

VAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 26, 2009

DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES, OFFICERS & STAFF PRESENT: Conrad Stewart-Addison; John Perkins-Bennington; Ken Gammell-Caledonia; Jeff Fay-Chittenden; Dave Page-Essex; John Ross-Franklin; Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Brian Currier-Lamoille; Jim Holbrook-Orange; Brian Cook-Orleans; Merritt Budd-Rutland; Mark Reeves-Washington; Tom Baltrus-Windham; Bruce Murray-Windsor; Pat Poulin -President; Jim Hill-Vice-President; Mark Ellingwood-Treasurer; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary; Bryant Watson-Executive Director, Ann Shangraw(*Absent*)-Past President; Alexis Nowalk-SSTP Trails Administrator; Kent Gardner-VAST News Manager

GUESTS: Star Poulin, Mitzi Oakes, Ed Hebebrand, Francis Pillsbury, Mike O'Hara, Joe Cicia, Josh Nelson, Stacy Lynds, Doug Wilson, Steve Perkins, Matt Goodyear

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

AGENDA: *Jim Hill moved and Bonnie Holbrook seconded to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.*

SECRETARY'S REPORT: *Jeff Fay moved and John Perkins seconded to approve the minutes of April 27, 2009 Board of Directors meeting as amended. Motion carried unanimously.*

TREASURER'S REPORT: *Ken Gammell moved and Bruce Murray seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.* We have a positive cash flow for the year to day. Last year at this time we had a 69,000 deficit. We took in \$650,000.

CONSENT CALENDAR-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT and TRAIL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: *Jim Hill moved and Bruce Murray seconded to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Motion carried unanimously.* Bryant Watson distributed an updated report on TMAs along with the list of clubs with outstanding TMAs. There was an email from the Vermont Chamber of Commerce regarding information sessions where Governor Jim Douglas will be explaining why he did what he did regarding the budget. Tom Baltrus uses a teleconferencing service with the company he works with and shared information on it. John Perkins questioned Alexis why she used the October through March for the six month average. She uses the Department of Energy monthly fuel averages and formula. She used the same formula as last year. The Governor's Council met earlier today and approved the SSTP Budget. She'll be looking at equipment grants on Tuesday, June 2nd. At this point we have \$432,494 approved for equipment grants. The Green Mountain National Forest is getting a million dollar grant to work on trails in the Green Mountain National Forest with some of them snowmobile and biking trails along with other trail work.

COUNTY REPORTS:

Champlain Valley; Addison County reported that Mt. Abe Snowmobile Club is getting back organized. Chittenden County is quiet.

Central Vermont; Orange County has a trail re-route in Tunbridge that is approximately 5,000 feet due to a landowner and it will cost about \$4,000. They will be submitting a construction grant. Washington County reported they are working on the Big Winooski Wonder suspension bridge. The engineers have been assessing it They are still cleaning up a little bit.

Northeast Kingdom; Caledonia County has been working on a bridge on the Passumpsic River and doing some culvert work. Essex County is getting a new Border Patrol office in Canaan. This may mean a trail change. Orleans County was going really good until last Thursday when they received a call from the Agency of Natural Resources regarding a problem along the pipeline trail which they'll be working together on it.

Northwest Vermont; Franklin County reported they are very quiet. Grand Isle County is pretty well wrapped up. They have a few projects going on. They have a bridge on the rail trail that needs to be repaired. Lamoille County has a good turnout for the landowner appreciation dinner.

Southeast Vermont; Windham County received a message today that the Forest Service wants to do another walk through on a section of trail that is being worked on. Windsor County reported all is fine.

Southwest Vermont; Bennington County is working on the trails in the GMNF. Rutland County had a landowner in Pittsford that complained about the trail on edge of his property. The County will be following up again at their County meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE: The plans are coming along great. They are working with Froggy 100 fm. The event will be open to the public. The day is being geared for a fun family event. There will be lots going on. There is no vendor fee. Open and running from 9 am to 5 pm and you need to reserve your space.

LANDOWNER APPRECIATION BOOKLET: Jim Hill has contacted the vendor and they are not interested at this time. It's now going to be up to us to solicit businesses to participate. For example, restaurants could pick a few off nights and offer a 2 for 1 price on dinners. Bryant Watson is working on the contract for the businesses. This is for a booklet to give to the landowners. Each county is being asked to come back with some contacts from their area. Please send the information to Jim Hill within the next couple of weeks. Ray Dubriel suggested possibly expanding the project to VAST Membership. This would create a large expense so we would need to really think this through. Another suggestion was we offer them to the membership at our cost to produce the book.

TELECONFERENCE CALLS: Currently as we are set up now, we could set up for six people to call in. After discussion, it appears that we would need new phone equipment to accommodate teleconference calls. *Ken Gammell moved and John Perkins seconded that Bryant Watson and Tom Baltrus price the phones and report next month. Motion carried unanimously.*

TRAILS POLICY CHANGES: The Trails Committee recommends that the Board to require the grooming contractor's financial reports be due and sent in at the end of the season, not the fall. The Trails Committee recommends holding the final grooming payment until the financial report has been received in the VAST Office. One reason is in case the person from the club that is responsible for the report moves and/or drops out during the summer the information may not be available. This would also give Alexis the opportunity to provide information for the budget process. This will be an annual process so if clubs keep their records, it will not take a long time to do. Most members at the Trails Committee last week were in favor of doing the report at the end of the season. Another suggestion was to include the financial information on the Grooming Log. Apparently all the county trails coordinators have not gone back to their counties to poll their clubs. The Sub-Committee and the Trails Committee voted unanimously to approve this change and they do want the financial information to be sent at the end of the season.

The recommendations from the Trails Committee were:

- *Based on the collected data, the current grooming reimbursement rate is adequate. The committee is recommending that the reimbursement rate per mile will not increase for the 2010 fiscal year.*
- *The committee is recommending that the VAST Board of Directors consider additional funding in the equipment grant program in order to maintain an average grooming fleet age of ten years or less.*
- *The Trails Committee approved that each VAST Grooming Club/Contractor submit an end of the season financial report, which will be tied to their annual VAST grooming contract. At the end of each season, the financial information will be entered into a database and the grooming cost will be determined before the upcoming year's budget is prepared. Final grooming payments will not be authorized until this information is submitted to the VAST Trails Administrator.*

John Perkins moved and Ken Gammell seconded to table this until next month.

2008/2009 GROOMING FUEL SUBSIDY: Alexis used the same formula as last year. The dollar per mile figure she came up with is \$.86 for class 1, 2 and 5 and then Class 3 and 4 would be at \$.43 per mile for a total of \$126,414. This is not to include third time grooming. *Ken Gammell moved and Brian Cook seconded that we approve the Fuel Grooming Subsidy at .86 for Class I, II & V and .43 for Class III and IV for a total of \$126,414 in grooming fuel subsidy payments. Motion carried unanimously.* If clubs have outstanding grooming logs, they will not receive the grooming fuel subsidy. According to the survey that was sent to the clubs, there is not a need for a fuel subsidy for this coming year. The Fiscal Committee will look at the unused money from the grooming surcharge.

NEW TRAILS & UPGRADED TRAILS: Alexis presented the requests for new trails and upgraded trails that were approved by the Trails Committee. John Perkins questioned when should we limit the number of miles our trail system has that we can afford and maintain. We have a cap of 4,700 miles of contracted mileage. We currently have approximately 4,650 contracted miles. *Bruce Murray moved and Brian Cook seconded that the Board approve the six clubs request for upgrade or new trails as approved by the Trails Committee. Motion carried unanimously.*

LVRT UPDATE: The State replaced the bridge that they removed on the LVRT. This bridge was very crucial to accessing the trail and working on it. We are still waiting on the Jurisdictional Opinion due to one coordinator holding the process up. The committee is very frustrated with the hold up.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES: Bryant provided a year end wrap on in the Board packet.

FOREST SERVICE UPDATE: There is no update at this time. Most of the projects of the clubs are shovel-ready. The Forest Service will be working with the clubs and will be helping with funding the work.

OTHER: Tom Baltrus inquired about any possible monies available to help the clubs with ice storm damage. Alexis received only one request from the club. Clubs need to go through the construction grant application.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: The **External Relations Committee** reported that a status meeting coming up on law suit. Mike O'Hara saw on the internet that there is a final conference and jury draw tomorrow. The **Fiscal Committee** will be meeting next week. The **Nominating Committee** has received one nomination for each officer position except for Vice President. The **Personnel Committee** will meet on June 2 at 4. The **Awards & Recognition Committee** met and selected the award winners that will be presented at the Annual

Meeting. The two winners of the scholarships are Andrew Robbins and Shauna Ann Taylor. The **Safety & Responsible Riding Committee** will be meeting in a couple of weeks. The **Marketing & PR Committee** will be scheduling a meeting.

The next Director's Meeting is Monday, June 26th, 2009 at 6:00 PM with refreshments provided by Caledonia County.

Jim Hill moved and Bonnie Holbrook seconded to adjourn at 8:58 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,
Bonnie Holbrook
VAST Recording Secretary