

## VAST Board of Directors May 23, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Approved at the June 27, 2016 meeting

### OFFICERS PRESENT:

President: Tim Mills  
Vice President: Jeff Fay  
Treasurer: Tom Baltrus  
Secretary: Jim Hill

### DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Addison: Lewis Barnes  
Bennington: Vacant  
Caledonia: Ken Gammell  
Chittenden: Pat Poulin  
Essex: Dave Page  
Franklin: Mike Burns  
Grand Isle: Dave Ladd  
Lamoille: Carmin Lemery  
Orange: Absent  
Orleans: Roger Gosselin  
Rutland: Merritt Budd  
Washington: Mark Reaves  
Windham: Roone Gibbs  
Windsor: Dick Jewett

### ALTERNATE DIRECTORS PRESENT:

### STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director: Cindy Locke  
Trails Administrator: Matt Tetreault  
Trails Manager: Shane Prisby  
Office Coordinator: Cyndy Carrier Jones

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Ross Page, Perry Armstrong, Ed Hebebrand, Ellis O’Hear

Meeting Called to Order: 6:00 PM

Recognition of Visitors

Approval of Agenda: **Dave Page moved to approve, Pat Poulin seconded, so moved.**

Secretary's Report: **Dick Jewett moved to approve, Roone Gibbs seconded, so moved.**

Treasurer's Report: Tom Baltrus gave an overview of financials for the period ended April 30, 2016.

**Dave Page moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report; Pat Poulin seconded, so moved.**

Consent Calendar:

Old Business – Trails Policy

- Matt Tetreault - Noted that he gave details in his report. He then explained the major change, which is on page 18 and 19 with the grooming cap. The Trails Subcommittee decided to agree to pay a onetime for grooming beyond the contract, as long as the contract had been reached and the miles had been met. And, it will only be paid if there is money left in the grooming budget for it.
- Mike Burns – One time, what does that mean?
- Matt Tetreault – One time per week.
- Mike Burns – So, it could be 16 weeks?
- Matt Tetreault – Yes. He gave an example from the trails policy.
- Jeff Fay – The only other thing that we detailed out was the tracks, and grousers on the repairs grants for older equipment.
- Matt Tetreault – Reference page 13 describes the capital repairs program. Only power units of a minimum of 10 years old may be eligible for a capital repairs program grant for expenses incurred due to normal wear and tear of track, cleats and grousers as priority and funding allow, and at the discretion of the Trails Administrator. All other capital repairs for existing owned equipment, the policy shall apply. This was to help clubs that may receive a lower subsidy and had older equipment to help keep it running and on the trails.
- Sprockets and wheels?
- Matt Tetreault – It does not include are: glass, lube, filters, body paint and body work or add on accessories and equipment, or repairs that are considered annual routine maintenance. If a club does not take care of their machine, the chances are less of them getting funding. Clubs need to maintain and take care of the machine, i.e., keep it out of the sun, etc.
- Mike Burns – Page 19 – regarding the grooming, what happens if we don't make it; where does that money go if we don't use it. I think it should go to the grooming contingency, but it doesn't state that here.
- Matt Tetreault – Typically if we have a low snow year and we are not grooming; we have low membership, so the revenue may or may not be there. If it were and we did not spend it, I guess it would be up to this Board and the Fiscal Committee to decide what to do with that additional revenue; would it go to the capital account or what do they want to do with it.
- Jeff Fay – That falls under the policy changes which we will address later.
- Jim Hill – Just to make it clear, we have a contingency fund that is only to be used if we exceed the line item for grooming all together. For example, we if we have \$1.4 million in grooming and grooming throughout the state exceeds that, that is what the contingency fund is for; it's not for additional grooming. It's only to cover contracted grooming if we exceed the line item.
- Matt Tetreault – If every club had hit their contract this year, it would be \$2.2 million and we had \$1.8 million budgeted, so the difference between \$2.2 and \$1.8, every club grooms their number of weeks at their cap; that is what the contingency fund can be used for and that is all it can be used for.
- Ross Page – You said you changed it the subsidy down to 40%.
- Matt Tetreault – Yes, but it depends on your weeks. If have 0 – 7.9 contract weeks, you get 30%, if you have 8 – 11.9, you get 35%, 12 – 15, you get 40% of your contract.  
Cindy Locke – If we do have a good year and we have leftover money, we didn't want it in policy because things could change. We wanted to leave it open ended, knowing that the money would go to trails, but the board should make that decision on where it should go, rather than having policy state it.
- Mike Burns – My perception was redirecting the monies and the next year having the potential to groom, but said we couldn't groom because we didn't having grooming funds. But last year, we had reserves there but we spent it on something else.

- Cindy Locke – The emergency funds that we have right now is a general fund for emergencies, which will include grooming. It can be for a bridge repair, but it can also include grooming; we've expanded the definition that is all.
- Tim Mills – We are trying to set up funds to be available.
- Dave Page – Realistically, it isn't just about grooming, because if you don't have the money to do construction on the trail, you don't have anything to groom.
- Jeff Fay – In the Bylaws changes, the Contingency Fund, we set the rate at \$500,000 and it goes to trails/equipment grant in aid programs. If there is money left beyond the grooming, that money can be used for equipment for trails. We are trying not to lock it into just grooming, but we are trying to make grooming the priority for the Contingency Fund, but also trying to open it up to equipment / trails grants as well. The key is that we are trying to start the Rainy Day Fund / Brown Winter Fund.
- Lewis Barnes - We changed guaranteed on the contract, for when there is no snow. It used to be 50%, now it is only 30%.

Roone Gibbs moved to approve the Trails Policy as presented, Carmin Lemery seconded, so moved.

### 2017Budget Forecast

- Tom Baltrus – There are two budgets in front of you. One is with a \$5.00 increase for the Regular Season TMAs only; and then another budget that does not include any increase. We need to discuss the pros and cons of the \$5.00 increase. The \$5.00 increase was not to specifically fund any element of the budget; it was proposed to add additional separation between the cost of the Regular Season TMA and the Early Bird, with the intention of increasing the activity in the Early Bird. Unlike the \$20.00 increase we did previously, which was specifically earmarked for increasing the mileage reimbursement to the clubs, general and trail funds. This time we have no specific item that we want to fund, other than to maybe create some increased revenue in the reserve accounts.
- Pat Poulin – I am hearing a lot from the members that didn't buy Early Birds this year; they waited, so those people are not going to buy early this year either; they are going to wait. Hopefully we will get the snow and I will encourage them to wait.
- Tom Baltrus – This is one of those things where you don't know what the impact is going to be. If they wait, it will be good for us. But if they wait and they don't buy anything, then it's not good for us.
- Dave Page – I would say the \$5.00 increase is good for us either way, because it will force some to buy the early birds and the ones that don't buy the early birds, will pay the extra \$5.00. And, they can't say we are giving them an increase after a bad year, because they are making the choice whether they get the increase or not, because we are giving them a very easy avenue to have no increase?
- Tom Baltrus – My only thinking is that, is this the right year to do this, because of the bad season.

Dave Page – We used that argument last year because we just asked for a \$20.00 increase. If anyone went to the annual meeting where we asked for an increase in the past, the membership very clearly told us that they didn't want to see another large increase, they wanted small increases. If we don't do small increases, we are going to find ourselves having to do another large increase and the membership is not going to be happy.

- Tim Mills – Let's wait and have this conversation for after annual meeting when we set the TMA price.
- Tom Baltrus – But we need to know which budget to present to the membership.
- Cindy Locke – What people don't realize, or did not care about, is there was an increase in regular season last year because we changed the way that we sold the TMAs; there was an increase in regular season that wasn't there before.
- Jim Hill – The \$5.00 doesn't reflect on any of the expenses or any of the rest of the budget, it's basically free money. I suggest we go ahead and present it with the \$5.00 increase; if they kick it out it doesn't really affect the bottom line of the budget; and it gives a little bigger difference between the regular and early bird.
- Dave Page – From my perspective, the \$5.00, if we get it, should go to the reserve fund.
- Cindy Locke – Yes, that is the way it is set up now.
- Cindy Locke – without the increase we end at \$74,000 in the black and with it \$121,000 in the black.
- Mark Reaves – Okay, so having said that, I agree with the \$5.00 increase as presented and let people sort it out. We are clearly giving them a choice not to have an increase.
- Jeff Fay – So, do we present it as a \$5.00 increase or do we just present it as a bottom number on the budget?
- Mark Reaves – We present it as a bottom number on the budget; we don't set the TMA price until after the meeting. When they ask the question, we have an answer for them.
- Ken Gammel – Every year we know for a fact we have 10,000 people that wait until the absolute last minute to buy their TMA. They are not going to buy until they see snow. Let's go with the \$5.00 increase and hopefully it works out.
- Mark Reaves – I would like to see the early bird cut off for December 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Tom Baltrus – We need to get this to a vote by no later than next month's meeting.
- Cindy Locke – This budget has not changed since the one you reviewed last month.

Dick Jewett made a motion to accept the budget as proposed, with the \$5.00 increase on the regular season TMA; Dave page seconded, so moved.

- Jeff Fay – Can we not word the motion that it is not a \$5.00 increase; as presented?
- Dick Jewett – No, you are going to let them know that it is there and they have a choice to accept it or not.
- Mark Reaves – It is not a \$5.00 increase until we set the TMA price after the budget is approved.
- Dick Jewett – Well, how are you going to explain it at the meeting?
- Mike Burns – The \$5.00 increase comes with significant reductions in trail maintenance funds, capital, etc.; so to me it's not a good combination. We are cutting trail maintenance from \$220,000 to \$190,000.
- Cindy Locke – Basically, that is the reason that the Trails Committee recommended changes on a brown winter and reducing some of the costs and that is why it's reflected in the budget and that is why the trails committee did their work on the Trails Policy. In a brown winter with the old trail's spending, it left an almost half a million dollar gap for VAST.

Lewis Barnes – That’s what happens when the membership doesn’t support VAST, and you go from 24,000 to 16,000.

- Dave Page – We have asked the clubs to take a hit and I don’t have a problem with the membership taking the same hit with the rest of us; we are all in this together and we are all suffering. If we don’t get this organization so it’s truly financially stable, we won’t be here to argue about it anyway. There isn’t really big decreases in trail maintenance; \$10,000.
- Jeff Fay – For the most part, these numbers are not cast in stone; we can overspend, underspend if we have the money. A budget is a guideline.
- Mike Burns – But, when Matt is going through his trail maintenance requests, he will allocate money to those projects based on these numbers. So he may not allocate 100% of that project, he will cut it back; that is where my concern is.
- Jeff Fay – If we also have funds available that are free money, as we are looking at the \$5.00 increase, there is nothing to say that Matt can’t issue an additional check to us to cover some additional expenses on a contract.
- Tom Baltrus – One of the things that we started last year, we are funding accounts for the unexpected, the unknown; disaster relief, plus if the budget works the right way, we will have an additional surplus that we can allocate into those accounts. We are trying to account for things that might happen, capital building, replacement of vehicles, so that something doesn’t come along and have to take from grooming, etc. We are building in some kind of insurance for these shortfalls.
- Tim Mills – I would entertain a motion for the adjusted budget for the standard budget, that way you are not choosing whether it is for \$5.00 or not. Change the wording of the motion; base it on the bottom line.
- Mike Burns – So, when we vote on this, what happens next?
- Tim – This will be the budget that will be presented at the annual meeting, and then it is voted on by the membership.
- Jim Hill – But, membership does not vote on the TMA prices, they vote on the income / expense side of it; the total budget.
- Jeff Fay – What you are approving on your motion right now, is to present this budget at annual meeting to the membership. And the membership will either approve, not approve or amend it. And based on what they tell us to do, we will meet after the annual meeting and set the TMA prices.

Mark Reaves – I would make a motion to approve the budget with a projected \$121,201.11 surplus; Dave Page seconded; so moved.

Mike Burns – Nay

- Tom Baltrus – Format wise, we will include some reference to last year’s budget and actions.
- Lewis Barnes – I just want to say that I have explained to a lot of people lately, with the TMAs, even if they didn’t buy one, that we still have the same budget and a lot of it goes to grooming; that we guarantee the clubs at least 50% of their money because that is the way the banks give them loans for their groomers. A lot of people don’t realize that; keep sending that message out. Our expenses are still the same.

New Business – Vintage TMAs

- Perry Armstrong – I have a lot of friends that collect vintage sleds and we are all thinking that you can’t really ride them that much because you have to buy an Antique TMA. You buy it

once at \$100, but you are limited to what you can do with it. I think VAST is missing an opportunity. I happen to own 25 vintage sleds; and I won't ride them like I ride my new sled. I think there are a lot of people out there that would, if we could come up with a solution and offer them a reduced TMA, and sell them annually instead of a one-time TMA; I think you would see some revenue increases from that. If you are looking for a volunteer to research this, I'd be happy to sit on the committee. This is a growing hobby and I've attended a lot of vintage swap meets recently. The situation has changed since the antique TMA was originally introduced and I think it needs to get looked at again. If you register it for \$25.00 you can ride it anywhere.

- Roger Gosselin – I would like to thank you for bringing this up, because I just recently bought a vintage sled. I purchased a regular registration and bought a regular TMA. I don't mind spending money for snowmobiling, but if I could save \$50.00.
- Perry Armstrong – Well, you might do it for one vintage sled, but if you have more than one, it gets expensive. Also, some of these people are landowners and they would like to show their vintage sleds off more, so if they could get a deal on them, I think they would buy more TMAs.
- Ken Gammell – What are you thinking of pricing, etc. What would you like to see?
- Perry Armstrong – there are a lot of ideas about it; maybe \$50.00, or having a dealer plate for \$150.00 that I can use on 5 sleds that are registered. I don't know the history of this. I think the same policy has been in place for a long time and it hasn't changed. Personally, I'd like to see \$125.00 or have a fee that is tiered up, so if you have two, you would pay \$50.00, 3 you would pay \$60.00. Also, people that have these don't want to put a sticker on them. We are talking about vintage sleds; these type of sleds are not going to ride 5,000 miles a season.
- Jim Hill – I always thought that we could have a dealer type TMA / plate, but I'm not going to register them all. The antique category doesn't allow for general use.
- Cindy Locke – If it's law or statute, it's not going to be able to be changed until the next session.
- Jeff Fay – It wouldn't have to be an antique TMA; it could be called a vintage TMA. As a vintage collector, I didn't know if you could do a blanket insurance policy that covers all of them.
- Cindy Locke – Let's form a committee and talk about this rather than trying to make a decision now. It needs to be talked about.
- Dick Jewett – I have 4 sleds that I register and insurance for all 4 is \$75.00.
- Perry Armstrong – I'm also trying to underwrite a vintage swap meet on Sept. 10, so I'm trying to get the local club, the White River Valley Chamber is underwriting with me. I may be looking for club addresses, etc. from VAST.

## By Laws

Copies are in front of you to review. Jeff started to review the changes, but then realized that the copies given out were not the correct ones. This will be reviewed at next month's meeting.

## New Business

- Dave Page - Brighton Loan Payment - basically what this is all about is that the payment that we are making, which is the overrun that run to a 10 year payment, there is about 2 years left on it and we have always made the payment around April 15<sup>th</sup> or the end of April when we got the last grooming payment. However, somehow in the bookwork it shows that it is January 1<sup>st</sup>. From what I understand, somebody had some concerns that we weren't going to make the payment, so I am requesting that the payment date be changed to April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Cindy Locke – It wasn't a concern of ours, it was a conversation that the Board had when the other date from the other club was moved a year or two ago. Dave just wants to be brought to the same time as the other club and it is up to the Board because you made a decision on the other club.
- Tim – As I recall, the payment was intended to be at the end of the season after all grooming was done.
- Dave Page – The problem is, it's my understanding that Norton's payment is in the same situation.  
There is no real paperwork that follows these demands for paperwork that the clubs have agreed to.  
We were told that we had to pay it; Alexis and Ann agreed that we shouldn't have to pay it, but when Ann left, it came back into being. The only reason Brighton is paying it is because Bryant called up the president and the president didn't want any confrontation, so he agreed to pay it. Since then, several times, he has said that we shouldn't be paying it, and you shouldn't have agreed to it, but since you agreed to it, we will pay for it. If you look at the payments, you will see that they come in at the end of April, except for the years October 1<sup>st</sup> was written in when Kathy passed away, because there was no real record of it, because October is when the whole thing originated.

**Mark Reaves – I make a motion to move the Brighton loan payment to be due on April 30<sup>th</sup>, Roger Gosselin seconded, so moved.**

## Legislative

Cindy Locke - H.308 passed; the session is over. The language in the Transportation bill regarding funding for the LVRT passed. VTrans will be matching us up to \$400,000 fundraising this year and up to \$1 million next year.

Tim Mills -The law that you discussed previously about Act 250, that didn't make it?

Cindy Locke - No, it didn't make it into the bill this year. Senator Mazza felt that it was being rushed and there was no time for testimony. It's going to bring up a lot of discussion. This language went in right to the very end of the session. We are lining people up for testimony next year and getting things organized to get us out of Act 250.

## On Line TMAs

- Cindy Locke – The On Line TMA Committee has met and there are 3 different scenarios in front of you. She reviewed the flow chart and what TMAs are being offered online, payment, etc. The customer will get a confirmation page that they can print out; it will put an expiration date on it, so they can have something to carry with them until they get their decal. VAST will have 10 days to send their TMA decal out to them. They will also get a confirmation email which they can download to their phone. The 3 Day TMAs will not be mailed a decal, because it is only for 3 days. There will be a link to the

DMV to renew their registration. New registrations cannot be done online; they must go to an agent or to a DMV office.

- The committee has agreed that there is a \$35.00 fee, a convenience fee, on top of a regular season or early bird TMA. \$5.00 goes to VAST and \$30 goes to the club. For the 3 day, it is \$20.00 and all of that goes to the club.
- She then described what happens at VAST after the order has been placed on line. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday a report will be printed from the database from the website on all new sales of TMAs. Each club will get a copy of the contact information for each person that purchased a TMA for their club. All payments will be made through a credit card. Every two weeks, clubs will be paid, with a detailed report for the payment.
- Clubs have to fill in all their own page / information for the on line website. Clubs will opt in or not to do the on line TMAs. They can also do manual TMAs.
- Roger Gosselin – I don't know where I stand as far as not letting people switch clubs, there is no price shopping. I don't know if it's the appropriate thing to do.
- Clubs/Dealers can have a laptop available for people to do them online.
- Mark Reaves – Is there going to be a way for the club to enter their memberships that they sell by hand into the database? Most of the membership people have an excel sheet to enter that information. That way VAST doesn't have to enter it.
- Cindy Locke – We talked about that; but it's hard to read someone's writing and there is more margin for mistakes if more than one person is entering the information.
- Mark Reaves – I feel strongly there should be and Cindy Locke agreed.

Dick Jewett – I think this is really a good start and the most positive thing that might work. I'd like to make a motion that we approve this online TMA program as presented; Mark Reaves seconded, so moved.

- Merritt Budd – I think the other thing is it will save on the cost of TMA forms that we throw away every year. It would be great if we could not print a year on it?
- Roger Gosselin – Is there going to be any redesign of the paper form, i.e., contributions for this year?
- Cindy Locke – Yes, those boxes and others will be added to the form, LVRT, Snow Trails.
- Jeff Fay – Talking with the On-line TMA Committee, they are hoping to have this up and running by the end of October.

#### Recurring Events/ Charitable Contributions

Cindy Locke – Beth is trying to put together some information for the magazine because there are a lot of clubs out there that give to the same charities or hold recurring events. A form has been passed out; please get information to Beth soon if you can.

#### Snow Bike Posters

Cindy Locke - We have printed them up; we are not saying that Snow Bikes are not allowed in Vermont, but letting them know what the laws are. These will be going out to shops/dealers/clubs.

Mark Reaves – Could you send it to the clubs that do safety classes, because we do a lot of people in the 20 to 30 age range. Also the County Sheriff's offices? Snowmobile Instructors?

Executive Director / Trails Administrator / LVRT – Reports are attached.

- Carmin Lemery – My thanks to Shane Prisby for all the work with the LVRT and Bridge 68.
- Ken Gammell – Seven Days magazine did a great story on the LVRT, bike riding, etc. Cindy's name was mentioned many times.
- Jeff Fay – Clubs are being contacted to get the junction signs appearance to be better.
- Ross Page – What is the status on the Cambridge bridge?
- Shane Prisby – The state has wrapped up the project last week, they pulled out half of the bridge and they armored the center pier and then they pull out the failing pier. Right now we are working on putting together our project and put it back together this summer.

### Committee Reports

Cindy Locke - The LVRT Committee has been very active and we've been talking about fundraising; have a great resume from someone that we will be talking to in about a week. The ribbon cutting is June 23<sup>rd</sup> – St. J to Cambridge. Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> was the dedication of the Memorial Plaque for the 3 men that were killed by a train in Cambridge in 1949. We had 67 family members of those 3 men; flowers were brought, a guest book, Stowe Reporter was there. Amy Noyes from NPR wants to do a story on the LVRT and the fundraising – lots going on.

### Awards & Nominations

Dave Ladd – We had selected the award recipients for the Annual Meeting. Dick Bigwood was chosen to receive the Founders Award. Because of his declining health, we made an exception and gave it to him at the Chester Snowmobile Club meeting. Cindy Locke, Jeff Fay and myself and my wife attended; and with the assistance of Dick Jewett we presented the award to Dick Bigwood. We also had a Trail blazers award which was presented to Dick Jewett.

### Annual Meeting

Merritt Budd – Everything is going well – the organizer runs a tight ship.

### Financial

Tom Baltrus – Thanks for all the work from the Financial Committee. One of our other responsibilities is building and grounds. We are going to embark on some of the items that we have on the building inspection list and start doing some of the needed maintenance; we'll report next month.

### Long Range Planning

Mark Reaves – Now that the budget has passed, we will get our long range plan updated for the annual meeting.

### PR & Marketing

Carmin Lemery – We are working on pulling the Military Ride back together, probably in February.

### Safety and Youth

Carmin Lemery – we are working on the E-911 emergency listing.

## Governor's Council Meeting

Dick Jewett – We have to vote on our budget next month. There has been a change in the format.

Matt Tetreault – We tried to change the format on the budget so it will be more understandable. Currently, revenue that comes in is earmarked for law enforcement by statute, but in a year like this where \$5.00 of every registration goes to law enforcement, our budget looks better than it really is. It show us in the red only a little bit, but we are actually in the red quite a bit, because there is almost \$100,000 in revenue that has to be used for law enforcement, so it offsets other losses in the budget, but it has to be used for law enforcement, so we can't use it to offset other expenses.

Next BOD meeting is June 27, 2017.

BBQ will be scheduled for the July meeting.

Motion to adjourn at 7:45 PM.

**It is our goal to provide a statewide snowmobile trails system second to none and to provide a quality snowmobiling experience to our members.**