

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING
June 23, 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; Brian Wells-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; Alexis Nowalk-SSTP Trails Administrator; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Bill and Ruth Benham, Jim Holbrook, Star Poulin, John Ross, Betty Roark, Conrad Stewart, Maridelle Tomlinson, Jim Hill, John Lynds, Ransom Baker, John Perkins, Mark Pederson. There were other guests that came in after the recognition of guests.

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. This is the first time in many years that Bryant Watson has missed a Director's meeting. He is returning from his daughter's wedding.

AGENDA: Dave LaBelle moved and Bruce Murray seconded to approve the agenda with one addition. Motion carried.
12 a Saxon Hill Riders (Alexis)

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Dave LaBelle moved and Ann Shangraw seconded to approve the minutes of May 19, 2003 as presented. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ann Shangraw questioned the check that was issued for a memorial. It was for a memorial for Chittenden County. Bill Oakes questioned why there are check numbers missing. Dave LaBelle said they were for payroll checks, which are not listed on the treasurer's reports. Pat Poulin questioned the cost of the yard mowing and cleanup. Dave LaBelle reported that it is what the Lawn Service charges. It appears to be the going rate in the area. So unless there is a crew of volunteers to clean the yard in the spring by raking and repairing lawn dug up from plowing. We can anticipate receiving a bill for approximately this amount annually. Pat Poulin moved and Ann Shangraw 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 Norm Roark seconded the approval of the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried unanimously

FY 2004 BUDGET – APPROVAL: The new proposed budget has been changed to reflect using the newer updated numbers for the amount of TMAs sold. There was a discussion on whether we can approve the budget before we vote on the volunteer TMAs. Essex County asked Dave Page to ask the Board why is VAST so set against adjusting the budget to reflect the amount of TMAs actually sold. Normally we use a rolling five-year average number of TMAs sold to create a budget. Historically we use the five-year averages in case of lean winters. This year we used the lower number for projecting the budget. We are being conservative because we are projecting how many TMAs we will sell. If there was a shortfall on the sales of the TMAs the membership would be after us for not being fiscally responsible. Another factor we need to take into account is the unknown affect of the insurance issues we are facing. This projected budget is being based on thirty-six thousand TMAs. There are major issues on the horizon. We also approved an increase in the grooming rates. The proposed increase of \$10 for TMAs for this year is for the VAST Trails Fund to cover the grooming rate increase. The proposed \$10 increase is across the board, meaning for resident, non-resident and commercial TMAs. We also have the issue of the lease groomer buyouts. We need to prepare for them. Dave LaBelle pointed out, that again this month, we are talking about the proposed increase for TMAs and the number of TMAs. There have not been questions on the expenditures in the budget. David Page questioned the Unencumbered (line 270) in the trails fund. He wanted to make sure that unencumbered amount would not be moved out of the trails fund and into the general fund. There will be excess money if we sell more than the 36,000 projected TMAs. Ann Shangraw pointed out that Bryant Watson will put out a call for volunteers to help input TMAs to help lower the cost for hiring temporary help (that we hire each year) to enter TMAs. Factors that significantly impact the budget are the unknown liability insurance issue, leased equipment and the 25% groomer increase. Dave LaBelle moved and Greg Rouleau seconded to approve the FY 2004 Proposed Budget. This was approved with Essex County opposed.

POLICY MANUAL CHANGE – VOLUNTEER TMAs: Pat Poulin moved and Dave LaBelle seconded to remove the discussion for the proposed policy manual changed from table. Motion carried.

Hal Coughlin moved and Pat Poulin seconded the motion to approve the proposed policy for volunteer TMAs. The motion carried by majority vote. The policy will be presented to the general membership. There was a discussion on the pros and cons of a volunteer TMA. We will present the volunteer TMA to the membership at the Annual meeting to approve. Dave LaBelle pointed out that we have the line item in the proposed budget and that we could vote the policy with the stipulation that the membership approves it at the annual meeting.

WINDSOR COUNTY, BRIDGEWATER SNO-ZIPPERS: Bruce Murray announced to his knowledge this situation as been resolved.

VERMONT TRADITIONS COALITION: Ann Shangraw moved and Ken Gammell to remove this item from the table. Motion carried. Steve McLeod forwarded the information he was requested from the last Director's meeting. The Vermont Traditions Coalition work hard to lobby to keep the state lands open for traditional recreational land uses. The farm and forest landowners who make these uses possible has a long way to go. Ken Gammell, Ann Shangraw and Greg Rouleau are members of the Vermont Traditions Coalition representing their counties and stated they (VTC) are fighting with us (VAST) to keep land open to snowmobiles that the Environmentalists are fighting to shut down to us. The Vermont Traditions Coalition represents several recreational activities. This helps to create a stronger front. Steve McLeod is an attorney and is a past member of the legislature. So he is experienced in the lobbying process. Greg Rouleau pointed out in the bylaws that VTC needs no objection to pursue an issue. Ron Bartemy stressed that he is concerned with VAST becoming a member of a coalition. Ken Gammell, Greg Rouleau and Ann Shangraw recommend that we join the Coalition. Greg, Ann and Ken feel that we should never feel held "hostage" by quiet threats about working relationships being threatened. Government officials are paid by our tax dollars and they need to be reminded. Ann Shangraw feels that VTC has a closer continuing working relationship with most agencies than VAST does at the current time. A continuing cooperation definitely needs to be in place. Roone Gibbs recommends against joining the coalition. What he's concerned about is that we could alienate the people we have to work with by joining a coalition, which may lobby against some of the rules those people believe in or are required to follow. There are always differences on how rules are interpreted. Roone's concern is that cooperation will disappear if some of the issues being lobbied are the same as the ones we have worked on with these officials. What incentive would they have to work with us if that happened? The rules could be enforced with a different point of view if we upset these people. This is why Roone feels that for VAST to join any lobby type group is not in our best interest because of this conflict. He is worried about the effect this lobbying coalition could have on our relations with the different departments and personnel we have to deal with. Dave LaBelle has heard good arguments for and against joining or supporting by donating to the Coalition. Before any decisions are made, he would like to get the opinion of the Executive Director and to review the bylaws and handout from Steve McLeod. Dave LaBelle moved and Brian Wells seconded that we table this to next month. Motion carried.

SAXON HILL RIDERS SNOWMOBILE CLUB, INC.: Andy Doe with the Saxon Hill Riders Snowmobile Club addressed the Board to request a Class IV grooming contract. He showed the trail on the map that he would like the grooming contract for. This is to provide continuous grooming on Corridor Route 2. This currently covers nine miles of un-groomed of trails. This request has gone through the proper channels and the Trails Committee approved the request. David Page moved and Pat Poulin seconded that we accept the requested contract for the 29.6 miles that the trails committee unanimously approved. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Trails Committee: Dave LaBelle reported on the Trails Committee. Kim Greenwood is the only person that can sign on the permits for Storm Water Runoffs. Currently there is a five acres law and they are trying to lower it to 8/10th of an acre. The permit has to be filed in the name of the landowner and signed by the landowner.

MARKETING COMMITTEE: Ann Shangraw had a marketing committee meeting. She shared ideas from Congress.

BOARD RESOURCE COMMITTEE: Ann Shangraw reported the Board Resource committee has met and is tallying the opinion poll. She would like to schedule the requested training in fall. The survey also expressed interest in a group trip. The committee will be quiet until the fall.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE: Bill Oakes announced the candidates running for office. There are two candidates running for President. Ann Shangraw and Hal Coughlin are both running for President. Pat Poulin will be running for Vice President, Bonnie Holbrook for Recording Secretary and David LaBelle for Treasurer. There will be opportunity for nominations from the floor.

AD HOC COMMITTEE: Bill Oakes reported on the Ad Hoc Committee. The committee will pick back up in the fall.

2006 INTERNATIONAL SNOWMOBILE CONGRESS COMMITTEE: Bonnie Holbrook announced that the ISC Congress did award the bid to VAST to host the 2006 Congress. The 2004 ISC will be in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. In 2005 it will be in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Ron Bartemy will ask Bryant Watson to report on the legislature and Congress at our next Board meeting.

COMMERCIAL SNOWMOBILE OPERATORS: Ron Bartemy gave opening comments addressing the Commercial Snowmobile Operators. The proposed increase is across the board for all TMAs. John Perkins, Commercial Operator addressed the Board. He is concerned with when the study will be done. He was told that the money has not been spent on the study yet but will be used next year. He would like to propose that the Commercial Operators do with VAST like what they are doing with the Forest Service. They give 3% of their gross sales to the Forest Service. His suggestion that instead of purchasing the higher priced Commercial TMAs he is proposing they give VAST a percentage of their gross sales. He has also been told that his insurance is going to be increased by another 30%. John Lynds addressed the club. He would like to see where the money from the large increase in Commercial TMAs has gone. He spends over \$10 million in liability insurance. He feels a \$10 per TMA increase across the board is very reasonable. There was a question from one of the Commercial Operators regarding the counters that were to be purchased and placed on trails. Barry Bradley reported he did purchase ten counters and some of them are also in the Woodford area. John Lynds prides himself on doing everything by the book and plays by the rules. He is very active in his local snowmobile club and is, in fact, the club president. Barry Bradley asked Ron Bartemy to give the commercial operators a copy of the law enforcement reports. John Lynds also wanted to express his support of the Vermont Traditions Coalition. He would like to see VAST participate. John Lynds also expressed Howard Smith's desire (in his absence) that we support the Coalition. Alexis Nowalk did note that it's in the best interest of the Forest Service to cooperate with VAST for the study. The study will need to be coordinated between VAST and the Forest Service. We also did not get a grant that we had applied for. Mark Pederson suggested that we create a paper trail to be able to show where the monies from the Commercial TMAs are spent.

ANNUAL MEETING: Brian Wells reported on the Annual Meeting. It will be September 6, 2003. It will be at Bolton Valley Ski Resort. There will be a pre-meeting. The booklet is just about done. They (the ski area) will not let anyone else come in and cook. Bryant Watson and Brian Wells are negotiating lunch prices with them. Call (802) 434-3444 at Bolton Valley to secure a room. The banquet tickets will be \$30. Brian Wells expressed a lot of praise for the VAST Staff with for their help on the meeting.

2002/2003 TMA DATA: – no questions.

2002/2003 LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT: Bruce Murray shared that they funded law enforcement from the Windsor County Sheriffs Department. Alexis Nowalk sat on the Governor's Council meeting. The State Police will be stricter next year in writing tickets for unregistered snowmobiles, no TMAs and improper placement of TMAs.

Ron Bartemy reminded everyone of the 6th Annual Dinner Cruise next month on Lake Champlain.

NEXT MEETING/REFRESHMENT: The next meeting will be July 28, 2003 at 6 p.m. Chittenden County will provide the refreshments next month.

David Page moved and Brian Wells seconded the motion to go into Executive Session for personnel issues. Motion carried.

Barry Bradley moved and Dave LaBelle seconded the meeting to come out of Executive session. Motion carried.

Dave LaBelle moved and Brian Wells seconded that the Executive Director to receive a 4% raise. Motion passed by a vote of nine to seven.

Dave LaBelle moved and Bruce Murray seconded to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted
By Bonnie Holbrook
Recording Secretary