

**VAST BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**  
*February 27, 2006*

**DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES & STAFF PRESENT:** Steve Fielding-Addison; Norm Roark-Bennington; Ken Gammell-Caledonia; Jim Hill-Chittenden; Dave Page -Essex; John Ross(**ABSENT**)-Franklin; Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Brian Wells-Lamoille; Jim Holbrook-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; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary; Bryant Watson-Executive Director, Alexis Nowalk-SSTP Trails Administrator  
**GUESTS:** Mitzi Oakes, Betty Roark, Star Poulin, Conrad Stewart, Johnny Lynds, Nikki Simpson, Don Glover, Mike Dente.

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

**AGENDA:** *Dave LaBelle moved and Pat Poulin seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.*

9b Alexis Nowalk request for action item for trail policy.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** *Dave LaBelle moved and Norm Roark seconded to approve the minutes of January 28, 2006 Board of Directors meeting. Motion carried.*

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** *Norm Roark moved and Roone Gibbs seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried.*

There were several questions on the General Fund and SSTP budgets including questions regarding expenses for GPS trail mapping, costs for the Trail Impact Study, over expenditure on the "purchase sleds" line item due to one of the last year's sleds not being sold yet. This is one of the most unfriendly accounting systems to use. Bryant Watson has told us that the accountants we use like this system but Ann Shangraw stressed that we really need to consider finding a different accounting system that would be much less complicated, easier to navigate and would be user friendly. It needs to fit our needs.

**CONSENT CALENDAR-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT and TRAIL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** *Norm Roark moved and Steve Fielding seconded to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Motion carried.* Bryant Watson provided a comparison report for TMA sales. We are 15% behind where we were last year at this time. Many clubs have not sent any TMAs which make it difficult to get a true reading on where we stand. County Directors need to emphasize to their county clubs to please get TMAs in as soon as possible after they are sold. Bryant Watson reviewed highlights from the Board Retreat, the Make-A-Wish Ride In and the Lamoille Valley Recreational Trail. The Lyndon Snow Cruisers did a lot of work on Friday night to be able to pull off the radar runs and mini 120 races. Apparently some of those little racers wanted to keep going and going and not stop! We put in about \$1,500 towards the fireworks display although the company put on about a \$5,000 display. We took in over \$2200 on the coin drop in town. Some folks stopped by to give a donation while the volunteers were setting up and others went through the coin drop several times and gave every time. We raised roughly \$10,000 all together with more monies coming in. This is pretty good considering the snow conditions and that we had to cancel Sunday's events. Area churches and the Lyndonville area want to help put it on again next year.

Alexis Nowalk noted that this week marks the 11<sup>th</sup> week of the season. She also reviewed her grooming payment report. The clubs that have not sent any grooming log sheets have been sent a letter. If they do not send in their grooming logs weekly as the policy states, they may be in jeopardy of receiving their subsidy payments.

**COUNTY REPORTS:** **Lamoille County** received eight inches of snow in most areas this weekend. If they get the snow forecasted for this Thursday, they should all be out grooming. **Windham County** director doesn't think they've been out grooming. **Washington County** had Alexis Nowalk attend their meeting. They have some trails that overlap club. It was very helpful to have Alexis at the meeting and Scott Stone thanked her for attending their meeting. **Rutland County** is waiting for snow and has sharpened their chain saws. They are looking at alternate ways for fundraisers now that it looks like they won't be at the Rutland Fair. **Orange County** made a \$500 donation to the Make-A-Wish Ride-in. We also have new county maps available. **Caledonia County** is pretty sparse on snow. **Chittenden County** has nothing happening. **Orleans County** has snow dancers dancing every night to no avail. Trails are not as good as they normally are. Trails between Island Pond and Canaan are being groomed nightly. It snowed on Saturday and that helped to open some trails. **Windsor County** doesn't have much grooming going on. Bruce Murray questioned the County Incorporated listing with the State. Windsor County Sheriff, Mike Chamberlain, was wondering if there is a way that the Sheriff's Department could get a "start up payment." Mike Chamberlain had a conversation with Bryant Watson last week and asked him if the Sheriffs could use their money for equipment if there is no patrolling this year and he was advised that the money could not go for equipment as it is budgeted specifically for trail patrols. **Grand Isle County** has a lot of "water that is not stiff". Bill Oakes spoke with a gentleman today in the County that sponsors a ride for the homeless children. Unfortunately the ride had to be cancelled due to lack of snow. **Bennington County** has snow and as far as Norm Roark knows, all groomers are grooming in their county. Their Make-A-Wish Hot Dog Roast is this Saturday. **Addison County** has riding in the mountains but no one is grooming.

**4-H SNOWMOBILE CLUB UPDATE – JIM HILL:** Unfortunately Jim Hill and Stacy Lynds have not received any names from either Orange or Washington County. So they have sent a notice to all schools in Washington and Orange Counties. They are also looking at other ways of getting names. Just four names/students would get the program going. Unfortunately there hasn't been riding so that could be a factor on low response.

**BOARD RETREAT SEYON RANCH:** The members that attended had a lot of fun. There were a lot of team building, laughs, a snowmobile ride, January's Board Meeting and good food. Steve Fielding and his wife created a poster board with pictures of the weekend. Hopefully more directors will attend the next one.

**MAKE-A-WISH – DISCUSSION:** There will be a meeting of the committee in the next few weeks to begin the plans for next year. The Lyndonville Chamber of Commerce wants to participate again next year. Unfortunately the special trail that Ken Gammell created to connect events was unable to be used because of no snow. The mini 120 races were great and the kids had a great time. The Cook's brought down their 8-men Groomer and gave demo rides. People were even donating money while the crew was setting up the Coin Drop. The concert was incredible. It lasted 2\_ hours of solid

the event. Everyone had a great time and also enthused over Bethany Currier from Williamstown who is 13 years old and has an incredible voice.

**LAMOILLE VALLEY RAIL TRAIL:** Bryant Watson gave an update on the Lamoille Valley Recreational Trail. The lease is still being worked on. The good news is that the Legislature has authorized VTrans to expend the federal earmark for the Lamoille Valley Recreational Trail however the lease will have to be reviewed by the Senate and the House Committees on Transportation and Appropriations. The State is going to take care of a bridge that was taken out from ice in Wolcott. VASA is working hard to convince Legislators that they should be allowed to cross and to use short sections of the Lamoille Valley Recreational Trail that would enable them to facilitate their trail system. VASA contacted both Ann Shangraw and Bryant Watson to make sure they are not stepping on our toes and to stress that they want to work with us. They have been very professional in their contact and dialogue with Ann Shangraw and Bryant Watson. This possibly could aid us in future funding and volunteer assistance down the road. Districts 5, 6 & 7 commissioners have received letters asking that the commission to give a Declaratory Ruling that the rail trail go through an Act 250 process. Bryant Watson has sent them a response advising that it's too early in the process for a Declaratory Ruling where the lease has not even been signed.

**SPECIAL AWARDS:** Ann Shangraw has been thinking of ways to thank people for their contributions and hard work. So, she created some special certificates with special wording and distributed them tonight. Ann Shangraw presented an "Energetic Spirit" award to Alexis Nowalk. She presented a "Helping Hand" award to Bonnie Holbrook. She presented Bryant Watson for an award for "Caring Commitment". For Pat Poulin, she awarded "The Power of Team". She presented "Award of Thanks" to Conrad Stewart, Steve Fielding and Bob Chalifoux for selling a large amount of the raffle tickets for the Make-A-Wish Charity Event Snowmobile Raffle.

**BOARD RESOURCES – STEVE FIELDING:** Steve Fielding, the new chair of Board Resources distributed the annual forms for the Board Members to sign. Steve Fielding gave a review on the fun at the Board Retreat. The Board Resources committee will meet before the next Board meeting. We will be doing an S.W.O.T. Analysis. S.W.O.T. stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

**TRAIL POLICY CHANGE REQUEST – ALEXIS NOWALK:** At the last Trails Committee meeting Alexis Nowalk discussed "what constitutes a grooming week." The policy change would consist of:

*A week of grooming shall be defined as grooming a minimum of 25% of the club/contractor's grooming contract miles. For example: If a club is contracted for 50 one-way miles, a minimum of 12.5 one-way miles shall be considered an actual grooming week. This will determine the club/contractor's number of weeks groomed within one season and will be applied to the five-year rolling average of grooming weeks.*

**Norm Roark moved and Roone Gibbs seconded to approve the requested policy change for 2006-2007. Motion carried.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS: VAST Landowner Appreciation & Incentives Committee** is working on several items. The State of Vermont does not have a lot of the state GPS'd for current use. The State map only has GPS'd two or three counties. We would like to overlay the VAST map over the current use map with GIS data. The idea is to come up with an incentive for landowners that would allow recreational use on their property. We will not propose that a landowner **must** allow recreational use if they put their land into Current Use. We are going to use the same Radio PSAs at the end of the season to thank Landowners. We are looking at Newspaper ads that clubs can use to add their information and submit for advertising. We have come up with a Landowner Thank You Sign. We will have 2 of these signs made for each club to post in their area. Along with that, we will be doing a laminated poster sign of that clubs can post in businesses and on bulletin boards. There are still Pepsi Banners available and if you don't want to letter it yourself, you can have Work Safe letter it for about \$35.00. The **2006 ISC Committee** Chair, Bonnie Holbrook, reported that the Chairs met. Plans are well underway. The pins have been ordered and received. The mass mailing went out to all attendees from the last couple of years. The **Fiscal Policy** will have a meeting in April. The **Insurance Committee** expanded the D&L policy to include the county associations and club officers. We will pay for it out of VAST this year. We need to look at how we will fund it and if we will ask Clubs to help fund it in the future. It would be under \$200/year per club. The **PR & Marketing Committee** had placemats made and available for area restaurants. The **Scholarships & Recognition Committee** is receiving applications for the scholarship. The deadline is very soon. The **Snowmobile Safe & Responsible Riding** chair, Mitzi Oakes, distributed a written report. She reported on the Safety Week display at University Mall in South Burlington. The committee suggested an idea of offering an early TMA registration. We'd like to see the Safety Display set up in other areas of the state. Ann Shangraw asked the committee to come up with a list of malls around the state. The University Mall did not charge us for use of the space. We have received a few offers on the Safety Trailer but they were way under the value of the trailer. We wanted \$10,000 but Precision Motorsports thinks it is worth about \$5,000. The **Trails Committee** has a subcommittee working on an equipment grants policy. The Trails Committee is also working on the construction policy. The second annual ride has been rescheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is open to all Board members too.

The next Director's Meeting is March 27<sup>th</sup>. Refreshments will be provided by Windham County. **Brian Wells moved and Norm Roark seconded to adjourn at 8:43 PM. Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Bonnie Holbrook  
Recording Secretary