

APRIL 28, 2003

DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES & STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Viau-Addison; Norm Roark-Bennington; Ken Gammell-Caledonia, Patrick Poulin-Chittenden; David Page-Essex; Jodie Ross-Franklin; Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Michael Cote-Lamoille; Ann Shangraw-Orange; Brian Cook-Orleans; Barry Bradley-Rutland; Greg Rouleau-Washington; Roone Gibbs-Windham; Bruce Murray-Windsor; Ron Bartemy-President; Hal Coughlin-Vice-President; David LaBelle-Treasurer; Bryant Watson-Executive Director; Alexis Nowalk-SSTP Trails Administrator; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary.

GUESTS: Mitzi Oakes, Bill and Ruth Benham, Jim Holbrook, Star Poulin, John Ross, Betty Roark, Sandy Woodbeck, Conrad Stewart, Maridelle Tomlinson, David Pastula, Alan Towle, Roberta Stammers, Jim Hill, Milan Lawson, Scott Stone, Don Glover, Matt Tetreault.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

AGENDA: Norm Roark moved and Dave Page seconded to approve the agenda with the addition.

Motion carried. Add Bridgewater Sno-Zippers to the agenda

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Dave LaBelle moved and Dave Page seconded to approve the minutes of March 24, 2003. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Norm Roark moved and Dave Page seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried.

FY 2004 BUDGET FIRST RUN: Ronald Bartemy requested that we review the Proposed FY 2004 Budgets First Run as submitted in our packets. One of the proposed additional line items was for proposed TMAs for Volunteers. This proposed FY2004 budget is with a proposed \$10 across the board TMA increase. If approved this would mean each category would increase by \$10. Dave LaBelle pointed out that proposed budget for Line items 17, 18 and 19 have not gone up. We did not add to the General Fund. Ron Bartemy stressed that the line item for the Volunteer TMA has not been approved as yet. This line item is based on approximately 1500 volunteers across the state. If this passes, the club will have control of who in their club will get a volunteer TMA. The Directors will set the proposed criteria. Bryant Watson read the proposed criteria for those TMAs. There was a discussion on the Volunteer TMAs. There was opposition from some of the directors. Hal Coughlin suggested that we take this proposal back to our counties and ask the county members for their input and then we could vote next month whether to adopt this new TMA. Bill Oakes asked about past discussions in the State about landowners receiving a tax break by opening their land to snowmobilers. Bryant Watson did state that they are working on proposing this to the legislature.

Bryant Watson reviewed the General Fund portion of the proposed budget. There are many line items in the budget that are not asking for an increase. He decreased the amount budgeted for the

Directors' retreats and special meetings. He put a slight increase in the property taxes without knowing what the next property taxes. He raised the amount budgeted for the Annual Meeting costs to bring it closer to what it has actually cost the last couple years.

Ann Shangraw questioned several line items including the amount for employee recognition. She also made note that she still has a problem for the budget for temporary staff. When Matt Tetreault was hired, it was talked about this helping to decrease the temporary positions but in fact it appears that the temporary positions have increased. Greg Rouleau questioned the club dues. Bryant Watson answered that the VAST Office collects \$15 per commercial TMA and then reimburses the Clubs for those TMAs.

Bryant Watson continued to review the budget for the Trails Fund. One of the additions is the Trail Impact Study in the National Forests. Trails Liability Insurance was paid for from the SSTP fund. Some of the extra TMAs sold above the amount that the budget was based on went towards the liability insurance premium. There was a question on some of the trail policies that need to be cleaned up. There are also some amounts for plowing parking lots that are still in the groomer contracts that need to be pulled out of the contract and have a separate contract created to be in the budget separately. We'll have closer figures next month due to not having all the figures back from the clubs. Hal Coughlin asked about the Outdoor gas tax on line item 184. He asked Bryant Watson that this be addressed to the state. Bryant Watson wants VAST to have the state look at the gas tax from snowmobiles to go towards the trails. We will be reviewing the proposed budget again at May's meeting. June is the month that we need to vote on the proposed budget.

CONSENT CALENDAR - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT and TRAIL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: David LaBelle moved and Greg Rouleau seconded the approval of the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

GROOMING RATES: Ron Bartemy asked David LaBelle and Alexis Nowalk to review the proposal for the grooming rate increase. The Trails Committee is still 100% in favor of the grooming rate increase. David LaBelle moved and Dave Page seconded to remove the grooming rate increase from the table. So moved.

David LaBelle moved and Dave Page to accept the 25% grooming rate as presented in February. Bryant Watson noted that this should fully fund the depreciation of their equipment. The proposed budget does cover this proposed increase. The motion carried unanimously.

PERSONNEL POLICY CHANGES: In the directors' packet was the wording for the proposed changes to the personnel policies for salaried employees. Bryant Watson and Alexis Nowalk are the only salaried employees. With today's technology it has become possible for employees to function normally and to complete their job duties operating outside of the VAST office. Salaried employees with the approval of the Executive Director and the Personnel Committee and as defined within the employee's employment agreement may negotiate to work from their home base for two days a week during the time period of June 1 through September 30 annually. If it is found that the arrangement does not provide the membership with their expected level of service the agreement may be terminated by the Executive Director with one month's notification. Norm Roark moved and Pat Poulin seconded to accept the changes to item C of

policy change. Note that David Page and Ken Gammell opposed the motion. They wanted to make note that they were not opposing the change but wanted to present it to their clubs first. Motion carried. Ken Gammell moved and David Page seconded motion to table the discussion of the proposed change. Motion to table is defeated.

Pat Poulin explained more proposed changes from the personnel committee. The Personnel Committee proposed adding necessary equipment to the policy. The proposed changes are: It shall be the policy of VAST that it supplies its employees with the equipment necessary to expeditiously and effectively perform their required job duties. This includes but is not limited to equipment that allows field personnel to view and inspect new and proposed trails equipment to allow for the effective mapping of snowmobile trails, equipment to process this information and to provide accurate information to base grant-in-aid disbursements as well as grooming contracts reimbursements and to assure that trails are located on property where permission has been granted; equipment necessary to transport any of the above to locations necessary to perform required tasks and/or jobs and to provide transportation to attend required, job related meetings, seminars, task forces, special committees and any other similar requirements. At the same time it is realized that not all needs of all employees can be met at the same time. If conflicts arise over the use of equipment the Executive Director shall determine which use has priority. If the conflict involves transportation issues the priority use will prevail and other provisions of the policy manual will resolve any other necessary transportation needs.

All equipment purchased or leased to accomplish the above shall be maintained in an accepted industry manner. Trailers shall be inspected and serviced on an annual basis and shall be ready for use at any time snowmobiles and ATVs shall be serviced on an annual basis and as recommended by the manufacturer motor vehicle(s) shall be maintained as recommended by the manufacturer and a log of their use shall be maintained that indicates each use of the vehicle mileage driven and the purpose of its use as well as scheduled and unscheduled maintenance All equipment shall be maintained in a way that ensures that the appearance is such that reflects a positive representation on VAST. The Executive Director shall be responsible for assuring that VAST owned and/or leased equipment is maintained and used in a manner that reflects positively on VAST. All expenditures for equipment purchased or leased shall be included within approved budgets and or as approved by the Board of Directors. Dave Page motioned and Jodie Ross seconded to table this discussion to next month. So moved. Ron Bartemy asked Bryant Watson to get figures for both leasing and purchasing a 3/4-ton pickup. Ron made note that Bryant Watson has contacted some manufacturers regarding a special purchase price.

CREDIT CARD FOR MATT TETREAUULT: It was presented that we approve a credit card for Matt Tetreault's use in his duties. Dave Page moved and Greg Rouleau seconded that we approve obtaining a credit card for Matt Tetreault to use in his VAST duties. Motion carried unanimously.

GROOMING CONTRACT CHANGES WARDSBORO AND POULTNEY: Alexis Nowalk explained the request to change the grooming contract for the Poultney Valley Snow Devils. The Poultney Snow Devils requested we upgrade their current grooming contract of Class IV to Class I. The Trails Committee unanimously voted on approving the upgrade for the 2003-2004

snowmobile season. Dave Page moved and Brian Cook seconded to approve the change for the Poultney Valley Snow Devils. So moved.

Alexis Nowalk explained the request for the request from the Wardsboro Pathfinders. The Wardsboro Pathfinders also requested the approval for a Class IV grooming contract to groom their trail system: VAST secondary 710. This is a major connection on the VAST trail system between Corridor 7 and Corridor 100. The trail has been upgraded to VAST corridor standards and the club would like to groom the trail with Class IV equipment. The Trails Committee unanimously voted on approving the upgrade for the 2003-2004 snowmobile season. Dave Page moved and Ken Gammell seconded to approve the request for a grooming contract. So moved.

CHANGE TO GROOMER POLICY: Alexis Nowalk explained the discussion to change groomer classification. The new policy addressed the issue of drags. After meeting with David LaBelle, VAST Trails Chairman, the Trails Committee decided to retain the current classification system with the exception of an additional clause that would amend the policy. This amendment would allow for a narrower piece of equipment to pull a wider drag (i.e.: Tucker 1000 {7' wide) to pull an 8' wide drag). This amendment will only go into effect upon the discretion and approval of the county trails coordinator and the VAST Trails Administrator. Barry Bradley moved and Dave Page seconded the motion to approve the change to the grooming reclassification. So moved.

HOST 2006 INTERNATIONAL SNOWMOBILE CONGRESS: Ron Bartemy was requested by the President of the ISC for VAST to host the Congress in 2006. Bryant Watson explained the scenario for choosing the location of the International Snowmobile Congress. This would be a very big undertaking. We would have the potential to make some money for this. Any where from 400-600 people attend the four-day Congress. The Congress puts in approximately 5% for seed money. Most of the costs are covered by registration fees and donations. We would need volunteers from each county. Ron Bartemy stressed that the VAST Staff cannot carry the work for this. This will have to be organized by a committee. Ann Shangraw moved and Ken Gammell seconded that we submit a proposal that we host the 2006 International Snowmobile Congress. This motion was approved unanimously by the Board of Directors.

LAMOILLE VALLEY RAIL COMMITTEE: Sandy Woodbeck did not have anything new to report. He did ask that we have a report by the group that went to the DC Fly-In. Ron Bartemy thinks it was very beneficial. Ann Shangraw reported that they were able to meet with every important official. Alexis Nowalk felt they were impressed with the number of representatives from Vermont. Greg Rouleau felt it was a good and productive trip. It was time well spent. Pat Poulin felt that Mr. Bernie Sanders was very supportive. Pat Poulin suggested that any director that has not attended the fly-in should experience it. Norm Roark felt that we were very well received and he is looking forward to see us getting something out of it. Bernie Sanders said that he would contact the Governor's office. Bryant Watson stressed that Bernie Sanders (and Jim Jeffords) stressed to us that it's important that we work with all forms of recreation with our trails.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Bill Oakes reported for the Nominating Committee. Ann Shangraw has come forth to run for President. Pat Poulin has volunteered to run for Vice-

President. Hal Coughlin will be stepping down from the Board after six years of service. Ron Bartemy will be taking a break for a couple of years, but he will be back.

MARKETING COMMITTEE: Ann Shangraw reported that the committee would present framed snowmobile pictures to the DC offices of our senators. The committee will send complimentary VAST newspapers to our local town officials to make our presence more felt. There are 177 towns listed with the League of Towns. All members of the legislature receive complimentary copies of the VAST paper.

RECOGNITION COMMITTEE: Star reported the committee sent information to the clubs requesting nominations. The VAST office has received a few nominations. Maelene Watson is the current chair of the nominating committee.

Ron Bartemy mentioned the VAST Dinner Cruise. The brochures are being mailed out to clubs.

Ron Bartemy asked for a volunteer to chair the Safety Committee.

ANNUAL MEETING: Lamoille County Michael Cote reported that the StoweFlake Inn is building a new building that would accommodate the Annual Meeting. Bryant Watson reported negotiating with the StoweFlake that the lowest they could go is \$35 per person per plate. This would be too expensive. Bryant is checking with Bolton Valley Ski area for a price. Norm Roark moved and Dave LaBelle seconded to extend the meeting for 10 minutes. So moved.

VERMONT TRADITIONS COALITION: Ken Gammell reported that someone from the Vermont Traditions Coalition would like to address the Board. Bruce Murray moved and Greg Rouleau seconded for the Vermont Traditions Coalition be invited to the Board Meeting next month. So moved. Ron Bartemy requested that Bryant Watson invite Steve McLeod to the meeting and put them at the top of the agenda under Discussion Items.

DOG SLEDS ON TRAILS: Brian Cooks asked to put this issue forth for discussion. There is a group of dog sledders in Craftsbury that feel they have the full run and the right of way to the VAST trails. They have caused a snowmobiler to crash his sled and then proceeded to yell at the snowmobiler for riding his snowmobile on the VAST trail. Bryant Watson reported that in the State of Vermont that dog sledders, horseback riders, cross country skiers can ride on the VAST trails unless its been posted for "snowmobiles only." If a landowner does not want other types of recreation on their trails, they (or request the club to) should post the trails on their land for snowmobiles only. Hal Coughlin moved and Pat Poulin seconded to extend the meeting 15 minutes. So moved. Dave LaBelle moved and Hal Coughlin seconded to move item 8a to 8g. So moved.

BRIDEWATER SNO-ZIPPERS: Bruce Murray presented the issue of a snowmobiler that hit a landowner's truck in Windsor County. At the time of the accident, the snowmobiler told the landowner it was his fault for the accident. They, the snowmobiler and the landowner, did not report the accident and there was a personal injury involved. By law, they were supposed to have reported it. So far, Windsor County has paid the landowner \$1,500 towards this accident as they were told the costs would be. Now the landowner is claiming \$2,300 in repairs. Ron Bartemy

suggested that Bryant Watson send a note to Tony Pitrone (the snowmobiler) and ask him to pay for the damages he caused.

NEXT MEETING/REFRESHMENTS: The next meeting will be May 19, 2003 at 6 p.m. due to Memorial Day. At Star Poulin's request, the "Peanut Gallery" will provide the refreshments next month. She did say that if anyone wanted to bring something to add that would be great!

David LaBelle moved and Pat Poulin seconded the motion to go into Executive Session. So moved. Pat Poulin moved and Bruce Murray seconded the meeting to come out of executive session. So moved.

Dave LaBelle moved and Hal Coughlin seconded to adjourn at 9:55 pm. So moved.

Respectfully submitted by
Bonnie Holbrook
Recording Secretary