

VAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 21, 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-Franklin; Bill Oakes-Grand Isle; Brian Currier-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, Matt Goodyear, Ed Hebebrand, Mike O'Hara, Matt Jacovelli, Pam Brackett, Sue Trottier, Cathee Hill, Roberta Stammers, Mark Reeves, Stacey Lynds, Eric and Ross Page

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm by President Jim Hill.

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

8b Landowner Appreciation – listing web links

9c Nomination for life member

SECRETARY'S REPORT: *Mark Ellingwood moved and Bruce Murray seconded to approve the minutes of November 23, 2009 Board of Directors meeting. Motion carried unanimously.*

TREASURER'S REPORT: *Tom Baltrus moved and Pat Poulin seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.* Mark Ellingwood reported a negative cash flow this month which is normal for this time year.

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

COUNTY REPORTS:

Champlain Valley; Addison County has a section of Route 17 on the way to Waitsfield that has been closed. They are hoping to be able to reroute it. **Chittenden County** has a closure on Route 7 in Williston by a landowner who was denied an ACT 250 permit. There is still a closure in Milton that is being worked on and hopefully will get reopened. They are also waiting for permits on another area.

Central Vermont; Orange County has a little grooming going on. **Washington County** reported some grooming in the upper elevations.

Northeast Kingdom; Caledonia County and Essex County are in pretty good shape. **Orleans County** has almost all of their trails packed and some have been groomed. They had a pretty substantial trail closure a few weeks ago but it was reopened thanks to the landowner. The lake is still unsafe. The ice is only about an inch thick on the big lake.

Northwest Vermont; Franklin County needs snow otherwise they are all set. **Grand Isle County** is all set with the bridge. **Lamoille County** reported most of the county has been tracked but the snow is thin. They had a reroute they had to do.

Southeast Vermont; Windham County is praying for snow. **Windsor County** has some grooming and riders have been out.

Southwest Vermont; Bennington County received snow in the higher elevation. There is thin cover with spring riding conditions. **Rutland County** has gotten Route 7 open all the way for the first time in about 25 years. They have a bridge they need to finish re-decking this weekend.

RECONSIDER SIGNING POLICY APPROVED LAST MONTH: As reported in Alexis' report, the Trails Committee made a motion to ask the Board to reconsider the decision made last month to have the discontinued signs removed immediately. Alexis apologized for the confusion and misrepresenting the Trails Committee during the discussion last month. Pam Brackett questioned the safety of having these signs removed. There was a discussion on the safety of the signs and the pros and cons of signs. We are trying to meet International standardized signing and achieve consistent signing throughout the state. If Clubs have already taken the signs down this year, they are applauded. Part of the grooming contracts is that clubs will sign the trails according to the signing policy. Our trail signage policy meets the minimum requirements and it's up to clubs if they sign beyond the standard.

- *Bruce Murray moved and Mark Ellingwood seconded that we take no further action in the decision to replace the signs that was voted on last month. Bruce Murray withdrew the motion and Mark Ellingwood seconded that the motion be withdrawn.*
- *Bruce Murray moved and Larry Trottier seconded that we reconsider the signing policy approved at last month's board meeting. Motion carried unanimously.*
- *Bruce Murray moved and Larry Trottier seconded that no change be made to the motion that was approved last month. With 8 yeas and 9 Nays (Bennington, Past President, Orange, Washington, Franklin, Grand Island, Orleans, Addison, Vice President). Motion failed.*
- *Ken Gammell moved and John Lynds seconded that we consider a policy for reimbursement of the discontinued signs and the signs can stay up until April 15, 2010. Motion carried with one nay (Windsor County).*

Pam Brackett expressed strong concern with removing hazard signs.

LANDOWNER APPRECIATION – LISTING WEB LINKS: Jeff Fay made note that the agreements for the Landowner Appreciation coupons stated that participants would have a free link this year. Kent Gardner will make a list of the businesses that participated and will include a hotlink to their website if it was included in the agreement.

BAYLEY HAZEN CLASS IV GROOMING CONTRACT: Before the last Board meeting the Bayley Hazen Club met with Alexis Nelson and Bryant Watson and presented hard copies of the landowner permission slips as per the agreement. Caledonia County held a special meeting and the County approved the request from the Bayley Hazen Club for a Class IV contract for ten miles of trail. The Bayley Hazen Club thought that there would be ten miles of trail that would be groomed by neighboring clubs. It has turned out that there is twenty miles that are open and will need to be groomed by the Bayley Hazen Club. The Trails Committee approved the twenty miles and recommends the Board approve it. *Larry Trottier moved and Brian Cook seconded to approve the Class IV grooming contract for the twenty miles as recommended by the Trails Committee. Motion carried unanimously.*

VAST FIREARMS POLICY: Bryant Watson provided a written copy of a recommended Firearms Policy. Our attorney has reviewed the policy. There was some discussion with some recommendation for changes. *Mark Ellingwood moved and Conrad Stewart seconded that we table this policy request. Motion carried unanimously.*

NOMINATION FOR LIFE MEMBER: *Jeff Fay moved and Bonnie Holbrook seconded that we bestow a life membership for Pat Poulin for his years of service as president of VAST. Motion carried unanimously.*

2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION: The Democrats are reported to be planning on submitting legislation to get rid of the Agency of Natural Resources and the Environmental Court. We will need to watch legislation closely through out the session. Potentially there may be several items that may affect our trail system.

LVRT UPDATE: We are still waiting.

FOREST SERVICE UPDATE: The study is in the works.

SNOW PACK STUDY UPDATE: The initial water sampling has been done and we are moving forward with the study.

UPDATE – CALEDONIA COUNTY/BIASTRE PROPERTY, GROTON: Ken Gammell read a letter from Betty & Buzzy Eastman regarding a complaint from landowner Mr. Biastre regarding some debris left on the property from some trail construction.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: The **Safety & Responsible Riding Committee** met and they are going to be holding the shows for the International Snowmobile Safety Week at University Mall and Rutland Mall January 16-17th. The State Police, Fish & Wildlife and Sheriff's Association will be partnering with us again this year. Bob Stebbins, Chittenden County Sheriff's Deputy will be coordinating the law enforcement. Rutland County is hosting the Rutland show and Chittenden County will host the Burlington one. The committee will be hosting a safety check station at the Military Appreciation Ride on January 30th in Waitsfield. The committee is also working on other charges that were given them by the President. The **Landowner Appreciation Committee** will be meeting January 6, 2010 at 6 PM.

The January meeting will be Monday, January 25th, 2010 at 6:00 PM and will be provided by Grand Isle County.

Tom Baltrus moved and Conrad Stewart seconded to adjourn at 8:36 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,
Bonnie Holbrook
VAST Recording Secretary