

VAST Board of Directors – April 27, 2020 – Meeting Minutes

Approved at the May 26, 2020 Meeting

OFFICERS PRESENT:

President: Tim Mills
Vice President: Jeff Fay
Treasurer: Sonia Koehler
Secretary: Jim Hill

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Addison: Absent
Bennington: Vacant
Caledonia: Ken Gammell
Chittenden: Pat Poulin
Essex: Mike Daley
Franklin: Mike Burns
Grand Isle: Dave Ladd
Lamoille: Absent
Orange: Absent
Orleans: Roger Gosselin
Rutland: Curt Marechaux
Washington: Mark Reaves
Windham: Drew Fraser
Windsor: Dick Jewett

ALTERNATE DIRECTORS PRESENT: Milo Day, Lamoille County; Doug Jacobs, Windsor County; Ivor Stevens, Windham County, Jason Luneau, Lamoille County.

STAFF PRESENT:

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

GUESTS PRESENT: Patty Companik, Raymond Rodrigue, Orleans Snow Stormers; Ed Hebebrand, St. Johnsbury Sno Blazers; Larry Dwyer, Lyndon Sno Cruisers; James Sugden, Country Riders; Darren Pion, Hazen's Notch; Francis Pillsbury, Lyndon Sno Cruisers; Ron Merrill, Country Riders; Brandon Phillips, Derby Drift Dusters/Country Riders; and Darren Peon of Hazen's Notch.

Meeting called to order at 6:02 PM.

Recognition of Visitors:

Approval of Agenda: Curt Marechaux moved to approve as amended, Mike Daley seconded; motion carried.

Cindy Locke – I'd like to make a couple of changes to the Agenda – 1. Add F. under Old Business – Long Range Planning Committee work; 2. Reduce #9 to 10 minutes.

Secretary's Report: Mark Reaves moved to approve; Curt Marechaux seconded, motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: A brief overview was presented to the Board.

Pat Poulin moved to approve; Curt Marechaux seconded, motion carried.

Old Business

LVRT Status

- Cindy Locke – Ken and I had a meeting with Joel Perrigo from VTrans last week.
- For funding, we are not sure right now, but the LVRT is still a priority for the Governor.
- At this time, everything they are doing has to do with COVID-19.
- The Legislature will break at the end of May and resume in August.
- Ken Brown – Regardless of the funding situation, we can still move ahead with the project that connects Swanton to Highgate.
- VTrans is trying to move ahead and get some construction done this year, projects will go out to bid in May.
- Similar timeline project in Hardwick; waiting for historical approval and then out to bid – 1 mile and bridge ?
- Blow and Cote will be working on redecking two bridges and one culvert they have to dig out and repair.

Caledonia County Snow Trails Club (CCSTC) Repayment

- Cindy Locke – This item was brought up last Fall, but it needs to be revisited.
- CCSTC had to repay us for lost TMAs in the amount of \$5,106.00.
- They didn't pay us that amount, because they found some of the TMAs. They paid \$1,545.00 for the ones still missing.
- We are still having issues with this club; we are missing 55 EBs from them; we have not received any regular season TMAs, nor any grooming sheets.
- I am thinking we need to rescind the motion to repay the club the \$5,106.00 dollars.
- We are working on resolving the issues with this club.

Mark Reaves moved to rescind the motion to reimburse the CCSTC for lost TMAs; Pat Poulin seconded; motion carried.

Pat Poulin moved to table any further action on the lost TMAs until more information is supplied. Mark Reaves seconded; motion carried.

Donation of stock to the LVRT

- Cindy Locke – We need to have a new motion because the minutes from the January meeting were lost.
- \$44,335 worth of stock donated to LVRT.
- In January we discussed whether to keep the stock invested and pay the LVRT the worth amount, or cash the stock in and give the money to the LVRT. At that time the vote was to keep the stock and reimburse the LVRT with quarterly reports to the finance committee and BOD.
- The value of the stock now is \$39,260, because of the drop in the market due to COVID-19.
- Cindy Locke read the wording for the proposed motion. "The Board will take the stock donated to the LVRT in the original value of \$44,435 and keep it as an investment for VAST. VAST will provide quarterly reports. VAST would then pay the LVRT because the donation was made for the LVRT.
- The stock is an energy company; good company.

Curt Marechaux made a motion to keep the LVRT donation invested in stocks for VAST and VAST will pay back the donation to the LVRT and the Board will receive a quarterly report on the investment. Dick Jewett seconded; motion carried.

Annual Meeting

- Cindy Locke – I am still looking for a location to hold the Annual Meeting. At this point High Schools are not interested in letting us hold it at their facility. I reached out to Rutland Fairgrounds to see if they might be interested. We need to reserve something.

Construction Seminar

- Cindy Locke – Obviously we will not have a Construction Seminar this spring.
- We are working on maybe some videos, on line course; something in the summer?
- We do need to hold something, for continued training and for our insurance company.

Long Range Planning Committee

- Cindy Locke – Shared her screen and read aloud a write up regarding long range planning.
- COVID-19 has hurt the clubs – no fundraisers being held.
- There are signing issues, road crossings, considering a sign trade in program; taller stakes for signs (buy in bulk and distribute) to the clubs.
- Went into detail regarding finances, reserves, emergency funding.
- Need to help the businesses that advertise in the magazine; possibly give free advertising to them for the summer issue.
- Equipment moratorium – multiple reasons – how much revenue for the future
- No fundraisers for clubs – so how will they afford new equipment?
- Clubs won't be able to rely on businesses for donations, etc., until the businesses get back on their feet.
- We have time before our next season starts to plan.
- Curt Marechaux – Amount from each TMA to the Scholarship Fund? – 10 cents per TMA. Annuity - \$200,000 We spend \$3,000/year on two scholarships of \$1,500 each, but voted to do three moving forward.
- The \$5.00 increase in TMAs went directly to trails.

Lawsuit Repercussions

- Cindy Locke – We have a lot to talk about with this issue. Our insurance settled because of a stop sign down and the claimer said he could not read and therefore did not understand what he was signing on the TMA waiver/membership application.
- Ice crossings, we need to revisit this issue
- Safety Ambassador program is good for us
- Signing
- Groomer training (Maine has a good video on this). Recap for standards.

ED / Trails / LVRT

- Cindy Locke – Long Range Planning – We are discussing a possible moratorium on equipment grants.
- We talked about a moratorium for this coming season. Right now we have two clubs that already have their groomers up for sale and they don't know that they will get a grant for a new one.

- Selling equipment that has low hours, etc. and it could last longer.
- Matt Tetreault – Some of the clubs treat their groomer like a car, so they trade it in too soon.
- If equipment is maintained properly, then it should last a long time.
- Clubs applied last year and didn't get it, so they applied again this year, when in fact they put a lot of money into the groomer last year. Why wouldn't you hold onto it?
- Cindy Locke – We don't know what's going to happen in the future. If the clubs can't do fundraisers, how are they going to make payments on the new equipment. We may have to help clubs make payments on existing equipment.
- Possibly revamp our Equipment Grant-In-Aid program.
- Curt Marechaux – Provide money for them to make capital repairs so that their equipment is in good shape for the upcoming season.
- VAST will write a letter/email to all the clubs regarding a possible moratorium.

Committees

NE Chapter – Pat Poulin – pushed back deadline date to April 30th for the Scholarships.

Snow Trails Conservancy – Jim Hill – Looking at a possible property donation in the Cambridge area.

Multi-Use – There will be a meeting in May, going over all the reports from this season.

Awards & Nominating – Patty Companik – Scholarship winner have been picked.

Camaraderie – This is a new award we have created.

Personnel – We do need to work on the E.D.'s review – going back to format we used a few years ago/numerical.

Trails – Meeting May 18th (via Zoom) – sign program, idea for reorganization, making it four smaller committees. Possibly do it by region. Idea is to possibly get clubs more involved directly.

Governor's Council – Pat Poulin – This was cancelled last month and will meet via zoom in May.

Pat Poulin moved to adjourn; Mark Reaves seconded; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32