

VAST
41 Granger Road
Berlin, VT 05601

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING
January 26, 2004

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; ~~Brian Wells-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, Don Glover, Conrad Steward, Maridelle Tomlinson, John Lyons, Sandy Woodbeck, Gregg Rouleau

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by President Ann Shangraw.

AGENDA: Jim Hill moved and David Page seconded to approve the agenda as presented with additions. Motion carried. Lisa Viau moved and Pat Poulin to move the Executive Session to the end. Motion carried.

Additions to the Agenda as follows:

8c Vermont Traditions Coalition Letter

9g Input from Alexis on Villainaux property.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Norm Roark moved and Jim Hill seconded to approve the minutes of December 22, 2003 as presented. Motion carried. David LaBelle moved and Dave Page seconded to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2004 Board of Directors Special Meeting with the addition to note that Ken Gammell abstained from voting and to correct the spelling of VAST's attorney's name to Leighton Detora. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: David LaBelle reported that the membership totals are down about 4500 from this time last year. The budget expenses are on track though. Dealer TMAs are dealer plates and they are paid directly to VAST. Ann Shangraw questioned check number 29958 that is charged to directors planning, and if that was for the Christmas party, which it was. Also check number 29949 is charged to 3 different accounts. Ann Shangraw also asked for more clarification on charges like the credit card charges. This is something that has been requested several times over the last couple of years. Alexis Nowalk reported that we paid out the first groomer payments on Friday. Pat Poulin noted the cost of Bryant Watson's sled. 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 with Bruce Murray seconding the approval of the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried. Pat Poulin asked Alexis about the Route 2 trail closure and why it's not marked as closed.

County Reports: Bruce Murray reported from Windsor County that there is no more riding on Stoughton Pond and North Springfield dam per the order of the town. Weathersfield Pathfinders are having a sweetheart poker ride on February 14. Jim Hill reported that all is fine in Chittenden. They had a bonfire on Saturday night. Their winter carnival is February 7. Barry Bradley reported that Rutland County has some areas that need snow and consequently the trails aren't so great. The county is having a ride in on February 14. Bill Oakes, Grand Isle County Director, said they have made up the trail problem he reported on last time as they have found a work around. Grooming worked pretty good once or twice and then they ran out of snow. David Page reported that things are good in Essex County. People seem to be following the trail closed signed in the southern part of the county. Riders need to be careful following the trail through the Lumber Yard in Island Pond. Larry Trottier reported things are fine in Orange County. On February 7th we have the Make-A-Wish Ride in and the W. Fairlee BBQ. Roone Gibbs reported that trails are in good shape where there is snow in Windham County. Some of the hills are pretty slick with ice. Trails are either super good or terrible. Norm Roark reported they have some icy spots and a couple of water spots to work out down in Bennington county. Scott Stone of Washington County reported that there are some icy spots and they are still filling in water spots. The suspension bridge is almost done. The Border-to-Border ride is February 7th. Ken Gammell noted that West Barnet and Peacham are still a problem. The new county map is coming out. It also covers a little of other counties like Washington, Lamoille and Orange. Lisa Viau reported that Addison County is having a Supper Bowl Sunday at the Bridgeport Grange on February 21 with a ride in to Ferrisburg. February 28 is the Mount Abe dinner and dance. Conrad Stewart reported on the half way house on 22A. They had two females that came together that was an owner and trails coordinator. They finally have it straightened out with a fence being put up. Brian Cook from Orleans County reported that route 120 had too much snow. They have better than 16 feet of snow! They have pushed the snow out of the trail and then the wind blew the snow back in. Route 242 between Inglenook Lodge and Jay have logging going on so be careful when traveling through that section. They had their first dogsled race on the trail this past weekend. Brian didn't receive any calls yesterday or today with problems. The person organizing the dogsled race did not respond to a letter informing her that she needs to get individual landowner permissions to run a dogsled race on their property. VAST only asks landowners for permission for snowmobiles and not for dogsleds,

skiers and other recreational uses. Cook's Equipment will be hosting a Groomer Rodeo on February 6-7. Piston Bully, Bombardier, Tucker Sno Cat, Maxi Truck, Sur Trac, Mogul Master, Centaur and Scot Trac will all be bringing equipment. Bryant Watson reported that **Brian Wells** is not here tonight as he is meeting with two clubs in Lamoille County.

TMA – Options for Clubs' Responsibility: Bruce Murray stated that he has never received an answer to "why we still charge the club the full price for lost TMAs". **Dave LaBelle moved and Bruce Murray seconded to remove the item from the table. Motion carried.** Ann Shangraw asked that we have the policy refined and sent to clubs. **Dave LaBelle moved and Roone Gibbs seconded that we use the policy that we have in place. Dave LaBelle amended and Roone Gibbs seconded the amended to read motion to continue with the policy of the TMAs that we have had in the past. Motion carried.**

Legislative Proposals from Summer Study: We've had a few changes in wording of proposals that will be submitted to Legislative. Bryant Watson reviewed the proposed changes. The wording of sleds used for ice fishing and whether they have to have TMAs and or be registered. The wording for the trail season and fines also had some changes. Bryant Watson was asked if he wanted to testify again on the summer study. Alice Hemming asked if we knew that the Governor was not going to support the Summer Study. Bryant Watson shared other comments he received. We had a very low participation from Legislators on the Summer Study, although they were all asked. Jonathan Winters did point out to Alice that VAST did everything they were asked to on the Summer Study and then some. There were three letters that were sent to the legislators and out of all the legislators there were only five that participated in the study. The Chairman of the Transportation Committee is committed to the study. Bryant Watson suggested that we have a public meeting to discuss it further with the Legislators. We would bring more snowmobilers in to help testify. Dave LaBelle asked if we have thought about the possibility that grants for landowners could open another can of worms for other special interest groups and that may be why the legislators are slow to support that proposal. Bryant Watson said that he was asked to prioritize the proposals on the spot. The Recreational law enforcement and general law enforcement is number one due to so much of the trail closures are caused by ATV's going where they do not have permission to be. Bryant Watson asked the Board to approve the changes to priorities to the Summer Study. Ann Shangraw asked Bryant Watson to send James Ehlers and Ed Larson a copy of the changed wording. **Norm Roark moved and Roone Gibbs seconded that we accept the changes to the legislation and the prioritizing of the priorities. Motion carried.**

Vermont Traditions Coalitions (VTC): Ann Shangraw passed a letter around the table from the Vermont Traditions Coalition to the Board. They (VTC) have asked Ann to sign the letter to be sent to the County Organizations and Local Clubs. She told them that she would not sign the letter without approval by the VAST Board. They also asked for it to be printed on VAST letterhead, but Ann disagreed to that. **David LaBelle moved and Larry Trottier seconded that we accept the draft letter to the VTC. Motion denied.** Norm Roark pointed out that the letter should show "make checks to the Vermont Tradition Coalition" and not an individual person. David LaBelle questioned the wording in the letter referring to last summer's annual meeting. He also does not feel she should sign the letter as "VAST President". Ken Gammell supports VTC strongly but he also agreed that she should not sign the letter as Ann Shangraw, President. Scott Stone also supports VTC but feels that Ann should not sign as president. Roone Gibbs still believes that VAST, as an entity, should not support VTC but VTC can be supported at the county level and local club levels. Barry Bradley suggested that VTC send the letter out on VTC's letterhead and not have it signed by "Ann Shangraw" or "Ann Shangraw, VAST President". Bryant Watson pled the fifth when he was asked for his opinion and stated that he will go forward as the Board decides. Ann Shangraw will have the letter revamped and will distribute it to the Board next month.

TMA – Family Sales: Norm Roark brought up the discussion on the Family TMAs at their county meeting and they think the local clubs could give a discount on the club dues if they wanted to help out families and that we should not lower the TMA and lose money from the trail system. David Page reported that they are not sure if they want a family sled TMA and some of them now think that if they have multiple sleds they should get a discount. Windsor and Caledonia County both think it's a can of worms. The Board agreed to remove this item from the agenda and that we not move forward with this idea.

Tele-Conference Committee Meetings – Scott Stone: Scott Stone checked on additional pricing for tele-conferencing costs. He reported that the cost Bryant Watson received from Lightship is the best price. Scott Stone recommends that if we do hold tele-conferencing meetings, then we go with Lightship, especially where they are also our telephone carrier. This is actually a much lower cost than paying mileage. We also should remember that this could be used for quick last minute preps for special events, reviewing a letter or other details. There is not a financial commitment to Lightship if we set up this account. Bryant Watson will have Kathy Duprey send the info to the chairs of committees after she sets up the account with Lightship.

Trails Closures, Essex County: Alexis Nowalk reported on the trail closures in Essex County. The corridor 1 is open this year although next year we may need to relocate. The stage road is about 30 yards from the current trail on the former Hancock parcel of land. This outfit has an option on purchasing additional property. We still do not know who the landowner is. We need to deal directly with Sarah Packer on this issue. She is very supportive to snowmobiling and has been a great asset to our trail system.

Act 250 – Fayston, Duxbury – Update: Bryant Watson reviewed the law that states that we do need to have an Act 250 permit for trails above 2500 feet. We need to amend the Act 250 permit on the Fayston parcel. Ed Stanack feels that we need to have a permit for the trails that were in place before the Act 250 also.

Safety Certificates for Children 8-11: Bonnie Holbrook reported that she received a voice message from Treenie Broussard. She is still looking into the issue of children aged 8-11 taking the safety course and not receiving a certificate. Lisa Viau has two sisters in Addison County that took the course together and they both passed. One was aged 12 and she received her certificate. The other sister, who was 10 years old, couldn't understand why she couldn't get a safety certificate when she passed the course. John Lyons stated that he thinks part of the reason Jere Johnson doesn't want children less than 12 years old to receive a certificate is because of the course and test is at the reading level of a sixth grader. Barry Bradley brought this up last month because the law states that children can receive the certificate if they take and pass the snowmobile safety course. The law does not grandfather children that have already taken the course. The law states that children 8-11 may operate a snowmobile under the supervision of their parent or legal guardian. There is concern that we will have 8-11 years old on the trail out on the trails that have not taken the safety course and that have not had any instruction in proper safety and operation of snowmobiles. Mitzi Oakes reported that the safety committee is looking into this issue. The Safety Committee is also looking into the problem of too many tests being proctored.

Villainaux Property: We have permission to use the Villainaux property this year only. He has stated that he wants to be paid for the use of his land. The trail is not open yet as the club is still working to obtain other landowner permissions. The Eden club sent a letter to Mr. Villainaux requesting use of his land for the snowmobile trail.

Committee Reports:

Roone Gibbs reported that the External Relations Committee called a special Board meeting and another will be scheduled soon.

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail committee chair, Sandy Woodbeck, reported that Feb 17 is the magic date if no railroad steps up to the plate. We should have more information at the next Board meeting. The company is ready to move in and begin removing the rails from the trail. Mr. Phelps from Hardwick is trying to resurrect the railroad. Congressman Sanders will be at the Legislative Banquet. He will be traveling up from DC for it. Ginny Nelson from W. Barnet will be with us also along with several other legislators...

The Personnel committee has reviewed the personnel policy manual.

Star Poulin reported on the Awards Committee and they do not think they need a lifetime TMA. They are working on ideas for awards.

Mitzi Oakes distributed a report from the safety committee. We are working on the safety trailer and possible uses. We're working on the certificate issue. A letter has been sent to all VAST clubs asking for a report of all emergency and rescue equipment they have or can get in a short notice. Jim Colgan, VT State Police, gave a demonstration on CDs that could work with proctoring safety tests. We got a package with Fatal Vision goggles. A date was set to have a "Banner Bee" to label the banners that have been donated by Pepsi Company. January 21st was the date set, but things hit a bit of a snafu when it was discovered that all the letters needed for the labeling were not in the delivered items. A new date will be set when we receive the letters.

The Trails Committee reviewed the Border-to-Border ride. Dave LaBelle reported they also reviewed bridge construction. They are exploring the possibility of using Bailey Bridges that are easy to put in and assembled. They are already engineered and constructed. We would need to have conditions in place with landowners prior to installing one. We would want to make sure that we could either remove the bridge if the trail was closed or at least use the trail for a predetermined length of time. February 11th is the first annual Trails Committee ride. They decided to drop the individual trails on the VAST website and have just a county description in place. Bryant Watson thinks the individual trails should still show but could be color coded showing whether it's green for open, red for closed or yellow for caution. There is a definite lack of help in updating the trails condition on the web page. Conrad Stewart reminded everyone that the trails committee agreed that each county can go into the web page and change the information on the web page. That's the problem. Unfortunately people are not reporting in on their trails. Matt Tetreault is spending an exorbitant amount of time updating the trails report webpage.

Ken Gammell moved and Pat Poulin seconded to move into executive session with Don Glover, Alternate Directors, Executive Director and Trails Administrator to be present to discuss trails issues. Motion carried with one opposed at 8:39 PM.

Brian Cook moved and Pat Poulin seconded to come out of Executive Session at 9:15. Motion carried.

Brian Cook moved and Lisa Viau seconded to reconvene a special Board meeting on Monday, February 2 at 6:00 PM to hear further testimony on the external relations issue. Motion carried. Bonnie Holbrook will not be able to be present so Mitzi Oakes has graciously agreed to take minutes in Bonnie's absence.

Orange County will provide the refreshments next month.

Lisa Viau moved and Pat Poulin seconded to adjourn at 9:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Holbrook
Recording Secretary