

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
November 24, 2003

**DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES & STAFF PRESENT:** Lisa Viau-Addison; Norm Roark-Bennington; Ken Gammell-Caledonia, Jim Hill-Chittenden; David Page-Essex; Jodie Ross-Franklin; Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Mike Cote-Lamoille; Larry Trottier-Orange; Brian Cook-Orleans; Barry Bradley-Rutland; Scott Stone-Washington; Roone Gibbs-Windham; Bruce Murray-Windsor; Ann Shangraw-President; Pat Poulin-Vice-President; David LaBelle-Treasurer; Bryant Watson-Executive Director; Alexis Nowalk-SSTP Trails Administrator; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary

**GUESTS:** Mitzi Oakes, Betty Roark, Star Poulin, Jim Holbrook, John Ross, John Lynds, Don Glover, Sandy Woodbeck, Conrad Steward, Mickey Auclair, Tjark Aldeborgh

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Ann Shangraw.

**AGENDA:** Barry Bradley moved and Dave LaBelle seconded to approve the agenda with additions and corrections. Motion carried.

8c Medical Insurance

9i Samantha Grout from Island Pond

11a Correction for Board Resources Committee - The Chair is Jodie Ross

11n Marketing and PR Committee with Jodie Ross as Chair

11o Personnel Committee with Pat Poulin as Chair

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Dave LaBelle moved and Pat Poulin seconded to approve the minutes of October 27, 2003 as amended with corrections. Motion carried.

**NAME CORRECTION FOR HILL FARMS:** Bryant Watson reported they met with Addison County, Brian Hill and his brother and sister Four Hill's Farm.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** David LaBelle opened the discussion on the Treasurer's Report. Bryant Watson added comments on the audit. The audit last year was so late that the figures were off. The auditors did not catch about \$140,000 in the amount that was reported on the carry forward amount. Jodie Ross questioned why adjustments are made to the budget at the end of every year when the accountants do an audit. Norm Roark moved and Bruce Murray 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 with Bruce Murray seconding the approval of the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Alexis Nowalk reported that only 65 out of over a 100 grooming contracts have been received.

**COUNTY REPORTS:**

Barry Bradley from Rutland County reported that they are losing two clubs in their county. Middle Town Springs and Wells are being expelled from the County due to not meeting the required attendance. The county is very concerned that if clubs do not attend county meetings then they are not aware of important changes, which create a much higher risk for liability issues.

Jim Hill had a land owners' dinner in Chittenden County and they ran out of food from a high attendance. There were about 51-53 families that attended.  
Jodie Ross reported that Franklin County is working hard on the Annual Meeting.

Bruce Murray reported Windsor County is doing fine. Some clubs are offering a percentage off the price of a TMA for working on trails with the club paying the discount.

Scott Stone of Washington County is dealing with some issues regarding the Waterbury suspension bridge.

Lisa Viau from Addison County reported that the issue with Four Hill's Farm appears to be settled and it looks like the trail will be active this year across their property.

Norm Roark from Bennington County shared that three out of four bridges are done. They are waiting for the Engineer to come back down before proceeding with the fourth bridge.

Bill Oakes of Grand Isle County lost one section of one of their trails. They think they've found a way around that will be a few miles longer. This will allow them to get back to a gas station to get gas. This station sells a lot of TMAs for the club. The town is going to brush hog the trail for the club.

Ken Gammell from Caledonia County said they are having fun and signing on trails. Lyndonville is holding them up on a section of trail.

Brian Cook from Orleans County reported they have delivered the last rescue sled to the Hazen Notch Snowmobile Club.

Brian Wells of Lamoille County reported they have problems in Eden. Another problem is the trail from the Charlmont Restaurant to Hyde Park (Route 15). A section of the trail is being closed due to an incident that happened when the law enforcement was working on a case.

Larry Trottier from Orange County reported that the county had a meeting with a group of residents and the past officers of the Fairlee Baldtoppers. The Fairlee Baldtoppers snowmobile club was disbanded last year due to non-compliance issues. The county has approved to reinstate the club with conditions and with new officers. There is a new bridge in Chelsea that was done although they have been unable to get a dozer out to connect the trail to the bridge.

**FINAL DRAFT OF THE SUMMER STUDY REPORT:** Bryant Watson showed what the whole report will look like with all the attachments. The Board received a copy of the report without all the attachments. He reviewed some of the recommended changes to the wording of violations. Some proposed recommendations include moving them under a higher fine for the violation. There is some concern with the changes to section seven allowing law enforcement to stop you without reasonable cause for suspicion. Bryant Watson had a meeting with Mr. Hoffman, who shared that they (the State) need to reduce the budget by 32 million dollars. We are bringing forth some very legitimate issues to the State and hope to find support from the State. Bryant Watson has also met with the governor. Dave LaBelle moved and Lisa Viau seconded we accept the final draft of the summer study and present the study to the State. Motion carried.

**AUTHORIZATION FOR FY04 LEASED EQUIPMENT:** Bryant Watson reviewed the document showing the leased equipment payments for FY04 to FY09 and explained the payments for the leased groomers. This includes payments for the final three leased groomers we need to take. The bank is asking for 20% down on those three. The total payments for FY04, less the buyout and FY04 down payment is \$588,793.82. The total payments for the buyout and down payment this fiscal year is \$470,450. Pat Poulin questioned that we budgeted a half a million dollars but we need to pay over a million. The buyout amounts are the anticipated buyout amount that we pay the lease company if we do not send the groomer back to Kassbohrer. When the club buys the groomer from VAST we recoup the cost of the buyout for that particular machine. David LaBelle moved and Norm Roark that we appropriate \$74,600 from the carry forward money to use as the 20% needed for the down payment for the fifth year purchase. Motion carried. Dave LaBelle noted that this does not exceed the amount budgeted for the groomers. We did not anticipate the bank requesting the down payment. We could put a mortgage on the building but that would have added costs. We have the money available from the amount carried forward. Norm Roark moved and Barry Bradley seconded that the President, the Treasurer and the Executive Director sign the paperwork at the bank. Motion carried.

**MEDICAL INSURANCE:** Bryant Watson asked to be removed from the medical insurance program for VAST staff. We already do this for two other employees and they are reimbursed the difference of the amount between the one person and two-person rate. At this time, there is not a difference between the first and second person rate. Bryant Watson requested that the amount be issued in a check with the taxes taken out. Pat Poulin moved and Ken Gammell that we exempt him from our insurance plan and reimburse him at the current rate as requested. Motion carried.

**BOARD TRAINING SESSION FEEDBACK:** The training that we had was very good. Bruce Murray requested that Ann Shangraw come up with a synopsis on the training. She does not have the time but welcomed Bruce to write one up to share. The others that attended felt the training was really good and was disappointed that a few of the directors were unable to attend.

**TMA-FAMILY SALES:** Ann Shangraw has been visiting several clubs. One of the first questions that she is receiving is regarding family memberships. Lisa Viau has had requests from her county members. Ann Shangraw asked if this is something that we want to pursue. Jodie Ross asked if we can take this back to our counties. Brian Cook suggested that we put a message in the VAST paper to solicit input from the general membership. This will have a cost that will be to be absorbed somewhere.

**TMA's OPTIONS FOR CLUBS RESPONSIBILITY:** Ann Shangraw asked if we need to address the issue of clubs losing TMA's. She asked the Directors to go back to their counties and ask for input. John Ross suggested that we should look at selling the TMA's out of the VAST office.

**ANNUAL MEETING:** Jodie Ross reported on the Annual Meeting. They have the contract with the location and the caterer. They are looking at entertainment.

**PERSONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE:** Scott Stone reported on the letter Ann Shangraw received from a VAST member. She received a letter from a member regarding the amount of the liability insurance they were quoted and Ann forwarded it on to Scott Stone who is in the insurance business. Scott replied to the VAST member and explained the process insurance companies use to price premiums. He also suggested they contact the state insurance commission if they think they are being price gouged. Some VAST members have been getting premiums at a very good price from Foremost Insurance Company.

**STATUS OF ALBANY SNOW ROLLERS ORLEANS COUNTY:** The County has met to discuss the issue with the Albany Snow Rollers. The Albany Snow Rollers will be a club for another year. They do not have any trails heading north or south out of Albany. The trail from Albany to Glover is on hold until December 15. Albany has already been working on trails and will be helping the Hazen Notch groomer. Brian Cook has received a letter from Craftsbury regarding a dog sled race that will cover some ski and snowmobile trails. The snowmobile trail is closed that they are planning to run the race on. Any one that is having an event that is on the VAST snowmobile trails needs to contact VAST and are required to have a liability policy for \$2 million and naming VAST as an additional insurer. We cannot give permission to other non-snowmobile users to use our trails. It's important that these groups obtain landowners' permission. We only have VAST trails from December 15 to April 15 providing there is snow coverage. Each year we get permission to operate a snowmobile trail only.

**TELE-CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS:** Jodie Ross asked to address the Board regarding utilizing tele-conference calls for meetings. With Board members living throughout different parts of the state a lot of time is spent traveling for meetings. Scott Stone will check on pricing for conference calls and report back next month.

**EAST HAVEN WIND FARM:** Dave Rapaport is the Vice-President of East Haven Wind Farm and has sent a letter to VAST requesting our support. As part of their project, they wish to open the radar base and other lands they own on East Mountain to snowmobiles and other forms of public access. This is a sensitive subject. We need to move forward

carefully on this. We will bring this issue back to our counties for input before deciding on the request.

**SAMANTHA GROUT FROM ISLAND POND:** Ann Shangraw received a letter from Samantha Grout from Island Pond. She is offering to host websites for snowmobile clubs. If your club is interested contact her for more information.

**SHORT BRIEFING:** Bryant Watson briefed the Board of Directors on a situation with an individual. There are reports from a landowner that an individual has been working on trails and not getting permission. The landowner would like to address the Board regarding this issue and to see if we can stop this person from addressing the public and working on trails. Bryant Watson is having the External Relations Committee review the request prior to addressing the Board.

**BOARD RESOURCES:** Jodie Ross distributed a Board questionnaire and the Roberts Rules. All questionnaires are asked to be filled out before leaving tonight.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

By-Laws did not have a report.

The Fiscal Policy committee will be meeting hopefully in early December.

Insurance Review Committee - Scott Stone has not had a meeting yet. Bryant Watson has Kathy Duprey pulling together a list of insurance companies.

ISC 2006 - Bonnie Holbrook reported that she and Bryant Watson had a meeting with Jim Bauman at the Sheraton. They toured the facility. Mitzi Oakes has reserved the Carriage Barn at Shelburne Farms for the off-site banquet. Bill Oakes has been checking on the Williston Rod and Gun club for a skeet shoot. The committee won't be meeting again until late spring when they will really begin to gear up.

LVRRT - Sandy Woodbeck reported that since the last board meeting they have inspected the trail. There are over 50 culverts and 100 bridges. What surprised Sandy is that there are not more clubs using the railbed. There are many areas that only need to be brush hogged in order to use for a snowmobile trail. There are some areas that need more extensive work to use.

Nominating Committee did not have a report.

Organizational Goals and Planning Committee met tonight prior to the Board meeting.

They are working on the organizational goals and planning.

Policy Manual Committee did not have a report.

Recognition Committee - Star Poulin reported that they met tonight. They are looking at ways to get more involvement from schools.

Snowmobile Safety and Responsible Riding Committee - Mitzi Oakes will be meeting with her committee on December 10, right after the Governor's Snowmobile Council meeting. Ann Shangraw asked the directors to go back to the counties and request representation on the committee. She would also like to see some safety instructors on the committee also.

Trails Committee - The tunnel is off for a place to put the registration decal. They are looking at more places for trailhead parking.

The Legislative Dinner will be Thursday, January 29. Cocktail hour is from 5:30 to 6 p.m. and dinner is from 6 to 7 p.m. with 7-8 p.m. for presentations. For entertainment they are going to ask some businesses to present what the impact snowmobiling means to them. There will be a four-stroke snowmobile and a safety sled on display.

Bruce Murray moved and Scott Stone seconded to extend the meeting 15 minutes.  
Motion carried.

The Personnel Committee met today. They discussed the upcoming Executive Director's personnel evaluation. They also discussed other employee evaluations.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Jodie Ross recommended that we move the suggestions for the good of the Association to earlier in the meeting. When it comes time for them, we are usually too tired and are anxious to get out of here and don't offer suggestions.

**NEXT MEETING/REFRESHMENTS:** The next meeting will be December 22, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. Next meeting will be potluck and the office will provide Hamburgers and Hot dogs. Ann Shangraw and Pat Poulin will provide dessert.

Pat Poulin moved and Lisa Viau seconded to adjourn at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Bonnie Holbrook  
Recording Secretary