

VAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

October 27, 2008

DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES, OFFICERS & STAFF PRESENT: Conrad Stewart-Addison; John Perkins-Bennington; Ken Gammell-Caledonia; Jeff Fay-Chittenden; Ray Dubriel-Essex; John Ross-Franklin; Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Brian Currier-Lamoille; Larry Trottier-Orange; Brian Cook-Orleans; Merritt Budd-Rutland; John Lynds *{absent}*-Washington; Roone Gibbs-Windham; Bruce Murray-Windsor; Pat Poulin - President; Jim Hill-Vice-President; Mark Ellingwood-Treasurer; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary; Bryant Watson-Executive Director, Alexis Nowalk-SSTP Trails Administrator; Ann Shangraw-Past President; Kent Gardner-VAST News Editor

GUESTS: Star Poulin, Mitzi Oakes, Jim Holbrook, Ed Hebebrand, Alan Robertson, Mike O'Hara, Francis Pillsbury, Joe Cicia, Sue Trottier, Roberta Stammers, Nancy Cook, Matt Goodyear, Dave Pastula, Eric Tanney

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by President Pat Poulin.

AGENDA: *Larry Trottier moved and Conrad Stewart seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.*

* Brighton Snowmobile Club has been billed so does not need to be discussed.

9D Bryant Watson distributed a copy of the Law Enforcement

9E PR Committee Meeting

SECRETARY'S REPORT: *Jim Hill moved and Jeff Fay seconded to approve the minutes of August 25, 2008 Board of Directors meeting as amended. Motion carried.*

TREASURER'S REPORT: *John Perkins moved and Jeff Fay seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried.* We have August and September financial reports this month. We had a \$54,000 negative cash flow in August and in September we had a \$66,000 negative cash flow. However, we are in much better shape this year by about \$150,000 at this time than we were last year at this time. This is due in part to the membership count this past season being higher than we had budgeted for.

CONSENT CALENDAR-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT and TRAIL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: *Bruce Murray moved and Larry Trottier seconded to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Motion carried.* The postage date of December 26, 2008 for clubs to send in the Early Bird TMAs that was in Bryant's Report should be Monday, December 29th. There will **not** be a grace period. If we do not receive the Early Bird TMAs by the due date, clubs will be billed for the regular season rate for all Early Bird TMAs not received by the deadline. We ordered the number of TMAs sold last year plus an additional 20%. Each club will be sent the number of Early Bird TMAs plus 10% of what they sold last year.

ERIK TANNEY – SENIOR DISTRICT EXECUTIVE, LAND OF CHAMPS DISTRICT, GREEN MOUNTAIN COUNCIL, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA – VENTURE SCOUTING PROGRAM PRESENTATION: Venturing is a coed program for boys and girls in the 12-20 years of age. Venturing is stepping it up from the Boys Scout, for example, in Venturing you can go hunting, in Boy Scouts you can go fishing. These Venture Programs fall under their liability insurance. It's an age appropriate program designed to get people outside, to grow and be better adults. A Venturing crew is made up of youth and adults. The youth are there to run the program and adults are there to supervise, assist and mentor the youth. The Venture crew has access to all the land in Vermont that is owned by the Boy Scouts. One of the benefits of having a Venture crew would be to add members to the local club. They would be there to help the club with club functions. Service to the community is very important to the Venture Programs. It is not a rigid program. If a club is interested in starting a Venture Program, they will need to contact the Green Mountain Council. There is a small cost of approximately \$20 to the club. The Board received a packet of information regarding the program. This might be a great way to get our youth involved in snowmobiling and with getting our youth back involved with the Scouts. Snowmobiling is allowed for a Venturing Program. They (the Council) have a plan in place to assist with facilitating a group. The Scouts is coming up on their 100th anniversary. Directors are asked to bring this back to their counties.

COUNTY REPORTS: For something different, President Pat Poulin asked each Director to share one neat thing that has happened in their county and one challenge they are looking at in their county.

Champlain Valley; Addison County has a challenge in the Texas Falls area and a challenge with the bridge on Lewis Creek. **Chittenden County** felt it was positive that they were present at the Fairgrounds for the Outdoor Expo even though the attendance was really small. A challenge or item of concern is getting towns deciding that they want to take over snowmobile trails for biking and hiking. We need to find the balance with working with other groups and not lose our trails.

Central Vermont; Orange County has two items as a positive note. One is VTC (Vermont Technical College) has a construction club that approached our county and want to work with our clubs on trails. They are limited to the times they are available, which is mostly during the week. Last season they were able to help Brookfield. The other positive thing was the Carmi Duso Award was presented to Ann Shangraw. She was not present at the Annual Meeting so Larry Trottier was able to give it to her tonight. On the challenge side, Larry has been seeing that land transfers happen and we don't seem to have any idea and sometimes one or two can slip through the cracks until you stumble upon it. **Washington County** was not present to report.

Northeast Kingdom; Caledonia County had a little trouble with a railroad crossing they are working on. Kenny had a problem with his

wood chipper by running the engine backwards and over heated it. The challenge will be to keep the positive attitude. **Essex County** has a challenge that has worked out real good with getting some younger people involved in a local club. The challenge now is to try this at the county level. **Orleans County** reported a neat thing they had with a landowner that wanted a trail moved. The landowner planned the reroute and provided pictures and written plans for the reroute. A challenge would be the amended Act 250 permit for the golf course at Jay Peak. **Northwest Vermont; Franklin County** reported their positive is that St. Albans only had two home invasions last month. Their challenge is with one club in the middle of the county that may fold up. **Grand Isle County** is experiencing slow freezing of the water and they had a beaver challenge that is no longer a challenge. **Lamoille County** reported the club that was almost defunct five years ago is now close to having a new groomer shed. A challenge is they may be losing a club.

Southeast Vermont; Windham County had a disaster last Saturday with part of a bridge being washed out. They had a little get together at the CC Camp. **Windsor County's** challenge would be the late st on the Bridgewater trail which has been GPS'd. A section of trail in Hartland that has existed for many years had to move due to a landowner closure. Yvonne Rice, President of the Hartland Hill Hoppers, has found a reroute around that property. Windsor County directed Bruce to ask for clarification for current land use. The Vermont Land Trust has been working with us on land that is being deeded to the Land Trust.

Southwest Vermont; Bennington County had 2 inches of snow last week when they went out to deck a bridge. Their negative is struggling to keep Corridor 7 open in the Snow Valley area. Act 250 permits are creating a challenge. **Rutland County** has two neat things. Their meeting place was in jeopardy but they managed to keep it. They have some new members in their club. The biggest challenge is the connector for Corridor 7 through the Rutland City Watershed between Shrewsbury and Rutland.

SET PRICE FOR 5-DAY PASS: Bryant Watson has been working with the Underwriters on insurance for the 5-day passes. It is recommended that we do not offer the insurance as the Underwriters have not gotten back to us even though they knew we had a deadline. **Roone Gibbs moved and Larry Trotter seconded that we offer the 5-day pass for \$95 (which includes the \$20 fuel surcharge) plus club and county dues. MOTION DEFEATED with six yea and nine nays.** Joe Cicia suggested offering the 5-day pass for the cost of an Early Bird TMA. Jeff Fay suggested we charge \$45 TMA plus \$20 plus a flat \$15 for club and county rate and that would total \$75 for the 5-day TMA. **Bruce Murray moved and Jeff Fay seconded that we offer the TMA for \$40 plus \$20 Fuel Surcharge which would be \$60 plus county and club dues. Bruce Murray retracted the motion and Jeff Fay retracted his second to the motion. John Perkins moved and Jeff Fay seconded that we set the 5-day pass rate at \$55 plus the \$20 Fuel Surcharge for \$75 plus club and County fees. Motion carried with 11 Yea and 6 nays (Lamoille, Grand Isle, Caledonia, Past President and Treasurer opposing).**

REVIEW 2008/2009 WORK PLAN-JIM HILL: The 2008/2009 Work Plan was in the Board packet. Ray Dubriel asked about any provisions in the work plan to cover legislation to help with the situation in Canaan. Under the Land Stability and Quality section, we need to include 'introduced legislation that property valuation can not be increased due to VAST Trail'. **John Perkins moved and Jeff Fay seconded to accept the work plan with the addition for legislation for property valuation. Motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVE LVRT FY 2009 BUDGET - BMW: The proposed budget that was passed by the LVRTC a couple of months ago was included in the Board packet for review and approval. It includes a substantial amount of additional lines items since the last proposed budget. Peter Welch is proposing to Congress that they waive the matching amount for the recreation enhancement grants. Alan Robertson and Bryant Watson have figured that hundreds of jobs would be created if the LVRT were to be completed within the next two years. FEMA denied money to VAST for the damage to the LVRT from the severe storm that took out a section of the rail trail. We are still trying to work with FEMA and VTRANS because this should fall under the disaster damage as declared by the President. Ken Hoepfner has gotten some donations in and has several pledges in place. Expenses incurred in 2007 are not included in the matching funds. There are trails that charge a fee for their use and this may be a way to raise funds for maintenance once the trail is in place. There is much concern with the other user groups who are not stepping up to the plate and the helping with the cost of the trail even though they are going will be using the trail most or all of the year where VAST will be only using the trail for a few months. Ray Dubriel suggested that an article be put in the VAST News explaining the trail and the answers to questions raised during the meeting tonight regarding the funding. **Jim Hill moved and Brian Currier that we approve the proposed LVRT FY 2009 Budget Motion carried with Bennington County voting nay.** Rutland County feels the same way as Bennington County does with VAST coming up with all the matching funds and some others feel that VAST is throwing the money away on the trail and the other users not assisting at all. Bryant Watson and Mike O'Hara will create a Q&A to put in the VAST News.

SNO-GOER AFFINITY PROGRAM: WHERE SHOULD THE MONEY GO?: VAST was selected as one of five states to participate in a pilot program for Sno-Goer Magazine. The normal subscription rate for Sno-Goer is \$14.97 annually. Dick Hendrick's offer to VAST was to market Sno-Goer to VAST members for the discounted price of \$10 annually with \$5 of the charge being returned to VAST to put towards anything that we liked. The caveat is that Sno-Goer will purchase one full-page color ad in VAST News at the going rate and VAST agrees to supply a second month's ad at no cost to Sno-Goer. **Ann Shangraw moved and John Perkins seconded that we put the funds toward the Vermont Snow Trails Conservancy. Motion carried unanimously.**

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGREEMENT: A copy of the Law Enforcement Agreement was given to the Board. We did get reports from the three agencies. There is a new addition to the agreement regarding coordination efforts. **Jim Hill moved and Jeff Fay seconded that we approve the Law Enforcement Agreement. Motion carried.**

John Perkins moved and Jim Hill seconded that we extend the meeting to 9:30. Motion carried unanimously.

PR COMMITTEE: The PR Committee met last Tuesday and voted to cancel the Legislative Banquet this year and in lieu hold a Military & VIP Event and asks the Board to approve it. *Bonnie Holbrook moved and Larry Trottier seconded that we hold a Military & VIP Event in lieu of the Legislative Banquet this year. Motion passed unanimously.* We will still be holding the Legislative Coffee. It will probably be January 7th.

LVRTC UPDATED: Johnny Lynds provided an oil powered bus owned by Umiak in Stowe for transportation for the site visits with the District Coordinators. The commissioners were very favorable.

OTHER: Bonnie Holbrook requested that whenever the VAST Office sends out mailings to the clubs that they also include the Directors and Officers.

Pat Poulin has received comments from a club that feels they did not have enough Early Bird TMA's. The deadline of returning unsold Early Bird TMA's "Postmarked by December 29th" was also a concern. Pat asked that we make sure we take this back to our clubs in our counties for feedback.

The club that lost the TMAs in the fire has paid for them.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – POTENTIAL LEGAL ISSUE: *Ann Shangraw moved and Jim Hill seconded that we go into Executive Session at 9:15 pm to discuss the potential legal issue and include the Alternate Directors, staff and Mitzi Oakes. Motion carried. Roone Gibbs moved and John Perkins seconded to come out of Executive Session at 9:26 pm. Motion carried.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Reports were suspended for this month.

The next Director's Meeting is November 24th, 2008 at 6:00 PM with Rutland County providing the refreshments. *Larry Trottier moved and Jim Hill seconded to adjourn at 9:27 PM.*

Respectfully submitted by,
Bonnie Holbrook
VAST Recording Secretary