

VAST Board of Directors – August 26, 2019 – Meeting Minutes

1st Draft to be approved at the October 28, 2019 Meeting

OFFICERS PRESENT:

President: Absent
Vice President: Jeff Fay
Treasurer: Sonia Koehler via phone
Secretary: Jim Hill

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Addison: Lewis Barnes
Bennington: Absent
Caledonia: Ken Gammell
Chittenden: Pat Poulin
Essex: Stewart Ahearn via phone
Franklin: Mike Burns
Grand Isle: Dave Ladd
Lamoille: Ellis O’Hear
Orange: Juliann Sherman
Orleans: Roger Gosselin
Rutland: Absent
Washington: Mark Reaves
Windham: Drew Fraser
Windsor: Dick Jewett

ALTERNATE DIRECTORS PRESENT: Ivor Stevens, Windham County; Doug Jacobs, Windsor County.

STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director: Cindy Locke
Trails Administrator: Matt Tetreault via phone
Trails Manager: Ken Brown
Office Coordinator: Cyndy Carrier Brown

GUESTS PRESENT: Ed Hebebrand, Adam Lane, President of VASA; Gary Nolan, VAST Law Enforcement Chair and Multi-Use Committee Chair; Brandon Phillips, Drift Dusters Snowmobile Club.

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM.

Recognition of Visitors:

Approval of Agenda. Lewis Barnes moved to approve; Roger Gosselin seconded, as amended, motion carried.

Cindy Locke – Add an item under New Business – d – Non Trail Work / Clubs

Secretary’s Report: Dick Jewett moved to approve; Lewis Barnes seconded, motion carried.

Jim Hill noted that at last month’s board meeting, the board approved to guaranty the loan for a side by side, for the Williston Hill Hawks, which would change our trails from class 1 to 3.

Also, Mark Reaves motion was to guarantee the amount of the loan for the Williston Hill Hawks.

Treasurer's Report: Sonia Koehler gave a brief overview of the July 31, 2019 month end financials.

Pat Poulin moved to approve; Mark Reaves seconded, motion carried.

Old Business

LVRT Update

- Ken Brown reported that the project in Sheldon is now done. The stormwater permit is closed out.
- We had a VYCC crew out there working on culvert cleaning.
- Maintenance activities are ongoing.
- Mike Burns - 1C washout repair in Highgate; I don't think it's going to last; it's already washing out.

TMA Increase

- Cindy Locke – Last month we had a lot on our plate about TMA increases, budget, etc.
- I based our TMAs on numbers sold in the 2018/19 season, which was 18,858.
- A 5% increase would yield \$99,290
- A 10% increase would yield \$109, 580
- Where would that additional money go if we did the increase; equipment or construction loans?
- Jim Hill - We didn't have time to discuss the \$50,000 increase in insurance; the budget was presented before that.
- Cindy Locke - We took the \$50,000 out of grooming line item, because it's the only thing we have flexibility on.
- Dick Jewett – If the membership hears that we had to take money out of grooming because of the insurance, I would think that they would be willing to look at an increase.
- Cindy Locke – That's why we gave you the 10 year grooming average, because last year's grooming was High; not the highest and not the lowest.
- Doug Jacobs – Do all of these expenses get broken out for the membership at the annual meeting?
- Cindy Locke – Most of this happens in the pre-meeting (2 hours).
- Jeff Fay – The budget that went out a month ago has all the line items and they can go over it in detail if they want.
- Considerable discussion about the budget, TMA costs, grooming costs, etc.
- Roger Gosselin – At my county's annual meeting, they were very vocal about some of the construction projects being cut, equipment grants, grooming not being paid over cap.

New Business

Free Weekend

- Cindy Locke - Maine has chosen their weekend; last weekend in January through first weekend in February.
- My recommendation for us would be not to do it the same weekend as them.
- I'm suggesting February 7 – 9
- NH is on a two year legislative cycle, so this coming year is when they will go back to their legislature and then they can ask for their own free weekend starting next year.

Lewis Barnes moved to approve February 7 – 9, 2020 for Free Weekend in Vermont; Mark Reaves seconded, motion carried.

Club Loan Guarantee Discussion

- Matt Tetreault reviewed the outstanding loans with clubs, and amounts that clubs are looking for for this season.
- Considerable discussion about individual club loans, detailed discussion on loan guarantees, repayment issues, etc.

Ken Gammell moved to table this item (Tri Town / East Montpelier clubs) until next month's board meeting; Mark Reaves seconded; motion carried.

- Dick Jewett - By tabling the EMGJ's, it also puts a hold on Ludlow Sidehill Cronchers purchase also?
- Matt Tetreault – We didn't provide a loan to Ludlow, they got a USDA grant. I don't believe it will affect them.

Clubs / Non Trail Work

- Cindy Locke – Occasionally we get a request that a club wants to do some work for landowners. In particular, a landowner had been driving on the trail for their own driveway and had been plowing part of it.
- The Town started an ordinance that you couldn't drive on the railbed. So now the club is coming to us and asking us to build the landowner a driveway. We have been telling them no, but I wanted to confirm it with you.
- Mike Burns – At the club level, we do some minor work, but I don't think we want VAST go get involved.

ED Report / Trail Administrator/LVRT

- Roger Gosselin – Question for Matt; for the bulk pricing for the drags, is some of the savings because VAST is a 501c3 and doesn't have to pay sales tax.
- Matt Tetreault - Yes, initially it was, but we have to pay sales tax, can't get around it.
- Lots of discussion about purchasing lumber and other building supplies, groomer fuel, etc. for the clubs.
- Cindy Locke - We could only buy it if it was something we were giving out in a grant. We couldn't buy it and then have the Club buy it from us. We would have to inventory it, bill it out, etc.
- Cindy Locke - Comparative State Totals of 3Day, 4Day, TMAs 2017 through 2019.
- The trade shows we have been attending seem to be working.
- Jeff Fay – Having done the PA show, the show itself comes and goes for size and attendance.
- Had a family come from PA to spend a weekend here snowmobiling – great story in the VAST magazine.
- Cindy Locke – New Safety Ambassador vests – great deal from Kilm.

Committee Reports

Northeast Chapter / USA

- Pat Poulin - We are considering adding a new category, associate member. There are several Canadian provinces that want to join. Also a business member category.
- Picked up a new state – Minnesota.

LVRT

- Mike Burns – How is the funding going for the LVRT?
- Cindy Locke – We have a meeting with AOT in a couple of weeks.
- We are also in the planning stages for an event in Morrisville, October 1st, from 4:00 to 6:00 at Lost Nation.
- I'm inviting the Governor, big state agencies, community members. I'll be doing a presentation on the trail.

Awards / Nominating – Everything is ready for the annual meeting.

Annual Meeting – Ken Gammell – VT Traditions Coalition will be doing a raffle on a hot rod - \$100 each/ only 250 sold.

Vendors for graphics on snowmobiles, safety lights, sled swap, silent auction. Larry Dwyer has done a great job on this event.

Long Range Planning - Minutes from the meeting are done.

Trails Meeting – 3rd Monday in Sept – 16th here at VAST – 6PM.

Safety – The Committee met in August.

Governor’s Council – Meeting on Sept. 4th – did not meet through the summer.

Law Enforcement

- Gary Nolan – Chair – I appreciate the opportunity to work on this committee. I was president of the Waterville Valley Snowmobile Club in 1971. A few years ago I got appointed to the Governor’s Snowmobile Safety Council and Cindy got me to ride on the Military Appreciation Day and now I’m back riding again.
- Pat, Mark and I went to the State Policy Academy and had a meeting with the Southern VT Task Force. I was impressed with their reports and how they run their enforcements down there. After I got more familiar with what’s going on, and talked with Cindy and Matt, we all thought that something needs to be done statewide about law enforcement.
- Same with ATVs as snowmobiles. Southern VT Task Force covers a small area, but they do a great job. They are all trained; anyone that works for them has to go through training. They do 5.5 days, but Pat told us that he could probably do a 2.5 day course that would suffice for us.
- Concerns were accident reporting; incorrect police reporting. Through no fault of the Department, but they were not trained for snowmobile accidents.
- Need to know how to investigate a snowmobile accident.
- Law enforcement patrols are very close together or not at all.
- Coordinate with fire and rescue, ambulance, fire departments, etc.
- Trying to get all pertinent agencies together to make law enforcement work better.
- I am also the Chair of the Multi-Use Trail Committee.
- I think we can help both sports with increased law enforcement.
- Ken Gammell – In NH they ride ATVs on the rail trails and snowmobile trails and not much trouble.
- They just opened up the longest rail trail in the state of NH; they did it in a year.

Roger Gosselin moved to adjourn; Mike Burns, seconded; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.