

VAST Board of Directors – July 22, 2019 – Meeting Minutes

Approved at the August 26, 2019 Meeting

OFFICERS PRESENT:

President: Tim Mills
Vice President: Jeff Fay
Treasurer: Sonia Koehler
Secretary: Jim Hill

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Addison: Lewis Barnes
Bennington: Absent
Caledonia: Ken Gammell
Chittenden: Pat Poulin
Essex: Stewart Ahearn
Franklin: Mike Burns
Grand Isle: Dave Ladd
Lamoille: Ellis O’Hear
Orange: Absent
Orleans: Roger Gosselin
Rutland: Curt Marechaux via phone
Washington: Mark Reaves
Windham: Drew Fraser
Windsor: Dick Jewett

ALTERNATE DIRECTORS PRESENT: Ivor Stevens, Windham County; Doug Jacobs, Windsor County.

STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director: Cindy Locke
Trails Administrator: Matt Tetreault
Trails Manager: Ken Brown
Office Coordinator: Cyndy Carrier Brown

GUESTS PRESENT: Angel Emmons

Meeting called to order at 6:03 PM.

Recognition of Visitors:

Approval of Agenda: Lewis Barnes moved to approve as amended; Dick Jewett seconded, motion carried.

Secretary’s Report: Dick Jewett moved to approve; Roger Gosselin seconded, motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report: Sonia Koehler gave a brief overview of the financials as of June 30, 2019.

The membership is up by 1,385 from last year.

Roger Gosselin moved to approve; Dave Ladd seconded, motion carried.

Old Business

LVRT Status

- Ken Brown – The Sheldon project is done; we are just waiting for a storm water permit.
- I have not seen the final costs yet, but we're thinking it might be a little under budget.
- Work in Hardwick is getting under way. We got a different engineer than VHB to design our bridge deck for a couple of bridges up there with the Northern Borders grant.
- They should have the design options to us by the end of the month. Hopefully we can get it out to bid in August and if a contractor is available maybe they can get the decking done this fall. If that happens, the only thing keeping that trail from being opened between East Hardwick and the town would be one culvert that is out. So, potentially it would be open for snowmobiling this winter. The goal is to have it so that people can walk or mountain bike through and they will continue their fundraising to keep improving it.
- Mike Burns – I stopped by and looked at Bridge 83 in Fairfield; having issues with landowner.
- Ken Brown – The town map and the railroad right-of-way both indicate that the state owns the land between the bridge and Elm Brook Road.
- We need some permitting to get off the railbed and get on to the town road.
- The bridge is 2 spans and the center pier is made out of wood that is rotten.
- VTrans said it can't be used. The deck is also rotten. The club has asked for money to add railings.
- Once we start doing the LVRT work in that area the bridge will be covered by federal monies.

Groomer Loan – Williston Hill Hawks

- Pat Poulin – Williston Hill Hawks - Last month the Board approved a loan to purchase a side by side to take us from class 2 down to class 3. As we got closer to purchasing that equipment, we were told we needed to turbo charge that motor.
- They said they could do that, but it still wouldn't have enough horsepower to do what you need to do.
- We have decided to buy a Mahindra Roxor which is basically a 1947 Willey's Jeep with a diesel engine.
- 61 hp turbo charged diesel, on tracks; 6 foot wide, 8 foot long drag.
- That unit minus the deposit is \$44,000+ so we need to increase the approval for the loan.

Mark Reaves – I approve the increase of the loan to the WHH; Dave Ladd 2nd.

New Business

Insurance Update

- Cindy Locke – Information passed out to the board. Our current company's quote will go up \$50,000.
- We have a new company that is looking to bid on this.
- Last week we reached out to the Governor's office. It does say in State statute that VAST could be insured by the State of Vermont, through the Agency of Finance, but it has to be approved by them. Cindy is waiting to hear back from the State to set up a meeting.
- The SSTP budget has already been approved. We need to figure out how to make up the \$50,000 deficit for the SSTP.

Bylaws Update

- Jeff Fay – We’ve been looking at TMA numbers with regard to 3-day TMAs.
- 3 day TMAs are actually included in the delegate count.
- The current bylaws state that a limited TMA will include membership valid only for a specified time frame but, will not afford any voting rights or benefits.
- Cindy and I have talked about the language in the bylaws. The current bylaws state that they aren’t allowed voting rights.
- A 3 day limited time TMA will include membership.

Mark Reaves moved to approve the suggested changes to the bylaws regarding the 3-day membership rights; Lewis Barnes seconded; motion carried.

Grooming Last Winter / Using GPS data

- Matt Tetreault – \$2,212,000 cap this year based on the GPS data
- Next year the cap would be \$1,948,000.
- This past winter, based on the contract mileage, it is \$807,000.
- Next year with more accurate contract data the cap should be \$711,000.
- Stewart Ahearn – Are there any clubs that are disputing this, want to have it evaluated?
- About 40 clubs have contacted VAST about the differences, and we are working with them.

Update – Club Financial Reviews

- Cindy Locke – Certified letters went out on June 27th to the 8 clubs picked for audits this year, but some of them sat in mailboxes for a week or two.
- Responses are coming in slow. It’s a tough time of year; vacations, weddings, no club meetings, etc.
- I have requested that the clubs keep in touch with me, i.e., the 15 day period.
- Some individual clubs have mentioned that the county clubs should be audited also.
- The bylaws state “all clubs”, so the county clubs could be audited.
- I think we should change the timeline in the bylaws for the audit from 15 days.
- Thinking of maybe changing the time of year for these also.

Mark Reaves moved to approve that the wording in the Bylaws shall be “such records shall be made available in accordance with VAST Policy; Lewis Barnes seconded; motion carried.

Budget + Actuals – FY 2019

- Cindy Locke – Review of the budget and talked about specific notes/issues.
- Very detailed and specific discussion ensued regarding many items in the budget.
- Mark Reaves – I would suggest putting computers on a rotating schedule, like the other equipment.
- Cindy Locke - We saved a lot of money on the audit this year because we didn’t have to have a single audit done because LVRT spending was way down.
- Cindy Locke - We didn’t do the economic impact study this year, but I’d like to put that money in reserves and then add another \$15,000 in for next year.

Trails

- SSTP Grooming Grant - We had budgeted \$1.457 million, ending at \$1.629 million, over by \$171,000.
- This does not include over the cap, this is within the cap.
- Pay it out of the checking out – take \$26,571 out?
- Take the \$109,371 out of grooming contingency?
- Another \$89,000 to put into reserves?
- \$75.00 of every TMA goes to grooming now.

We have to:

- Find \$50,000 for insurance costs.
- Find \$100,000 for equipment grants (capital repairs)?
- Need to have a realistic budget.
- Take the \$26,571 out of the checking account?
- Keep trying to build up the grooming contingency?

We need to have:

- Motion to deal with overage money for grooming.
- Motion of how much we are going to put in reserves this year if you want to do it.
- Motion to vote on next year's budget.

Grooming Overage – FY 2019

Mike Burns made a motion that we take the trails deficit of \$71,000 (because of grooming) out of the following: \$44,608.04 from the General Fund overage and the remaining \$26,391.96 from the Grooming Contingency. Dick Jewett seconded; motion carried.

Grooming Contingency

Roger Gosselin made a motion to put \$89,000 into the reserve accounts as outlined in the end of year financial report; Pat Poulin seconded; motion carried.

2020 Budget

Grooming Line Item

- Cindy Locke - I adjusted numbers based on this past year (2018-19), and TMA numbers for income.
- What are we going to do about grooming; we were over by \$171,000?
- Jeff Fay – What is the new max if everyone capped out on the GPS?
- Matt Tetreault – It would be \$1.948 million down from \$2.212 million.
- Cindy Locke – Budget A - the General Fund would end at minus \$64,872 (approximately) for next year because of the insurance cost. And it would leave the Trails Fund at minus \$66,635 next year.
- Considerable discussion about the pricing of tmas and where the additional income would go.

Lewis Barnes moved to approve the amended budget as Cindy presented; Mark Reaves seconded; motion carried.

- Mike Burns – I have a problem with accepting a deficit budget without a clear plan to correct that.
- Cindy Locke – The only way to balance the budget would be to put the grooming back - \$1.391 million and then take out \$50,000 and move that \$50,000 deficit out of the General Fund. The General Fund would be in the black again and grooming would be \$1.351 million. That is how you would bring a balanced budget to bring to the membership. Tell them that is all we have for grooming, knowing that if grooming went over we would be looking at the contingency again next year around this time.
- We would add a line item in the trails fund for insurance.
- Tim Mills – Why don't we make the adjustments to balance the budget. Bring that to the annual meeting and we will set the TMA rate after the meeting. And the adjustment could be justified by insurance loss and grooming.
- Cindy Locke – And then you could say to the membership if you are ok with this budget, we are thinking of a \$10 increase, they can all discuss it, and if that happens, this is where the money would go toward; some for equipment, some for grooming, or just equipment.
- Tim Mills – If you bring an unbalanced budget it doesn't look good.
- Cindy Locke – This is trails liability insurance, so it should come out of trails.
- You have a motion on the table that doesn't agree with your discussion.

Mark Reaves and Lewis Barnes both withdrew their motions.

- Grooming would then be \$1,341,065 in order to have a balanced budget.

Roger Gosselin moved that we amend the trails budget for grooming line item to reflect \$1,391,065 minus \$50,000 in order to balance the budget as presented by Cindy Locke. Mark Reaves seconded; motion carried.

Committee Reports

Snow Trails Conservancy

- Jim Hill – We are working on two possible easements, one in Mt. Holly and one in Berlin.

Lewis Barnes moved to adjourn; Dick Jewett seconded, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.