

**Board of Directors
October 23, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present:

OFFICERS PRESENT

President, Jeff Fay
Vice President, Mark Reaves
Secretary, Ruth Halpin
Treasurer, Patty Companik

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Addison: Lewis Barnes
Bennington: Carol DeJohn
Caledonia: Bruce Carlson
Chittenden: Pat Poulin
Essex: John Hull (Not Present)
Franklin: Mike Burns (Not Present)
Grand Isle: Jeff Porter
Lamoille: Dustin Turner
Orange: Juliann Sherman
Orleans: Roger Gosselin
Rutland: Mike Stewart
Washington: Jeff Halpin
Windham: Michael Garber
Windsor: Doug Jacobs

STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director: Cindy Locke
Trails Administrator: Matthew Tetreault
Office & Programs Manager: Mandy Dwinell
Technology & Media Manager: Beth Flint
Office & Programs Assistant: Lindsey Sanders

GUESTS:

Mike Koehler, Orleans County Alt. Director; Ivor Stevens, Windham County Alt. Director, Ed Hebebrand, Caledonia County Alt. Director; John Bialek, Essex County Alt. Director; Doug Todd, Rutland County Alt. Director; Stan Choiniere, Windsor County Alt. Director; Doug Wilson, Mad River Ridge Runners; Kristen Delisle, Burke Drift Skippers; Travis Courser, Burke Drift Skippers; Nick Newland, Burke Drift Skippers; Jim Hill, VSTC President

President Jeff Fay called the meeting to order at 6:02pm

Approval of Agenda

Addison County moved and Grand Isle County seconded, to approve the Agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Addition to the Agenda, 8D. VSTC Trustee Election

Secretary's Report

Windsor County: Motion to approve, Grand Isle County seconded to approve Secretary's Report.

MOTION CARRIED.

Treasurer's Report

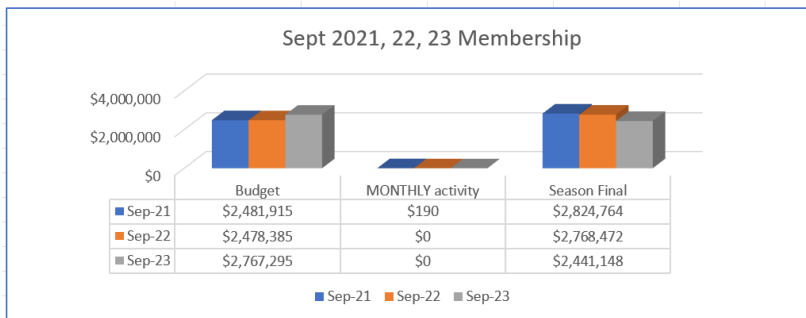
Expense Budget Increased in 2023 primarily due to changes in Grooming Payouts to Clubs (We had a ~\$200k increase in the Grooming line item and this does not include Fuel \$1 per mile)

➤ New Expense line item will be added to Trails Fund Budget Report in 2024 – once expenses start coming in: Acct No 8310/2010b and it will be called Flood Relief Trail work.

➤ Flooding projects paid, will be posted against this account for the 2024 Season

	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	
Membership \$\$				
Budget	\$2,481,915	\$2,478,385	\$2,767,295	
MONTHLY activity	\$190	\$0	\$0	2023
Season Final	\$2,824,764	\$2,768,472	\$2,441,148	-\$326,147
percentage	113.81%	111.70%	88.21%	

Membership Final/Actual for 2020 was \$2,517,695.



Treasurer's Report included a screen share of 2022/2023 Fiscal Year End Highlights.

Discussion on overall total surplus and deficit for this fiscal year. Report was included with the 2023 Annual Report.

Washington County: Motion to approve, Lamoille County seconded to approve Treasurer's Report. MOTION CARRIED.

TABLED ITEMS

Policy Changes

Nothing new to report.

Old Business

Nothing new to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Mad River Ridge Runners (MRRR) (Club Equipment), Doug Wilson

Doug Wilson attended as a representation of one of the two clubs that applied for an equipment grant from the \$750k funds.

MRRR is a 60-mile club with equipment that's 15-years old, both of which were criteria for the equipment grant. MRRD applied for a \$250k piece of equipment, club anticipated receiving \$126k on a grant, \$55k trade from current equipment and \$69k from club funds.

Discussion from May BOD meeting RE: AOT funds and allocation of the \$750k. MRRD expressed they had applied for the equipment grant prior to the June 30th deadline.

MRRR are seeking a guarantee of \$126k equipment grant funds for next year.

Discussion that \$750k grant funds was decided to be put aside at the June BOD meeting to allow for further discussion during the July BOD Retreat Meeting.

Discussion that during the July BOD Retreat and BOD meeting it was determined that trails needed to be evaluated and damage assessed from the July flooding and ask AOT if the \$750k funds could be repurposed for trail recovery.

Patty reminded BOD there is only \$249k allocated for equipment grants next year.

Discussion on the challenge presented with a club guarantee equipment grant funds and how it could potentially create significant hardship for club grant applications in the future.

Inquiry if there could be a discussion with AOT that two clubs were eligible for equipment grant funds for equipment that is in need of repair, without receiving grant funds creates a hardship for clubs next year. Suggestion that SOV will ask about financial viability as a bigger picture as an assessment of the number of power units within the fleet.

Burke Drift Skippers (Equipment Grant), Kristen Delisle

Club applied for an equipment grant and was awarded \$19,250 originally for use towards the purchase of equipment from the Orleans Snowstormers, club later decided to purchase a Tucker from Track Inc. instead. When Trails Administrator, Matt Tetreault found out about the change in equipment purchase he contacted the Burke Drift Skippers expressing concerns on the equipment that were shared from two other groomer operators who were the equipment's prior owner.

Club shared they were told zero capital funds would be permitted on the Tucker for future funds.

Discussion of capital purchases policy.

Discussion on original equipment grant for specific equipment and club transitioned to alternate equipment that's had multiple issues and suggestion expressed to connect with prior owner of the Track Inc. machine.

Discussion on how VAST tries to connect and review equipment, expresses concerns and attempts to be proactive with information and updates.

Discussion on if a grant is approved for a specific equipment and a different equipment is wanting to be purchased, suggestion to reapply or amend current grant application.

Discussion of VAST creating an annual report of equipment (manufacturer, year, Vin#, history) to be shared publicly.

Discussion regarding why the club converted from the original equipment with Orleans Snowstormers to Track Inc..

Discussion for a recommendation to review policy for capital repairs grants in the future.

Jacksonville EZ Riders (Loan Guarantee), Matt

Club is seeking a NSB loan guarantee to purchase a 2023 Snow Rabbit to replace their Scout. They are looking for a 5-year \$45k loan through NSB. Club is receiving a VAST grant, as well as a trade value for the Scout and club reserves.

Washington County: Motion to approve, Chittenden County seconded to support loan request guarantee to the Jacksonville EZ Riders. MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion on if club could sustain the financial burden of the loan. Support from the Rutland County Director that the club can successfully fulfill the financial responsibilities of the loan.

Discussion on prior grant topic, and the repair deadline. VAST Trails Administrator shared he stands with his decision that grants are awarded in regard to highest priority.

Discussion to review future assessment for the capital repair grant.

VT Snow Trails Conservancy, Trustee Vote -Jim Hill, VSTC President

Ken Brown was the Vice President and Trustee with the VSTC, with Ken's transitioning from VAST the positions became vacant. Cindy Locke was voted at a recent VSTC meeting as a Trustee.

Grand Isle County: Motion to approve, Lamoille County seconded to approve Cindy Locke as Trustee for VSTC. MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion on role of a Trustee.

Policy Change (Appeals Policy) – Policy & Bylaws Committee, Mark

Appeals policy formerly known as Grievance Policy.

Right to Appeal

From time-to-time disputes may arise over decisions that have been made by VAST employees, VAST policy requirements or deadlines. All VAST clubs are entitled to appeal decisions within 60 calendar days of notification of decision. VAST reserves the right to consolidate appeals that are based upon a single decision or deadline. In these cases, the timeframes outlined below will be based on the date of the missed deadline or the date the decision was initially issued.

The following steps shall be taken to resolve disputes that may arise:

Step 1 –The appealing party shall notify the VAST Executive Director, VAST President, their County Director and/or County Alternate Director of their desire to appeal a decision. The appellant must detail their reason for the appeal in writing to the VAST office by certified mail **and** by email with a read receipt, to the VAST Executive Director, VAST President, their County Director and/or County Alternate Director.

Step 2 –The Executive Committee will review all appeals within 45 calendar days of receipt. The Executive Committee will forward all appeals to the Board of Directors with a course of action to consider.

Step 3 – The Board of Directors will receive the Executive Committee's reviewed appeals at a regularly scheduled or a special Board meeting as required within 60 calendar days of the Executive Committee's review. The Board of Directors will have up to 35 calendar days to render a decision. The appellant shall be notified of the Board's decision by the Director or Alternate Director of their County. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

Windsor County: Motion to approve, Windham County seconded to approve Appeals Policy renamed to Grievance Policy. MOTION CARRIED.

Trails Administrator's / ED Report – Cindy and Matt

Working with SBA and site visits as part of the FEMA process.

Significant damage is Washington County (Waterbury and East Montpelier suspension bridges) and Windsor County (Plymouth, bridges by 100A) with a total of \$1.5M in estimated damage.

Committee and Other Meeting Reports

American Outdoor Risk Retention Group (AORRG) Insurance – Cindy

Annual Meeting recently.

The finances looked good and passed the audit.

Recommendation to lower rate opted not to as a way to continue to build up cash reserves.

Discussion if there's an option to offer insurance coverage to other organizations. AORRG is beginning its second year, wants to continue to be conservative, not ready to branch out to other organizations yet, as this may also increase risk.

Northeast Chapter and USA – Pat Poulin, Jeff Fay as VT Representatives

USA: No meeting last month

Northeast Chapter: Planning for a meeting in early February with NY as the host. More details to follow.

VT Snow Trails Conservancy (VSTC) – Jim Hill, VSTC President

Covered earlier in the meeting.

Law Enforcement (LE) Committee – Cindy

Recently had the LE Orientation at the VAST office, went well.

LE contracts will be going out soon.

Interest expressed from Berlin PD to join the program, hopefully meeting with them soon.

Awards & Nominating – Patty Companik

Congratulations to 2023 award recipients.

Reminder for award recipients who weren't able to attend Annual Meeting, to email Beth photos of candidates with their awards for the upcoming magazine.

By-Laws & Policy – Mark Reaves, Chair

Reviewing grant timeline and verbiage for possible corrections.

Annual Meeting – Ivor Stevens

Looking into possible event locations.

Mark Reaves (Washington County) offered to connect with Windham County to review Annual Meeting planning details and checklist.

Executive Committee – Jeff Fay, President

Met last Wednesday to review October BOD meeting agenda and prepare for meeting.

Cindy connected with new BOD Secretary, Ruth Halpin.

Finance - Patty Companik

Reviewed earlier in the meeting.

Long Range Planning & Organizational Committee – Mark Reaves

No meeting planned, will be reaching out soon to schedule.
Will send out new committee list the next week.

Personnel – Juliann Sherman, Chair

Nothing new to report.

Trails – Brian Currier/Matt

The next meeting TBD – prior to the 2024 season, possibly in November.

Discussion on the frequency of the Trails Committee and the importance of the Committee.

Safety Committee – Stan Choiniere

Met last month, meeting coming up for this month.

Focusing on eNews & brief articles in Snowmobile Vermont magazine highlighting current safety programs.

Governor's Council – Pat Poulin

LE Orientation prior to the October meeting, next meeting Wednesday, Nov. 1st at 3pm via Zoom.

Discussion on attending 2023 trade shows. Attendance has been well received. NH & ME have raised their trail passes for 2024 season.

Jeff Fay, Mark Reaves, Carol DeJohn, Cindy Locke, Jim Hill, Pat and Star Poulin recently attended the Memorial Service for Betty Roark.

Motion to adjourn Washington County moved to approve; Windsor County seconded to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Halpin
Secretary