

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

August 25, 2003

DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES & STAFF PRESENT: Conrad Stewart-Addison; Norm Roark-Bennington; Ken Gammell-Caledonia, Patrick Poulin-Chittenden; David Page-Essex; Jodie Ross Franklin-Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Brian Wells-Lamoille; Ann Shangraw-Orange; Merle Young, Sr.-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: Special Guest, The Honorable Bernie Sanders; Mitzi Oakes, Bill and Ruth Benham, Jim Holbrook, Star Poulin, Jim Hill, Howard Smith, John Lynds, Don Glover, Tony Mirando, Sandy Woodbeck, Tom Batty, Lauri Thomas, Matt Tetreault, Corporal Stebbins, Wayne Pelkey. More guests arrived after the meeting started.

Vice-President Hal Coughlin called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. President Ron Bartemy was absent.

Representative Bernie Sanders was our guest speaker. He began the meeting by asking for input from those present on the issues that we think Congress needs to work on. He shared some of his thoughts and ideas on some issues. Rep. Sanders is excited about the four-season trail (the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail) we are putting in and is in support of it. The VA HUD bill and transportation bills have been submitted. He hopes that we will get the bills passed.

Rep. Sanders asked us what we feel the conflict is with motorized vehicles in state and federal lands, for example Yellowstone. There are vehicles that travel through Yellowstone all summer but some groups want to stop snowmobiling in the winter. Alexis Nowalk pointed out that snowmobiling uses only 2% of the park. Vehicles contribute to pollution far more than snowmobiles do. Rep. Sanders stated that he supports snowmobiling. He feels that it's a good sport and a family sport. One of the issues for some people is pollution. There is very little from snowmobiles in comparison to automobiles. The average person drives about 20,000 miles a year with their car; the average snowmobiler only snowmobiles a few weekends and many only for about a month. The snowmobiles are more efficient and much better nowadays. He (Bernie Sanders) supports stronger standards for vehicles to get better gas mileage. It was noted that we (snowmobilers) do not tear up the pavement. In the spring, our tracks are gone. The hiker creates more erosion than a snowmobile. Rep. Sanders feels that we should be able to accommodate each other's needs. Howard Smith brought up the issue that ANR (Agency for Natural Resources) tries to shut state and federal owned land down as much as possible. One of the big issues within Vermont is the Vermont Wilderness Coalition, which is trying to avoid the government process when trying to limit the use of the federal lands. There are other issues with big forest and agricultural landowners. Some trails groups have bought easements of one thousand feet wide and do not share access, but we are willing to share our trails. These trail groups pay for their easement out of everyone's tax money and they do not pay any user fees. Ken Gammell mentioned that we (snowmobilers) pay for just about everything we do. On the other hand, bikers come in, and pay some money for food but they don't have to pay to ride their

bikes or pay for maintenance of the trails. The construction and maintenance of the trails are paid for by tax money. This is the same with other groups.

We are very concerned with the changes in the EPA Stormwater runoff permits and processes. It seems to have become over regulated. The EPA Stormwater rules are causing issues with our trails. Rep. Sanders asked Bryant Watson to make a list of the issues with information and present them to him. He will think about them and see how we can work together. The National Recreation Trail Fund is very important to us and Rep. Sanders said that he is in favor of supporting snowmobiling. He would like to see us work together.

AGENDA: Norm Roark moved and Barry Bradley seconded to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: David LaBelle moved and David Page seconded to approve the minutes of July 28, 2003 with the following corrections. Motion carried.

Regarding Ann's statement: "officials are state employees and are held hostage," it should have read; "officials of State agencies are our employees and we should not be held hostage or be made to feel held hostage."

Second correction - relationships with governmental agencies were questioned comparing VTC and VAST, not Ann personally.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ann Shangraw questioned Bryant Watson for the continued expenses for computer technical assistance. She also questioned the cost of parts and labor for the new truck. This was for the purchase and installation for the tunnel cover and running boards. Norm Roark moved and Barry Bradley seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried.

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

LEGISLATION REQUEST BY BOMBARDIER: We have a request from Bombardier to support the legislation request for a change to the Vermont Statutes. The current Vermont law indicates that a snowmobile shall weigh no more than 1,000 pounds and the Elite weights in at nearly 1,600 pounds. Ann Shangraw moved and David Page seconded to support this request for the change. Motion carried.

WORK VEHICLE FOR THE LAMOILLE VALLEY RAIL COMMITTEE: David LaBelle moved and Roone Gibbs seconded removing from the table. Motion carried. Bryant Watson said that we have received one more quote for the price of a six-wheeler. He spoke with an attorney for the department of transportation about the licensing and inspecting of the six-wheeler. There is a possibility that the money will be refunded from the federal funds for the purchase of the six-wheeler. Addison, Essex and Orleans counties are not in favor of the purchase although the directors of two of those counties are in favor of purchasing it. David LaBelle reminded us that

this trail would always be ours. He would like to see a policy written on who will be able to use the Ranger. Roone Gibbs moved and Brian Wells seconded to purchase the six-wheeler. The motion carried with a 10 to five vote (Essex, Orange, Orleans, Chittenden and the Secretary voted against). Roone Gibbs moved and David LaBelle seconded to have Bryant Watson and Alexis Nowalk create a policy for usage and maintenance. Roone Gibbs moved and Brian Wells seconded to purchase a trailer to haul the six-wheeler. Motion carried with a 10 to five vote.

POLICY CHANGE FOR CLASS IV GROOMERS: Alexis presented a proposed change for Class IV Groomers. The proposed policy change was approved by the Trails Committee. David LaBelle moved and Pat Poulin seconded to approve the change to the groomers' policy. Greg Rouleau is very concerned with allowing the use of the ATVs with the track conversion kit to groom. He is concerned that if people begin see an ATV with a conversion kit on the trail, then they will then take their own out on the trail. Corporal Stebbins feels that it will clearly be a grooming machine and a trail maintenance vehicle. It's important to remember the key point is that clubs will have to have landowner permission, a visible mounted beacon, slow moving vehicle sign, all safety gear and equipment (first aid kit, etc) and display a VAST Trail Maintenance sign on front and rear of power unit. Tony Mirando questioned whether we need to make a change to the by-laws. Jim Holbrook asked if clubs will be able to apply for grant-in-aid for these.

TRI-TOWN TRAIL TRAVELERS CLASS IV GROOMING CONTRACT: Tri-Town Trail Travelers approached the Trails Committee with a request for a Class IV grooming contract. Ann Shangraw moved and Pat Poulin seconded to accept the recommendation of the trails committee to approve the proposed contract. Motion carried.

MALLETTS BAY LAKERS SNOWMOBILE CLUB LOST TMAS: This club accidentally threw away 79 TMAs. The numbers have been run through the system and they have not been turned in. Pat Poulin asked Kathy to run the TMAs prior to the director's meeting. Tony Mirando reminded the Board that the Woodford Sno Busters had accidentally burned TMAs a few years ago and had to pay for the TMAs. There have been other clubs that have paid for a large amount of TMAs that were lost. Ann Shangraw moved and David Page seconded that we allow the club to pay the amount of \$4,345. over a period of four years and the policy committee be charged to review the policy and present recommendations for a possible policy change by the October Board Meeting. Motion carried.

OTHER COMMITTEES: The marketing committee has the new display board ordered.

POLICY CHANGES FOR LEASED GROOMERS: Alexis Nowalk presented the suggested policy changes for the leased groomers. She read the wording for the policy changes for the disposition of leased equipment at end of the term. There is one club that thought they would be able to lease the groomer for 10 years and then purchase it for \$1. There are several clubs that cannot afford the buy out their groomer after five years. It was recommended that Alexis put the wording back in that she was going to take out. Don Glover questioned if they could buy out one groomer and extend the lease another five years for their second groomer as they have two groomers.

David LaBelle moved and Ann Shangraw seconded that we move item 8b to item 7f. Motion Carried. David LaBelle moved and Ann Shangraw seconded to adopt the policy change as amended.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE SUMMER STUDY: Bryant Watson reported that the committee is still in the discussion process. One of the proposals is to have a Snowmobile Vermont vanity plate for \$20 a year. Linda Snyder from DMV Operations will bring back information on the success of other group vanity plates. Another idea the group has had is to have a permanent registration plate mounted on the outside of the tunnel of the snowmobile. The money for these would come to VAST. The first year of the program would see half of the funds staying with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Then after the first year, a percentage would stay with the Department of Motor Vehicles for administrative costs and the balance to VAST. Bryant Watson reviewed other issues that they have discussed. One of the proposals is for the State of Vermont to include VAST under the state liability policy. This Thursday is the second day meeting and then the interactive television meetings will be on September 9 and 16.

ANNUAL MEETING: Brian Wells thanked the VAST staff for all of their help with the Annual Meeting. RV Parking will be in the lower parking lot with shuttle service.

2006 INTERNATIONAL SNOWMOBILE CONGRESS COMMITTEE REPORT: Bonnie Holbrook reported on the progress of the committee to date, although was cut short just before finishing her report.

OTHER DISCUSSION: Bonnie Holbrook addressed the comment in Bryant Watson's report on the Master Liability Policy regarding VAST adopting a liability insurance policy for every member and charging the members in the cost of the TMA. The Board was not presented it in this way and has not approved that idea. Bryant Watson was to look into our insurance carrier to provide a liability policy that VAST members could choose to purchase through the insurance carrier.

David LaBelle moved and Greg Rouleau seconded to go into Executive Session. Motion carried. David LaBelle moved and David Page seconded to come out of Executive Session. Motion carried. David LaBelle moved and David Page seconded to settle the Machin Case. Motion carried with three opposed.

NEXT MEETING/REFRESHMENTS: The next meeting will be September 22, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. Essex County will provide the refreshments next month. David LaBelle moved and David Page seconded to adjourn at 9:02 p.m.