

**oard of Directors
August 28, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present:

OFFICERS PRESENT

President: Jeff Fay

Vice President: Mark Reaves (Not Present)

Secretary: Jim Hill

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

Grand Isle: Jeff Porter

Lamoille: Dustin Turner

Orange: Juliann Sherman (Not Present)

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

Trails Manager: Ken Brown

Office & Programs Manager, Mandy Dwinell

Technology & Media Manager, Beth Flint

GUESTS:

Mike O'Hara, Past VAST Vice President; Ivor Stevens, Windham County Alt. Director; Stan Choiniere, Windsor County Alt. Director; Ed Hebebrand, Caledonia County Alt. Director; Rob Tracy, Bridgewater Sno-Zippers; Chris Sterns, Bridgewater Sno-Zippers; Carmin Lemery, Ghion

Jeff Fay called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Approval of Agenda

Grand Isle County: Motion to approve, Franklin County seconded to approve the agenda as amended. MOTION CARRIED.

Addition

e. Equipment Loans Update

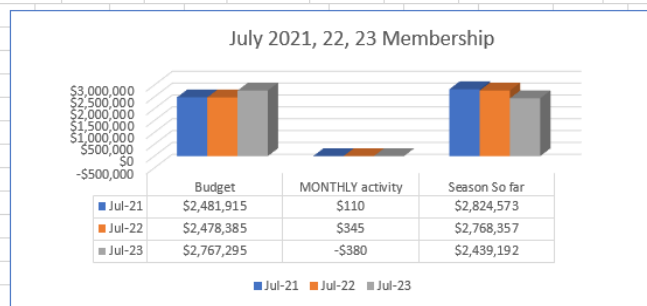
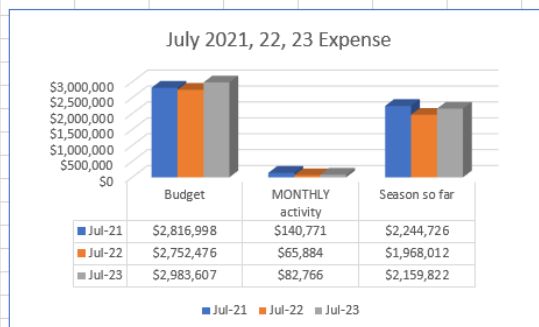
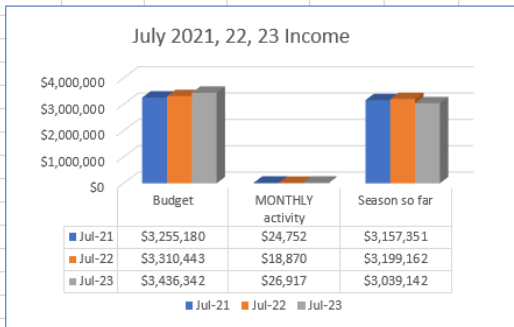
f. LVRT Update

Approval of the Secretary's Report

Chittenden County: Motion to approve, Grand Isle County seconded to approve Secretary's Report.
MOTION CARRIED.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

	Jul-21	Jul-22	Jul-23		
				0.83%	Of Budget Season
Membership \$\$					
Budget	\$2,481,915	\$2,478,385	\$2,767,295		
MONTHLY activity	\$110	\$345	-\$380		
Season So far	\$2,824,573	\$2,768,357	\$2,439,192	-\$329,165	
percentage	113.81%	111.70%	88.14%		
July 2023 - Membership 2023 actual Mbshp as of 88% - ~329k less than last season					
Income \$\$					
Budget	\$3,255,180	\$3,310,443	\$3,436,342		
MONTHLY activity	\$24,752	\$18,870	\$26,917		
Season so far	\$3,157,351	\$3,199,162	\$3,039,142	-\$160,020	
percentage	96.99%	96.64%	88.44%		
July 2023 - Income ~13k from Media Sales Overall income is ~\$160k less than last season Though membership was ~329k less than last season - Interest increased about 20k Pr/Marketing Grant increased ~60k and Media ~10k (these items helped make up some of the difference)					
Expense					
Budget	\$2,816,998	\$2,752,476	\$2,983,607		
MONTHLY activity	\$140,771	\$65,884	\$82,766		
Season so far	\$2,244,726	\$1,968,012	\$2,159,822	\$191,810	
percentage	79.69%	71.50%	72.39%		
July 2023 - Expense ~42k of the 82k is in salaries / benefits ~10k in Professional (~5k Audit GF/TF and ~4k in IRS Club) Compared to last season we have had an additional ~191k in expenses 2021 Expenses were much higher than 2022/2023 due to ~40k in grooming and ~32k in GMNF/Cost Share 2022/2023 - ~191k increase - Majority is from increased Trails Expenses					
				2023	2022
				Trails Expenses: 1285503	1095536 189967



Approval of Treasurer's Report

Washington County: Motion to approve, Windsor County seconded to approve as presented.
MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Update on State Funds, Cindy

Cindy met with Senator Jane Kitchel regarding the State of Vermont \$750k funds. Cindy shared that Jane thinks it's a great idea to transition the fund for use on trails due to the significant storm damage sustained this summer. Cindy also shared with Jane there were two original clubs had applied and their applications had not been approved yet.

b. Update on Flood Damage, Matt & Ken

Discussion on statewide storm damage areas.

121 projects have been submitted and it's about 1.5 million in requests from 31 clubs that had submitted those 120 and that's just the storm that doesn't include the regular grant requests.

Approximately \$600k in damages reported so far.

Discussion on FEMA guidelines for assistance – if a trail is connected to residential access it may qualify for FEMA assistance.

c. Club Reviews – Pick 4 clubs, Cindy

Two of the three officers with the Green Mtn Trail Blazers have accepted the certified letter with a confirmation sent to VAST. Working on a plan and letter to send to the members and landowners regarding the update on the club. There has been interest expressed by individuals in the area to create a new club.

Four clubs were selected for a club review live during the meeting via a randomizer app:

- Billtown Moonshiners
- Pittsford Snomads
- Alburg SnoSpringers
- Highledge Snow Stormers

The clubs above will be notified via letter from VAST that they have been selected for a club review. The BOD directors will be CC'ed on the letters.

d. *Policy Change, Policy Committee

Chittenden County: Motion to approved to table item d on the agenda, Lamoille County seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

e. Equipment Loans Update, Cindy and Matt

There have been quite a few equipment grant applications received with more anticipated by the August 31st deadline.

Discussion on 2 Windsor County clubs, Barnard Mountain Viewers and Bridgewater Sno Zippers who've submitted equipment loan applications.

Barnard Mountain Viewers is looking to purchase a 2021 Prinoth Husky with a \$228k purchase price. The club is receiving \$50k trade for their tucker, \$39,750 loan from Windsor County, \$60k VAST grant, \$53,250 paid from their club funds, with a balance of \$25k through a 5-year loan with Northfield Savings Bank.

Discussion of prior VAST history with co-signing on club loans. VAST to be a co-signer with the bank, not the county. The county loan agreement is between the club and county.

Discussion that the VAST guarantee is to the Northfield Savings Bank, and not directly to the club.

Discussion on all prior co-signed loans have been paid successfully, with East Montpelier Gully Jumpers and Tri Town Travelers estimated to fulfil their loan by next year.

Discussion on the club's responsibility with having 2 loans.

Bridgewater Sno Zippers is looking to purchase a 2019 Polaris Wide Track 500 Grooming Snowmobile with a \$9k purchase price. They are anticipating a \$500 trade for their old snowmobile, a 2001 Polaris as a parts machine (the snowmobile isn't sold yet). The club is to receive a \$5200 VAST grant, and is looking for a \$3800 loan from Northfield Savings Bank for 5 years. The anticipated \$500 trade towards payment of the new 2019 snowmobile.

Discussion that the Bridgewater Sno Zippers is a small club that's why they're asking for a 5-year loan.

Washington County: Motion to guarantee the loan to the Barnard Mountain Viewers, and allow for Cindy Locke to sign on behalf of the VAST BOD on the required Northfield Savings Bank documents. Rutland County seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Grand Isle County: Motion to guarantee the loan to the Bridgewater Sno Zippers, and allow for Cindy Locke to sign on behalf of the VAST BOD on the required Northfield Savings Bank documents. Lamoille County seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

f. LVRT Update, Mike O'Hara

Recently attended the memorial for Ted Chase who was a major contributor with the LVRT.

Discussion on having a memorial for Ted Chase along the LVRT for his 15+ years of service with the LVRT by Joe's Pond. Mike is requesting VAST to consider a donation.

Trail Administrator's/ED Report/LVRT Repot – Cindy, Matt and Ken

Discussion on updates with leasing GPS units for the groomers to be installed on the roof of the groomers.

Clubs will be issued the GPS unit and the required lithium batteries. The units record data every 3 minutes during usage. The GPS units will have an automatic shut off feature and wouldn't require clubs to manually turn off the GPS units after grooming.

Discussion on no new printed maps for the 2024 season due to uncertainties on trail conditions and accuracy. There are currently 1k printed maps at the VAST office which will include a sticker notifying for the most up to date trails conditions to visit the interactive map at www.vtvast.org/trails

Committee and Other Meeting Reports

American Outdoor Risk Retention Group (AORRG) Insurance – Cindy

Recently had an audit, all came out well.

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

Northeast Chapter: Nothing new to report.

USA: Partnering with federal highway to allows waivers on the buy American program.

VT Snow Trails Conservancy (VSTC) – Jim Hill, VSTC President
Nothing new to report.

Law Enforcement (LE) Committee – Cindy
LE Orientation is scheduled for the first weekend in October, more information to come.

Awards & Nominating – Patty Companik, Chair
Working on the final steps for Annual Meeting. Little different setup this year with the award envelopes that include medals. These were previously at the registration table, this year they by the county signs. County directors asked to distribute medals to the individuals within their county.

By-Laws & Policy – Mark Reaves, Chair
Nothing new to report.

Annual Meeting – Jeff Halpin
Getting closer to Annual Meeting, all is looking well.

Executive Committee, Jeff Fay
Nothing new to report.

Financial – Patty Companik, Chair
Nothing new to report.

Long Range Planning & Organizational, Mark Reaves
Nothing new to report.

Personnel – Juliann Sherman, Chair
Nothing new to report.

Trails – Brian Currier, Chair
Nothing new to report.

Safety – Stan Choiniere
No meeting held in August.
Safety videos are currently on pause due to cost with a refocus on restoring trails.
Stan working at the Big E coming up soon to represent VAST.

Governor's Council – Pat Poulin
Next meeting held on Wednesday, September 6.

Motion to adjourn by Addison County: Motion to approve, Chittenden County seconded to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Hill, Secretary