing the operation; for instance, part of VDTM’s integration with Vermont Life, businesses can now be the sole monthly sponsor of VDTM’s consumer enews. Vermont Life is working with VDTM and ThinkVermont on content creation and editing, which has helped build capacity. There will also be skill sharing among staff in building new advertising channels for Vermont Life. The new Director of Communications will oversee social media across both VDTM and Vermont Life channels. The goal is to break even with Vermont Life by July 1. There is a bill in the Legislature to

update the Vermont Life statute to allow the Commissioner of VDTM to have more authority over Vermont Life.

- Recent snow is a much-needed late-season boon. The VDTM team is promoting events and working on a video promotion with the governor to go to all core markets.
- Kathleen is working on finalizing the show schedule; she had a great show in Foxboro recently because people are out and about without power and they were looking for events and diversions. Shows in near future are covered with partners and other staff in this time of transition.
- Hillary and ThinkVermont Project Manager Elaine Sopchak worked with Southern Vermont Economic Development Corporation to offer trainings on how partners can get involved with VDTM and ThinkVermont. Hilary is also working with mountain bike associations to establish a trail network recovery fund.
- ThinkVermont has launched a new web feature, allowing multiple layers on an interactive relocation map.

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 am.

*Next Meetings:* May 17, 2018 | 9:00 am – 11:00 am | Calvin Coolidge Conference Room

July 19, Jay Peak Resort, meeting to start mid/late morning (more details to follow). Jay Peak has offered an industry rate of \$95/night in a King Suite, with Pump House Water Park tickets for two, valid any time from July 19 – 22. Please call 800-451-4449 to book and mention the TRC Discount.