

MAY 19, 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; 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, Roberta Stammers, Jim Hill, Scott Stone, Howard Smith, John Lynds, Steve McLeod, Robby Mather, Bill Sayer

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm.

VERMONT TRADITIONS COALITION: Steve McLeod with the Vermont Traditions Coalition (VTC) was introduced by Ann Shangraw and Ken Gammell. This organization works very hard lobbying for snowmobiling in Vermont. Ken Gammell stated that in the past we (VAST) have talked about hiring a lobbyist to help Bryant Watson with lobbying for snowmobiling in Vermont. After introductions and preliminary information on the Vermont Traditions Coalition, Steve McLeod addressed the Board. Steve also brought Robby Mather (HAT - Hunter, Anglers and Trappers Association of Vermont) who is also very active in the Coalition. Steve McLeod explained how the Coalition was created. He also shared his background as an attorney and a member of the legislature for two years. There are several organizations that are fighting to stop snowmobiling. VTC is in their second year of operation. Last year they worked on the Champion Land issues. This year they did branch out to work on other issues. The issues that VTC works on are not just snowmobiling but they indirectly help snowmobiling and other land use groups to protect our heritage for land usage. Anything that VTC does has to be approved by consensus of the group. Steve would like to see more snowmobilers in the Coalition. The Coalition also works hard on publicity. The Coalition is asking for more delegates from clubs, counties and from VAST. They operate on donations. Steve suggested if you are doing a fundraising you could add a dollar or two to the admission price to donate to the Coalition. Steve McLeod's phone is (802) 434-3346 if you have any questions. Robby Mather with the Hunter, Anglers, and Trappers Association of Vermont addressed the Board and explained how he got involved with the Coalition. Steve McLeod also introduced Bill Sayer who is very active with the Vermont Traditions Coalition. HAT has a website. The Champion Lands Leaseholders and Traditional Interests Association, Inc. has a newsletter called The Moose Poop. The Vermont Traditions Coalition does not have a website at this time. They rely on members and supporters to spread information about them. The next meeting is Thursday at 5:30 at AIV (Associated Industries of Vermont) in Montpelier. Bruce Murray requested a written statement and bylaws for the Coalition. Greg Rouleau moved and Ken Gammell seconded the motion to donate \$5,000 to the Vermont Trails Coalition for the next legislation. Dave LaBelle made note that the motion was made out of order. We will need to add the item to the agenda as an action item to be able to vote on it.

AGENDA: Norm Roark moved and Dave LaBelle seconded to approve the agenda with the following addition. Motion carried. Add to the agenda item 7f, further discussion on the Vermont Traditions Coalition.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Dave LaBelle moved and Jodie Ross seconded to approve the minutes of April 28, 2003. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Jodie Ross questioned the charge for repairs. Norm Roark moved and Hal Coughlin seconded to approve the Treasurers Report as presented. Motion carried.

FY 2004 BUDGET SECOND REVIEW: Jodie Ross questioned the process of approving the budget and at what point we need to approve the proposed volunteer TMAs. David LaBelle asked if everyone reviewed Bryant Watson's report with figures with the new count for TMAs sold this year. Hal Coughlin questioned the amount for the purchase of the leased groomers. He also questioned when the federal government will be voting on the National Recreational Trails Fund. Alexis Nowalk shared that she will be meeting with the clubs with the leased groomers to discuss purchasing the groomers as their lease comes up. Ron Bartemy spoke about the debt that VAST has and suggested that we need to work to lower the debt. Hal Coughlin asked Bryant Watson what our debt is. Bryant Watson stated that he cannot give an exact amount of our debt right now. The debt we are talking about is for the leased groomers. The original debt was over \$2 million. We have paid it down about fifty percent. Ken Gammell brought up again the fact that we should have approved a \$31 TMA increase a couple of years ago to cover these debts and expenses. We continued to discuss the leased groomers and the amount of debt we are carrying. We are looking at over one million dollars in outstanding debt. David LaBelle suggested we go to the bank and ask if we can get a line of credit with the amount of cash we have in the bank.

Bryant Watson talked about the letter he put in each director and officers place tonight regarding the insurance. He has been discussing individual insurance policies with the Liberty Mutual Fire Insurance Company that insured us this year. The representative with Liberty Insurance feels she may be able to find an insurance company that may be interested in providing a policy.

David LaBelle asked for the general consensus for Volunteer TMAs - Essex, Orange and Rutland were against. Windsor does not meet after April so Bruce said he would sit on the fence. Washington, Chittenden, Orleans, Caledonia, Windham and Bennington voted for.

Next month we need to vote on the budget that we will propose at the Annual Meeting. Ken Gammell emphasized the fact that more people registered and purchased TMA s in Vermont each year even with the increase in TMA s. Hal Coughlin suggested that Bryant Watson obtain the numbers in our neighboring states. At this time, there is not a line item in the proposed budget showing the debt reduction. There was a discussion on paying down the debt and what we will do with our extra revenue from the TMA s that we had not budgeted. One of the purposes of the study group this summer is to look at the ways to reward landowners. Hal Coughlin noted that the debt is secured by the equipment. Jodie Ross suggested that by having the Vermont Trails Coalition here tonight that it stressed why we need to get more exposure with the government.

CONSENT CALENDAR - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT and TRAIL

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: David LaBelle moved and Ann Shangraw seconded the approval of the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

PERSONNEL POLICY CHANGES: Bryant Watson distributed the proposal for the requested equipment for the VAST staff. He recommended that we take the money from this year's carry over funds in the General Fund that we have. We would need to add a line item in the SSTP budget for servicing the equipment. Bryant Watson said that last week he called the dealers he had not received a bid from. They still did not present a bid. The insurance would also be under the SSTP Fund. The insurance would be between \$600-\$1200 dollars a year. These prices reflect the rebates that are available until the end of May. David LaBelle moved and Bruce Murray seconded that we adopt section 8R in the policy manual as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Hal Coughlin moved and Bruce Murray seconded that we charge Bryant Watson, with the approval of the fiscal committee, to purchase a heavy-duty four-wheel-drive pickup truck. The motion carried unanimously.

POLICY MANUAL CHANGE - VOLUNTEER TMAs: Ann Shangraw moved and Jodie Ross to table Policy Manual Change - Volunteer TMAs. So Moved.

WINDSOR COUNTY BRIDGEWATER SNO-ZIPPERS: Bruce Murray explained the situation with the snowmobiler that hit a landowner's truck. The landowner and the snowmobiler did not report the accident to the authorities although there was bodily injury and by law were required to do so. Hal Coughlin suggested that VAST cut a check to the Bridgewater Sno-Zippers for \$800. After discussion, Bruce Murray will take this issue back home to Windsor County.

APPOINT COMMITTEE TO HOST 2006 INTERNATIONAL SNOWMOBILE

CONGRESS: Bryant Watson has done some preliminary work on the proposal for the Congress. Next week we need to submit the bid to the Planning Committee for the 2006 International Snowmobile Congress. Jodie Ross, Bonnie Holbrook, Lisa Viau and Norm Roark volunteered to be on the committee. President Ron Bartemy appointed Bonnie Holbrook as Chair of the committee.

APPOINT COMMITTEE TO WORK WITH THE SUMMER STUDY GROUP: Bryant Watson briefed the Board on the study group. This committee will be very busy and will have many meetings around the state. This committee will take a lot of time during the summer. Bryant Watson will push to get Bill Sayer on the committee too. He is also going to try to get some of these meetings on interactive television to enable more participation from landowners. Most of the meetings will take place in the evening. Hal Coughlin volunteered to take care of Rutland and that part of the state. Roone Gibbs will represent the southern end. Pat Poulin will represent the northwestern end. Ron Bartemy asked Bryant Watson to ask Nancy Cook to represent the northeastern area of the state.

VERMONT TRADITIONS COALITION: Greg Rouleau moved and Ann Shangraw seconded to donate \$5000 for this year's legislative work. Hal Coughlin moved and Pat Poulin seconded to

table this until next month. Howard Smith suggested that we invite Steve McLeod to the VAST Annual meeting. Hal Coughlin moved and Barry Bradley seconded to extend the meeting until 9:30.

Lamoille Valley Rail Committee Sandy Woodbeck gave a brief update on the Lamoille Valley Rail Committee.

OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS: No other committee reports.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS: Reports due for Annual Meeting Booklet by June 13 Chairs need to get their reports into Lauri.

ANNUAL MEETING: Lamoille County The Annual Meeting will be at Bolton Valley on Sept 6, 2003. There will be a comedian for entertainment. There will also be a buffet banquet. There will be a pre-meeting. That has worked well the last few years.

As chair of the Nominating Committee, Bill Oakes reported that Ann Shangraw will run for President, Pat Poulin for Vice President and Bonnie Holbrook will run for Recording Secretary.

Bryant Watson talked about the ongoing Sno-Karr issue.

Greg Rouleau wanted to point out a couple of things for directors to bring back to their clubs. We have two VAST Board members on the coalition. The Vermont Current Use Coalition and the Vermont Sugar Makers Association are also members of the Vermont Traditions Coalition. If the membership is not comfortable with supporting the Vermont Traditions Coalition then we should think about hiring our own lobbyist. Mitzi Oakes pointed out that in 1966 they did not have a written statement and bylaws when they began VAST. Bill Oakes shared that they were up against the wall and were attacked by many others. They locked arms and fought back.

NEXT MEETING/REFRESHMENTS: The next meeting will be June 23, 2003 at 6 p.m. Caledonia County will provide the refreshments next month.

Hal Coughlin moved and David LaBelle seconded the motion to go into Executive Session for personnel issues.

Hal Coughlin moved and Jodie Ross seconded the meeting to come out of Executive session.

Hal Coughlin moved and Pat Poulin seconded to prepare a policy for providing emergency money to staff. Motion defeated.

Dave LaBelle moved and Hal Coughlin seconded to adjourn at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Bonnie Holbrook
Recording Secretary