

## VAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 22, 2009

**DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES, OFFICERS & STAFF PRESENT:** Conrad Stewart-Addison; Norm Roark-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 (*Absent*)-Rutland; John Lynds-Washington; Tom Baltrus (*Absent*)-Windham; Bruce Murray-Windsor; Pat Poulin -President; Jim Hill-Vice-President; Mark Ellingwood-Treasurer; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary; Bryant Watson-Executive Director, Ann Shangraw-Past President; Alexis Nowalk (*Absent*)-SSTP Trails Administrator; Kent Gardner-VAST News Manager  
**GUESTS:** Star Poulin, Mitzi Oakes, Ed Hebebrand, Francis Pillsbury, Mike O'Hara, Joe Cicia, Matt Goodyear, Betty Roark, Wally Procorpio, Sandy Woodbeck, Sue Trottier, Howard Smith

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by President Pat Poulin. We have a new "VAST person", Miss Zoe Nelson, daughter of Alexis Nowalk and Josh Nelson.

**AGENDA:** *Mark Ellingwood moved and Jeff Fay seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.*

8e 2009 ISC – quick report

9d Skidoo Million Dollar Program

9e Rules Governing the Establishment of All-Terrain Vehicle Use Trails on State Land

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** *Jim Hill moved and Larry Trottier seconded to approve the minutes of May 26, 2009 Board of Directors meeting as amended. Motion carried unanimously.*

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** *Larry Trottier moved and Jim Hill seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.* Mark Ellingwood gave a brief overview of the budget report. Bonnie Holbrook asked for an explanation on the legal fees for Hardwick/Woodbury.

**CONSENT CALENDAR-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT and TRAIL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:** *Jim Hill moved and Jeff Fay seconded to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **COUNTY REPORTS:**

*Champlain Valley;* Addison County and Chittenden County are quiet.

*Central Vermont;* Orange County has a landowner that would like the clubs to help to gate his land to non-snowmobilers. Washington County reported trying to get all the paperwork in by the 30<sup>th</sup> June for the Winooski Suspension Bridge

*Northeast Kingdom;* Caledonia County and Essex County are quiet. Orleans County was going really good until last Thursday when they received a call from the Agency of Natural Resources regarding the trail along the pipeline. They'll be working together on it.

*Northwest Vermont;* Franklin County reported they are very quiet. Grand Isle County is working with the Vermont Preservation Group that wants to save a historic bridge that has been condemned. Lamoille County is quiet.

*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 quiet

*Southwest Vermont;* Bennington County is working on the trails in the Green Mountain National Forest. Rutland County had a landowner in Pittsford that complained about the trail on the edge of his property. They (the County) will be following up with the club again at their County meeting.

**ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE:** The plans are coming along great. The Town of Barre has changed the price for rental of the auditorium and arena. The Vendor event/show will be open to the public and announcements will be on Froggy Radio. The day is being geared for a fun filled family event. There will be lots going on. There will not be a vendor fee. The Vendor show will be open and running from 9 am to 5 pm and vendors will need to reserve their space. The beneficiary of the Silent Auction is the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Vermont. The Annual Meeting Committee is asking for each county to donate gift(s) for the silent auction. There will be educational opportunities and a snowmobile safety instructor certification class in the morning. Mark Ellingwood asked to have a space to do a TMA workshop. Alexis is working on having a workshop on "how to manage your grooming contract". The committee is considering working with the Town of Barre to see if businesses want to be involved.

**LANDOWNER APPRECIATION BOOKLET:** Jim Hill showed the forms that have been made up. If you have camera ready material it will not cost the businesses money. The link for websites of the participating vendors will be in the VAST News and on the VAST website by region. We need the form to be returned to the VAST Office by the end of July. Once received, it will take 2-3 weeks at the printers. The

current format is set up for 8½ by 5½ with 4 coupons per page. Each page would be perforated. The organization of the coupons will be by region and not by county. Mark Ellingwood suggested that each county needs to have an emergency meeting. Ann Shangraw suggested that each one of us call each club in our county and ask each club to obtain at least one business. Bryant Watson will have the office send out forms to each club in the state this week. One of the things to remember is this is a coupon booklet for landowners and the businesses that participate do not have to be snowmobile related businesses. There was a discussion regarding the cost of printing the booklets.

**TELECONFERENCE CALLS:** Bryant Watson provided information in the Board packets on equipment for teleconference calls. Tom Baltrus is checking on the prices conference calls. Unfortunately he is not here tonight to report. *Mark Ellingwood moved and Ken Gammell seconded that we table this until next month when we have more information. Motion carried unanimously.*

**TRAILS POLICY CHANGES:** *Ann Shangraw moved and Jeff Fay seconded that we approve the recommendations from the Trails Committee as presented in the Board packet. Motion carried unanimously.*

**2009 ISC Report:** Pat Poulin reported the most memorable moment at the 2009 International Snowmobile Congress this year was when the Prime Minister of Canada came to Prince Edward Island to meet us. It was amazing and very rare to have the Prime Minister show up at the International Snowmobile Council Congress. Jim Hill is waiting to receive the Safety Patrol manuals from New Hampshire and Ontario. He spent a lot of time talking with various associations about their trail safety programs. In Canada, they also have a Trail Wardens Program where they can write tickets on compliance issues but not make arrests.

Ann Shangraw reported that a couple of years ago the Northeast Chapter pushed for a change in the dues structure. With the economy, the ACSA Board came back this year with a proposal for an increase in the dues structure that would have impacted us and was not an increase across the board meaning an increase for all states equally. We had an increase in snowmobile raffle tickets and calendar sales this year. With the increase sales in the fundraisers, the budget was offset and an increase in the ACSA dues was not needed this year to make budget.

The IASA has a Zero Tolerance Product that will be hitting the associations soon. They will include PSAs and other materials. ACSA is also working on a White Paper which is a booklet that we can hand out to legislators and landowners that will address the LACK of impact snowmobiles have on the environment. It will be a living document that will be updated as we go along. We have a new ACSA President (Fred Willey from California/Nevada), a new Vice President (Terry Durby from Iowa) and Curt Kennedy from Utah is still the Secretary/Treasurer.

John Lynds brought up that a year or two ago, we approved to cut the travel budget for attendance at the Congress. He thinks this was not a good move. He was very disappointed to hear that our Executive Director did not go to Congress this year. John would like to make sure that we are sending enough representation to the ISC and that we need to re-look at the budget. As a Director he wants to stress that we need to have more people there. Our policy states 2 officers and 2 staff but our budget is for only one person.

Bonnie Holbrook reported on the Iron Dog Brigade. She had the honor of reading the obituary and saying a few words about Bill Benham at the Iron Dog Banquet. She is one of the new Directors of the Iron Dog Brigade, serving a three year term. Bonnie also shared information regarding a presentation Video Mike did at the Media Council Presentation. This is for a program where clubs can link, at no cost to them, to Snow Trails TV and people can view snowmobile video clips.

**FY 2010 BUDGET - MARK:** We had a very good Fiscal Committee meeting a couple of weeks ago. Mark Ellingwood gave an overview on the proposed 2010 budget. The committee feels that although the staff did a really great job this year, the committee proposes that due to the economy, there will not be a salary increase this year. The Revenue is suggested to be based on the same number of TMA sales as were projected for FY 2009 at 30,000 TMAs. The Committee recommends that we go forward without any increase in the cost of TMAs for FY 2010, and without a grooming surcharge. Last year the change was made to include all salaries and wages in the General Fund Account, and the same is true for FY 2010. There was no wage or salary increases calculated in the projections for FY 2010 Budgets. Bruce Murray questioned the amount budgeted for Trail Construction. *Bruce Murray moved and Ann Shangraw seconded that we approve the Proposed 2010 Budgets for VAST General Fund, Trails Fund and Scholarship Fund. Jeff Fay moved and Ray Dubreuil seconded that we amend the motion to add \$10,000 to cover travel to the Congress and DC Fly-in. The amended motion carried with no nays and Ann Shangraw abstained. The motion for the Proposed 2010 Budget with the amendment carried with no nays and Ann Shangraw and Jim Hill abstained.* Ann Shangraw thanked the Committee for presenting a very conservative budget for this year. Jeff Fay asked about including the funds in this budget for increased representation at Congress. In the current policy, we send 2 officers and 2 staff members but the budget was for one person. *Jeff Fay moved and Ann Shangraw seconded that with the additional \$10,000 we fund 4 additional people to Congress at \$1500 (\$6000 total) with 2 people at DC Fly-in at \$2000 each. Motion carried with no nays and Jim Hill abstained.*

**LVRT FUNDING:** To date, VAST has accrued more than \$200,000 worth of in-kind credit, and the State of Vermont is responsible for Bridge #48 (\$161,100) and a contribution of \$20,000 for a bridge removed in Greensboro Bend. We have current pledges for specific projects of \$75,000 and we expect to accrue an additional \$20,000. The Friends of the LVRT are working to put a grant together for RBEG grants

although these can not be used for matching funds. Bryant Watson has been researching our alternatives for providing both temporary and permanent funding vehicles in order to meet our fiduciary responsibilities for the project. Bryant Watson asked that we approve him to submit the paperwork to apply to the VT State Infrastructure Bank. If we do not get any of the projected funds donated, then VAST would be responsible for paying back the loan. *Larry Trottier moved and Bruce Murray seconded that we authorize VAST to submit an application for a loan for match funding for the LVRT with the VT State Infrastructure Bank. The motion does not authorize VAST to sign for the note. Motion carried unanimously.*

**FUNDING FOR VT SNOW TRAILS CONSERVANCY & TRUST:** Bryant Watson reported that we now have an entity and need to file with the IRS. In order to file for our Not-For-Profit status for the Trust with the IRS we need to have a value. There is one thing that is stopping us from completing filing the paperwork; we currently do not have anything of value to declare in order to establish the Trust. We do have easements' however, these easements would need to be appraised, and a value established for those easements if we are to use them. Bryant Watson recommends that we forward \$100,000 from the VAST General Fund to the VT Snow Trails Conservancy Trust. Once moved this can not be moved back into the General Fund. *Ann Shangraw moved and Bruce Murray seconded that Bryant Watson investigate the minimum requirements to file and then we'll revisit the request. Motion carried unanimously.*

**SKI-DOO MILLION DOLLAR FUND:** Last year in Canada, Ski-Doo offered a Million Dollar Fund program and are expanding it to the States this year. Jim Hill provided information to the board. Team Canada/Co-op is asking for the contact information for each club across the state. For each form that is returned to Team Canada/Co-op they will develop a high-visibility communication campaign to encourage snowmobilers to return the certificate to their Ski-Doo dealership and the club will receive a \$10 donation. Jim Hill reported that Ski-Doo had a June 19<sup>th</sup> deadline but would extend the offer until our June Board meeting. There was much concern expressed with not having time to take the offer back to the counties for input. *Ann Shangraw moved and Jeff Fay seconded to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Motion carried. Ken Gammell moved and Ray Dubreuil seconded that we support the program. Motion defeated by the majority (Brian Currier, Ray Dubreuil voted in the affirmative and Norm Roark abstained).*

**RULES GOVERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE USE TRAILS ON STATE LAND:** Ann Shangraw asked that we make a decision for VAST to take a stand on the issue and she recommends that we support the efforts to establish rules to govern the establishment of all-terrain vehicle use trails on state land. That way if we are approached by media we have a statement ready. We should support all forms of recreation on state lands and there is room for all of us to recreate. We should share the state lands. *Jim Hill moved and Jeff Fay seconded to extend the meeting another 15 minutes. Motion carried. Ann Shangraw moved and Jeff Fay seconded that VAST comes up with an official statement that "VAST supports responsible public use of public lands, trail construction and use as appropriate under controlled conditions". Motion carried with no nays and Bruce Murray abstained.*

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** The **Fiscal Committee** has a sub-committee to address TMAs. Some of the things they are looking at are printing numbers on the decals, relaxing the due date for the Early Bird TMAs and reducing the number of decals to just 4 with the exception of the 5-day pass, do an early and late resident and an early and late non-resident decal. The committee proposes that the categories are still all there. The Committee will be meeting again soon. Mark Ellingwood would like to receive feedback from counties. The **Personnel Committee** met last week to work on the Executive Director's annual performance evaluation.

The **Nominating Committee** has received one nomination for each officer position except for Vice President.

The next Director's Meeting is Monday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 6:00 PM with refreshments being our summer pot-luck.

*Jim Hill moved and Jeff Fay seconded to adjourn at 9:42 PM. Motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted by,  
Bonnie Holbrook  
VAST Recording Secretary