

VAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

November 23, 2009

DIRECTORS, ALTERNATES, OFFICERS & STAFF PRESENT: Conrad Stewart-Addison; John Perkins(*via Phone*)-Bennington; Ken Gammell-Caledonia; Jeff Fay-Chittenden; Ray Dubriel-Essex; John Ross(*via Phone*)-Franklin; Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Matt Goodyear-Lamoille; Larry Trottier-Orange; Brian Cook-Orleans; Merritt Budd-Rutland; John Lynds-Washington; Tom Baltrus-Windham; Bruce Murray-Windsor; Jim Hill-President; Joe Cicia-Vice-President; Mark Ellingwood-Treasurer; Bonnie Holbrook-Recording Secretary; Bryant Watson-Executive Director, Pat Poulin-Past President; Alexis Nelson-Trails Administrator; Kent Gardner-VAST News Editor
GUESTS: Mitzi Oakes, Jim Holbrook, Star Poulin Ed Hebebrand, Mike O'Hara, Dave Pastula, Matt Jacovelli

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by President Jim Hill.

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

- 10c Trail Signage
- 10d VT Public Television

SECRETARY'S REPORT: *Bruce Murray moved and Jeff Fay seconded to approve the minutes of October 26, 2009 Board of Directors meeting. Motion carried unanimously.*

TREASURER'S REPORT: *Bruce Murray moved and Ray Dubreuil seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.* Mark Ellingwood gave a brief overview of the budget. It's that time of year that we have a negative cash flow until TMAs begin coming in.

CONSENT CALENDAR-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT and TRAIL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: *Larry Trottier moved and Matt Goodyear seconded to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Motion carried unanimously.*

COUNTY REPORTS:

Champlain Valley; Addison County reported the upper trail near Silver Lake in the Goshen area will be open this year. Dave Holbrook took a week off work to work on this trail to get it open. This is the trail that replaces the Lester Hollow trail. There are still a lot of corn fields up so signing has been held up those areas. **Chittenden County** had their landowners' dinner last month and had an increase in landowner attendance. They are in good shape in their county.

Central Vermont; Orange County is in good shape. They made a lot of repairs from the flashfloods this summer. **Washington County** had their elections of officers. They have been working hard on projects. They bought a snowmobile trailer and brand new snowmobile for the Washington County Sheriff's Department. They also helped the Waterbury Rescue Squad with purchasing a rescue sled. Things are moving along. They've also worked on the Winooski Wonder Bridge.

Northeast Kingdom; Caledonia County is waiting for snow and is ready to go. **Essex County** is going pretty good. They had the election of officers with no changes. The only thing they have left to do is signing on the Conti Refuge. The manager of the County Refuge wants additional signing. He also would like to have a trail go into his office and invite snowmobilers to stop by. **Orleans County** had a trail open back up a couple of weeks ago. This trail was closed a couple of years ago.

Northwest Vermont; Franklin County is in pretty good shape. **Grand Isle County** is all set with the bridge and all the landowner permission slips are signed. **Lamoille County** is signed and ready. They have a beaver issue to fix on the LVRT.

Southeast Vermont; Windham County had to close the trail to downtown Wilmington because of a landowner, so you can't get to gas or food there. **Windsor County** reported that things are well. The issue in Bridgewater is up to the courts now.

Southwest Vermont; Bennington County is in pretty good shape. They are waiting for snow. Their trails are ready to go. **Rutland County** has one more issue to resolve on the Corridor 7 trail. It is almost ready to go. The Proctor trail is having a section of trail that is part of an old railroad track and they are going to fill it in between the rails. There is a new highway bridge that crosses Route 100 in Stockbridge. Alexis will check to see how the trail will cross there. Merritt Budd has asked his clubs to let him know when they are going to have large work parties so he can announce it at Board meetings. They are also looking for a new secretary for the County but other than that, they have the same officers.

OTHER: Jim Hill welcomed Joe Cicia to his first meeting "in person" as Vice President. Jim also thanked Pat Poulin for his years as President.

LANDOWNER APPRECIATION BOOKLET: Mark Ellingwood expressed his appreciation for the job well done on the Landowner Appreciation Booklet. Kent Gardner and Melissa Aldeborgh worked hard on the booklet. Tom Baltrus was disappointed his county was not more involved in the booklet. If this goes well, we will offer this again next year. It cost approximately \$10,000 when including labor costs. Unfortunately there were some businesses that were missed including MK Richardson Insurance in Chelsea along with one of Johnny Lynds'. We hope no others were missed. Matt Jacovelli recommended that if we do this again next year to have each county review the ones from their county prior to going to print.

ANCIENT ROADS: February 10, 2010 is the deadline for towns to have all the roads on their maps. It is coming up really soon and hopefully all clubs have been engaged in the process in their towns. There is a 45 day notice that has to go to all abutting landowners PRIOR to them being put on the town map. Bryant Watson provided more information in the Board packets.

LVRT UPDATE: All the paperwork has been filed with the Environmental Court. VT Natural Resources Council is now representing the group of individuals that is opposing the LVRT. Dave Pastula asked if it would help to have the landowners that are in support of the LVRT send letters to the Environmental Court. If they do, they would need to send copies of the letter to the other group of interested parties. The group could send them to the Environmental Court but they would also need to contact the Environmental Court for the list of five or six other "interested parties" to send them to.

In the Board packet there was information on the PR & Marketing plan for the LVRT. When Bryant Watson was talking to the PR & Marketing firm that we are interested in, he also talked to them about ideas for marketing VAST. The firm that has the best proposal was from The Imagination Company. We have very few responses each year from the clubs reporting how much money they do for charity. This brought of another conversation on clubs reporting to VAST what they do for fundraising, not only money but volunteer hours too. VAST in turn reports figures to ACSA (American Council of Snowmobile Associations) who use this information when working with legislators for snowmobile access. Mike O'Hara told us that Alan Robertson has donated thousands of dollars of his personal money for the LVRT project. We also receive "in kind" service for his work. The LVRT Committee voted to name a section of trail after Alan Robertson. Where he is an engineer, a bridge would be very fitting.

FOREST SERVICE UPDATE: Bryant Watson gave an update on the ARRA funds that we will be able to use for projects in the Green Mountain National Forest. John Perkins asked how the matching funds work with these funds. Bryant Watson replied how that's why it's very important that each club (and club member) needs to report to VAST when and how much time they work on the trails debrising, grooming and maintenance. There will be a meeting next week. According to the ARRA agreement, there is not a division of money between the northern and the southern part of the Green Mountain National Forest. John Perkins asked Bryant Watson to call the manager in the southern portion of the Green Mountain National Forest Service because that is different than what he has heard.

TRAIL SIGNAGE: There is confusion regarding why some signs have been removed. There was a segment in the Trails Construction Seminar about the new signing. Alexis will write a side bar on the website and in the VAST News. Also the more trail signs we have, the more liability we are responsible for. The guideline manual for signing will be updated and put on the website. There was also confusion on whether clubs can use old signs if they still have them. There was a discussion with the Board having a difference of opinion. **Ray Dubreuil moved and Ken Gammell seconded that the signs; keep right, dip, bump, gate ahead, winding trail, left and right hair pin and caution signs not be used on the trails and any existing signs of the aforementioned be removed from the trail. Motion carried with 1 nay (Lamoille County).** It's important that clubs follow the trails signage guidelines. Our insurance approved the current sign manual. The 'caution' sign was replaced with 'slow' about three years ago. The VAST Trails Committee reviewed and approved the removal of these signs from the trails program last spring. The driving force behind this action is to achieve statewide consistency in our trail signing program. Alexis will bring up the issue at the Trails Committee to discuss what clubs can do with those discontinued signs.

VT PUBLIC TELEVISION: Over the last few years, a group of volunteers from VAST have worked a telethon on VT Public Television. This year we are doing it December 1, 2009 from 7:30 PM to 11:30 PM.

OTHER: Jim Hill was asked by Vermont Living Magazine to do an interview and it will be published in their magazine this winter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: The **Safety Committee** will be meeting on the 15th of December directly after the Governor's Snowmobile Council Meeting. Bonnie Holbrook (chair of the SS&RR Committee) and Mitzi Oakes (chair of the Council) are going to work closely with agendas so they do not duplicate conversations where many of the members are on both the Council and the committee. There was a committee meeting in November that Mitzi ran for Bonnie as she couldn't attend due to recovery from surgery. The committee will be working on their new charges this year. The **PR & Marketing Committee** has posters for the Military Appreciation Ride which Jeff Fay distributed. The ride will be January 30, 2010 and hopefully all of the Board will be in attendance this year. The **VAST Website Committee** will be meeting soon. The **Trails Committee** is meeting on December 14th.

The December meeting will be Monday, December 21st, 2009 at 6:00 PM and will be our traditional potluck.

Jeff Fay moved and Tom Baltrus seconded to adjourn at 8:07 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,
Bonnie Holbrook
VAST Recording Secretary