

**Board of Directors
May 23, 2022
Meeting Minutes – FINAL**

Members Present:

OFFICERS PRESENT

President: Jeff Fay
Vice President: Mark Reaves
Secretary: Jim Hill
Patty Companik: Treasurer

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Addison: Lewis Barnes
Caledonia: Bruce Carlson
Chittenden: Pat Poulin
Essex: John Hull
Franklin: Mike Burns
Lamoille: Carmin Lemery
Orange: Juliann Sherman
Orleans: Roger Gosselin
Washington: Jeff Halpin
Windham: Michael Garber
Windsor: Doug Jacobs

STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director, Cindy Locke
Trails Administrator, Matt Tetreault
Office & Programs Manager, Mandy Dwinell
Media and Technology Manager, Beth Flint

GUESTS:

Brian Currier, VAST Trails Committee Chair. Ivor Stevens, Resource Committee. Amber Stevens, Resource Committee volunteer. Ellis O'Hear, Resource Committee. Perry Armstrong, Resource Committee. Mike Mustacio, Lunenburg Polar Bears, Ed Hebebrand, Caledonia County Alt. Director. Barry Messier, Windsor County Trail Master.

Jeff Fay called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.

Approval of Agenda

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

Additions to the agenda

- a. Board Retreat
- b. Lifetime membership presented by Doug Jacobs

Approval of Secretary's Report

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

Approval of Treasurer's Report

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

Data thru end of April 2022 - 7 months - 58% of budget season

Income thru April 2022:

- Budget: \$3,310,443
- Monthly Activity: \$18,351
- Income to date/season: \$3,128,467 (\$-181,976 short of budget income expectation)
- Overall income is at 95% of budgeted income expectations - compared to April 2021 when we also at 95% of expected budget income)

Expense thru April 2022:

- Budget: \$2,752,476
- Monthly Activity: \$105,712 (33k from Trails Expense budget)
- Expenses to date/season: \$1,438,215
- Currently at 52% of budget expense expectations - compared to April 2021 we were at 56%

Approval of Treasurer's Report

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

Tabled Items

N/A

Consent Calendar

N/A

Old Business

N/A

NEW BUSINESS

Board Retreat

Discussion regarding a BOD retreat prior to Annual Meeting in Killington, Friday evening – Sunday morning dates of 8/5-8/7 & 8/26-8/28 were suggested. Cindy to follow up with Jeff and Mark regarding if alternate directors would be permitted to attend in the director's place, or just added in general.

Lifetime Membership – Doug Jacobs

Discussion of Lifetime Membership for Dennis Lemire presented by Doug Jacobs.

Unanimous BOD vote needed: Chittenden County: Motion to approve, Lamoille County seconded to approve as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

Doug Jacobs shared Patty Companik was voted in to become the next Windsor County president this fall.

Funding from State of Vermont discussion – Cindy Locke

Most of VAST funding has been restored. The budget was going to go to Governor last week and hasn't, once it does, he has 5 business days to sign or just let it pass. No reason at this time to think that he'll veto. In conference committee's understanding is that the stipulations have been removed so we are waiting for it to get to the administration. Cindy will update the BOD in June.

FY2022 Budget/Actual EOY Projection – Cindy Locke

I will be presenting budget verses actuals with end of year projections at every meeting until the end of the season, a copy is included in BOD packet. Projected that we will end the year in the black in both the General & Trails Funds. Beginning to build the 2023 budgets very soon for BOD to review in June and vote in July.

New reserve line item for VAST club equipment was added for this year as a reserve account to build up funds to help clubs with equipment vs the standard pot of trail money. This will actually be something that's a VAST reserve account dedicated specifically to assisting clubs and won't be used from emergency reserves. The plan is to use it sparingly to supplement the existing program.

Discussion on the VAST building account and condition of VAST building. Cindy mentioned building is in good condition, may consider patching or resurfacing the driveway. Work done recently include roof repair, side yard excavation and new retaining wall, sealing the foundation and flood repair and mitigation.

VAST trucks have been on a 5-year rotation, Toyota is a 2016 and this fall would be considered for rotation.

Discussion on emergency vs. disaster and how to determine when appropriate to use each.

Reserve accounts will be voted on at the September BOD meeting.

Resource Committee Presentation - Ivor, Ellis, Perry

Ivor shared an introduction and process of the Resource Committee per Tim Mills creation of the committee.

Year-long project regarding recommendations that would provide a positive nonbiased impact with quick implementation to the clubs. Their recommendations are a direct reflection of what they heard from all of the directors and club volunteer representatives. Grooming miles discussed in the presentation represent corridor miles only.

Presentation covered and overview on:

- Grooming and maintenance
- Membership & club dues
- Membership – a club's "membership" does not correlate to number of miles maintained and groomed
- Increasing club dues doesn't correlate directly to the club for the trails they groom
 - Some clubs have same milage of trails but have a significant difference in membership based on size of the club
- Membership – grooming miles
- Putting more money into membership is not fair to most of the clubs and the overall VAST trail system
- Some clubs have more resources and support to recruit and build their membership
- Grooming cost estimates

- Grooming rates have not increased since 2015
- Need to focus on trails and health of our clubs
- Proposed TMA increase option to help to make a positive change – would need \$400k additional income resulting in a \$20 TMA increase
- Option 1: \$20 TMA increase/\$400k = \$3 rate increase avg per mile across all classes
- Option 2: \$30 or \$40 increase to provide \$800k additional income to assist with grooming contracts
- With all money going towards grooming miles and contracts
- Option 3: \$40 increase
- \$20/grooming \$20/equipment grant
- Equipment grant increase by \$400k
- Eliminate “over cap” payments
- Idea of grooming contracts beginning based on snow depth, help to preserve equipment and maintenance
- If groomed prior to the grooming contract start, the club would be financially responsible
- Additional funds from any version of TMA increase not used in grooming rates
- If we exceed \$20k any excess would be presented to BOD to vote on where to allocate
- Resource committee recommendation for a \$20 TMA increase
- Options Summary \$20 TMA increase all for grooming rate increases (\$3 avg across all classes)

Trails Working Group Update - Matt, Jeff & Brian

- Trying to create policy language and to help with moving towards a motion
- Trails working group is created with individuals from a variety clubs based on location, size & grooming miles
- Focusing on equipment grants and providing support to clubs
- Reviewing the grooming financial analysis and taking into consideration increases with fuel costs
- Reviewing on how payments are made and looking at a possible reconfiguration possibly with a bank of milage for their grooming contract
- Working towards finetuning verbiage for potential policy to bring to trails committee
- Working on connecting with members
- Coming up with policies to help support clubs and partner together to establish funding

Jeff reminded everyone that at the present time there is no TMA proposed increase under discussion. It was mentioned in the Resource Committee presentation. The increase is for wording on the presentation and there is nothing officially proposed for a TMA increase at the moment.

- Discussion on TMA cost and ways to help maintain and sustain the cost of the sport.
- Jeff extended an appreciation to the Resource Committee for their hard work and diligence with gathering and presenting information to the BOD.
- Discussion on trail class determination and grooming miles
- Discussion on membership, expressed hesitancy with snowfall maps determining when the grooming could begin-
- Discussion with feedback on not wanting to move forward with a TMA increase
- Discussion for increased use of trail counters to determine areas of traffic and which trails are utilized the most by the club to help determine funds.
- Discussion on possibly having clubs manage their own grooming funds accordingly with parameters and guidelines on spending may assist with reducing the confusion with current grooming contracts?
- Discussion on grooming caps, milage and grooming contracts.
- Discussion on grooming equipment and ways to maintain and preserve equipment.

- Mark Reaves reminded us that the information is provided based on research from the Resource Committee. There isn't support at this time to increase TMAs and the proposed budget will be presented at the annual meeting for a vote.
- Discussion on the difference between VT from NH, NY and ME. We are funded differently, as we are a self-funded association.
- Discussion on variances with the consolidation of some clubs and equipment and how it may affect volunteers
- Discussion on policies as two separate things between fuel increases and overall cost of living increase.
- Hoping to have updates to the Trails Committee from the Work Group for the May 31st meeting
- Email questions to Matt or Jeff which will be shared with the Work Group and Trails Committee.

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

Ken welcomed a baby girl, Phoebe last Thursday. Ken will be out of the office until mid-June. Matt and Cindy assisting with the LVRT.

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

Club Trail Mileage Changes

At the May Trails Committee Meeting the committee decided to approve the following:

- Lunenburg Polar Bears to upgrade their 14-mile grooming contract from Class 4 to Class 3
- Canaan Border Riders addition of 3.1 miles of trail to their 93-mile Class 1 grooming contract
- Chester Snowmobile Club addition of 2 miles of trail to their 57-mile Class 1 grooming contract

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

Committee and Other Meeting Reports

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

N/A

VT Snow Trails Conservancy – Jim Hill, VSTC President

N/A

Law Enforcement – Gary Nolan, Chair

N/A

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee – Ken Brown

Ken is out of the office until mid-June. LVRT report is included in the BOD packet.

Awards/Rec/Scholarship/Nominating Committee – Patty Companik, Chair

Awards - Package of nominations sent to all Committee Members - Meeting scheduled for the first week of June to discuss/select award recipients

Nominating Committee - All current officers have stated they will be seeking re-election

By-Laws & Policy – Mark Reaves, Chair

Meeting with Cindy after the budget is ready to be proposed.

Annual Meeting, John Hull

Not much new to report, moving along the "To Do" list for annual meeting.

Executive Committee, Jeff

N/A

Finance - Patty Companik, Chair

N/A

Long Range Planning & Organizational - Mark Reaves, Chair

Working on planning August BOD retreat. Details to come soon.

Resource Committee – Ivor Stevens, Chair

Presentation in the earlier part of the meeting.

Personnel – Juliann Sherman, Chair

Completed VAST staff family leave policy in place. Upcoming VAST staff evaluation for Cindy.

Trails – Brian Currier, Chair

Covered earlier in the meeting.

Safety Committee – Stan Choiniere, Chair

N/A

Governor's Council – Pat Poulin, Chair

FY23 SSTP budget presented with no major issues. Looking to approve at the June Governor's Council meeting.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Hill
Secretary