

**Board of Directors
April 25, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present:

OFFICERS PRESENT

President, Jeff Fay

Vice President, Mark Reaves

Patty Companik, Treasurer

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Bennington: Carol DeJohn

Caledonia: Bruce Carlson

Chittenden: Pat Poulin

Essex: John Hull

Franklin: Mike Burns

Lamoille: Carmin Lemery

Orange: Juliann Sherman

Orleans: Roger Gosselin

Washington: Jeff Haplin

Windham: Michael Garber

Windsor: Doug Jacobs

STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director, Cindy Locke

Trails Administrator, Matt Tetreault

LVRT/Trails Manager, Ken Brown

Office & Programs Manager, Mandy Dwinell

GUESTS:

Stan Choiniere, Windsor County Alt. Director. Brian Currier, Trails Committee. Ivor Stevens, Resource Committee. Mike Mustacio, Lunenburg Polar Bears, Ed Hebebrand, Caledonia County Alt. Director. Doug Todd, Rutland County Alt. Director.

Jeff Fay called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Approval of Agenda

Washington County: Motion to approve, Bennington County seconded to approve as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.

Approval of Secretary's Report

Essex County: Motion to approve, Washington County seconded to approve as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Patty Companik gave a report of the financials as of March 30, 2022.

Summary of Financial Report: General budget, Trails budget, Scholarship budget

Data thru end of March 2022 - 6 months - 50% of budget season

Income thru March 2022:

- Budget: \$3,310,443
- Monthly Activity: \$107,122 (58k from GMNF (Green Mtn Ntl Forest Grants))
- Income to date/season: \$ 3,110,119 \$(-200,324 to make budget income expectation)
- Overall income is at 94% of budgeted income expectations - compared to March 2021 we were at 94.52%

Expense thru March 2022:

- Budget: \$2,752,476
- Monthly Activity: \$479,058 (351k is grooming payments)
- Expenses to date/season: \$ 1,332,503
- Currently at 48% of budget expense expectations - compared to Feb 2021 we were at 52%

Approval of Treasurer's Report

**Windsor County: Motion to approve, Chittenden County seconded to approve as presented.
MOTION CARRIED.**

Consent Calendar

N/A

Old Business

N/A

NEW BUSINESS

Update on Administration Request - Cindy

To date, the budgets for \$750K for equipment and \$50k for law enforcement have been passed by House and the Senate. They have formed a Conference Committee to discuss the final details. The budget is part of the Must Pass Bill. Waiting for Conference Committee's final feedback. We are very appreciative of the funding as there were \$80million in requests this year that were denied from other organizations. More details to come at the next BOD meeting. Cindy confirmed that the \$50k is not tied to the \$750k and is to only be used for law enforcement. This would be new money and above what we normally receive from registrations to help supplement and grow our existing program.

Trail Administrator's/ED Report/LVRT Repot – Cindy, Matt and Ken

Cindy is working on year-end projections and working with the finance committee. Year-end and budget for next fiscal year will be available in May.

VAST staff is currently working on a club compliance project. VAST will be checking the state & federal websites for club filing compliance to see when filing dates are approaching. The purpose is to help clubs to stay current with filing. Clubs may receive a letter within the next few weeks with compliance details. Every club will receive letters every 6-months/annually this will help assist with VAST annual audits and in general help clubs stay on top of state and federal requirements.

Reminder of Spring Construction Seminars

- Zoom (Thursday May 5th 6 pm-8 pm) and one on a Saturday morning, May 14th 8 am- 10 am).
- There will be no in person seminars as part of Annual Meeting in September. After discussion, there is not the time or the space available.

Committee and Other Meeting Reports

Northeast Chapter and USA - Pat Poulin, Jeff Fay at VT Representatives

Met 2 weeks ago. Most states in the association will be at International Snowmobile Congress (ISC) June meeting in Iowa and are holding their annual meeting at ISC. Northeast Chapter is sponsoring the welcoming ceremony at ISC. Executive Director from NY retired 4/24/22, with the replacement being the prior GM, Jennifer Senf.

Mark Reaves asked for clarification for BOD on the difference between Northeast Chapter and United Snowmobile Alliance (USA). Northeast Chapter representation of Eastward and north of the border, advocacy group plus communicates among the group for problem-solving. USA is a notional association (excludes Canada), an advocacy group for east coast trail ride issues and share concerns.

VT Snow Trails Conservancy – Jim Hill, VSTC President

Cindy shared an easement Tunnel Brook a couple of years ago. There was a possible mistake within the easement document regarding a parcel of land. Working to correct.

Law Enforcement – Gary Nolan, Chair

Cindy is reviewing year end reports and invoices, and will reconnect if information is missing.

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee – Ken Brown

We've begun to hand things over to AOT, though they won't officially take over management of the trail until July. I'll be meeting with their field staff regularly. We are still responsible for maintenance for now. I've hired a trapper to deal with beavers in the Cambridge area. We've hired Munson Earth Moving to replace the rotten decks snowmobile club volunteers patched with plywood this past fall. They have to wait for the lumber, so that project will run well into the summer. We might need to coordinate one last round of mowing if AOT doesn't get a contract in place until later in the summer. We might have some washouts and mowing to manage before the hand off is official. You can still provide input on the LVRT management plan, the final public meeting isn't scheduled yet. <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/lvrt/management>

Cindy mentioned that we will continue to groom and fix snowmobile-related damages to bridges. Currently working on a lease agreement with our attorneys.

Roger inquired if there is access to information collected from Resource Committee and if there would be an anticipated presentation at an upcoming BOD meeting.

Discussion on subsidy payments for upcoming groomer payments. Brian shared the Trails Committee is working on gathering more information and will present the details soon.

Discussion regarding the layout of the Work Group Committee, and the flow of information from the Resource and Trails committees to the BOD.

Cindy recalled previous summer BOD weekend retreats to brainstorm and problem solve, encouraged members to reconnect, plan to review and discuss topics.

Jeff asked for the Resource Committee presentation to be added to upcoming BOD meeting agenda.

Awards & Nominating – Patty Companik, Chair

Awards: May 1 - deadline for award nominations - Committee will meet mid/late May (individual time to review all submissions) - Place order beginning of June. Reminder that Trailblazer nominations can be submitted year-round.

VAST officer Nominations: Current officer Slate to respond if seeking re-election by mid May

By-Laws & Policy – Mark Reaves, Chair

After budget done, meeting with Cindy mid-May on next steps.

Annual Meeting, John Hull

Coming along well. Working with Cindy for new sign designs. Looking for 4-microphone system, seeking ideas and donations. Cindy offered VAST's speaker & microphone, as well as outdoor annual meeting banners and parking arrows. Drift Dusters offered their microphone and to look into possible local sound system options if needed. Vendors & dealers have been invited. Working with Sled Farm for meals.

Executive Committee, Jeff

N/A

Finance - Patty Companik, Chair

N/A

Long Range Planning & Organizational - Mark Reaves, Chair

RRG licensing. Some changes to Governor documents. There weren't any questions after the state's initial review. Hopefully more updates within the next week or so.

Resource Committee – Ivor Stevens, Chair

After last Trails Committee meeting, was asked for additional data and graphs. Please reach out by email to Ivor with any questions or inquiries and he will share them with the Resource Committee.

Resource Committee preparing presentation for next BOD meeting.

Personnel – Juliann Sherman, Chair

Working on creating a policy for VAST staff regarding emergency leave, which can be used for family leave or to support ill family members.

Trails – Brian Currier, Chair

Working Group meeting 5/2 and Special Trails Committee meeting 5/16. Please have information to Matt or Brian by 5/9.

Discussion on the Working Group and Trails Committee, confirmed these are separate. Information is shared with Working Group, reviewed and then presented to the BOD.

Safety Committee – Stan Choiniere, Chair

Met this month to review the season. Distributed new safety signs and discussed marketing. Starting to brainstorm for next year's safety week. Reached out to ISMA for safety resource materials, the program is currently suspended. Asked to be added to the agenda for the next Trails Committee meeting regarding off-trail riding

Safety Course

Classroom: 71 (Not including 23 from a recent course with the Washington SnoFlyers)

Online: 1586

Total: 1657

Mark reminded the past 2 years of safety course numbers are an anomaly in regards to COVID and having limited access to in-person course locations.

Juliann mentioned a discussion with Trevor Carbo and the vetting on current instructors and level of interest in continuing for next season. Reminder a background check, fingerprinting and half day class with the VT State Police is required for all instructors. Stan reminded that instructors are not limited to performing safety courses to their county. Discussion on the instruction and learning variables between online vs. in-person safety courses.

Governor's Council – Pat Poulin, Chair

DMV to date: 21,534

15,711 in-state registrations

Other

Reminder from Cindy on the Celebration of Life Memorial Services for Tim Mills on Saturday, May 21st in Bethel. An email reminder will be sent to the BOD with more information.

Motion to adjourn by Windsor County: Motion to approve, Chittenden County seconded to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Hill
Secretary