

VAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES
Monday, July 27, 2020

OFFICERS PRESENT:

President, Tim Mills
Vice President, Jeff Fay
Secretary, Jim Hill

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Caledonia: Ken Gammell
Chittenden: Pat Poulin
Essex: Mike Daley
Franklin: Mike Burns
Grand Isle: Dave Ladd
Lamoille: Ellis O'Hare
Orange: Juliann Sherman
Orleans: Roger Gosselin
Rutland: Curt Marechaux
Washington: Mark Reaves
Windham: Drew Fraser
Windsor: Dick Jewett

ALTERNATE DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Bennington: Billy Burns
Windham: Ivor Stevens
Windsor: Doug Jacobs
Orleans: Milo Day

STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director: Cindy Locke
Trails Administrator: Matthew Tetreault
Trails Manager: Ken Brown
Media Manager: Beth Flint
Office Manager: Cindy Carrier Brown
VAST/LVRT Associate: Peggy Whiteneck

GUESTS:

Patty Companik, Chair, Awards and Nominating Committee
Carmin Lemery, President, Lamoille County
Bobbi Rooney, Sterling Snow Riders
Stan Choiniere, Windsor County
Mary Beth Daniels, Woodford Sno-Busters
Ed Hebebrand

President Tim Mills called the remote attendance Zoom meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION:

Pat Poulin moved the agenda be accepted as circulated, Mike Daley seconding. ***Motion carried.***

Secretary's Report

MOTION:

Pat Poulin moved and Dave Ladd seconded approval of the minutes of the June 22, 2002 Board minutes as circulated. ***Motion carried.***

Treasurer's Report

In Sonia Koehler's absence, Cindy Locke reviewed the FY 20-21 VAST Operating Budget as circulated in the Board packets.

MOTION:

Dave Ladd moved and Mark Reaves seconded approval of the budget as submitted. ***Motion carried.***

Tabled Items

MOTION:

Pat Poulin moved and Mark Reaves seconded the un-tabling of discussion on Caledonia County's outstanding TMAs. ***Motion carried.***

Cindy Locke reported that a packet from this club was received in today's mail, including reconciled early bird TMAs. Still outstanding are 41 regular season and 17 3-day TMAs, totaling \$7,170. Sheila Fenoff-Willett will follow up with the club with a new invoice for the TMAs still outstanding.

MOTION:

Mark Reaves moved and Mike Burns seconded that this item be re-tabled for further discussion at the next Board meeting. ***Motion carried.***

Old Business

LVRT Status Update

Cindy Locke noted that the governor may do a ceremonial bill signing on the legislation to transition responsibility for constructing the trail over to the state, but he has understandably been busy with other matters during the Covid pandemic. Ken Brown reported that the state is keen to finish this project while federal match money is still available over the next two years, and the state already has bids out on the Swanton to Highgate section. Meanwhile, work is progressing on the Hardwick project.

Resource Committee

Cindy Locke reported that the committee is seriously committed to getting input from the counties. The committee's second meeting is scheduled, and it is still in the research and information gathering stage on groomer issues and other related trail management. It plans to schedule meetings with each of the counties about their concerns and challenges. Roger Gosselin said that, as an important logistical point, he would like to see the committee make its recommendation on grooming prior to the upcoming season, whatever else in their work they might defer until later, and there was a consensus among the Board that grooming recommendations prior to the season would be desirable.

ACTION TAKEN:

Cindy Locke will send out a draft trails policy to the Board in their next month's BOD packet. A consensus vote was taken to put this on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

New Business

Change from Cash to Accrual for Accounting

Cindy explained that our accounting system needs to change from a cash to an accrual basis in response to recommendations from the auditor and since scholarship and LVRT investments are already on an accrual basis. This was an information item only and did not require Board action, but the BOD did not voice any concern and understood the need to change.

Changes to Bylaws

Jeff Fay reviewed the few small recommended changes to the Bylaws as circulated and to be voted on at the Annual Meeting. If any are needed, additional changes related to the shift to online TMAs can be handled in a revision of the Bylaws next year.

MOTION:

Mark Reaves moved and Curt Marechaux seconded that the Board approve the recommended changes to the Bylaws to be voted on at the Annual Meeting. ***Motion carried.***

Moving to Online TMAs

Directors reported meeting with their counties to get the sense of the members on this issue. Although the rest of the Board reported their members were (often surprisingly) receptive to the move, Ellis O'Hear noted that the Lamoille County clubs are opposed although they gave no specific reason for the opposition. Speculation is that differing levels of comfort with technology may have been a factor. Cindy Locke noted that she'll be doing educational sessions on the move to online TMAs with counties and retail vendors, which may increase member comfort level.

MOTION:

Roger Gosselin moved and Pat Poulin seconded that VAST move to an all-online system for TMAs. **Motion carried, with 12 yes and 1 no vote.**

Question was raised about whether or not the decision to move to a total online system should be brought to the Annual Meeting for a vote. There was no sense among Board members that this was appropriate, but a motion was advanced in order to document the Board's having dealt with the question. Cindy Locke noted that clubs had ample time to join informational zoom meetings over a 6 week period to learn about the new system and offer their opinions and guidance, and those that did attend voiced that they would prefer it to only be a board decision. They felt that others that may have not spent the time to join these meetings, should then trust their county director's vote based on opinions of those that did participate and feedback gathered from clubs prior to the board meeting.

MOTION:

Mark Reaves moved and Roger Gosselin seconded that we bring the approval of all-online TMA registration to the Annual Meeting for a vote. **Motion defeated unanimously.**

The remaining issue outstanding for Board discussion was whether and how registrants choose the club under which to register a given TMA:

Option 1: The field for club field is populated automatically according to the last club under which the member registered, and the only way for a member to change that field is to make a separate sled registration, entering all the registration information again.

Option 2: The field has a question that asks purchasers if they want to use the club from last year to register but gives them the option to change the field.

Option 3: The club field doesn't populate automatically but they can pick a club where they ride based on a map provided.

MOTION:

Roger Gosselin moved and Dave Ladd seconded that the Board approve option 2. This raised objections from some Board members who felt that this eliminated Option 1 from consideration at all while some Board members said their members had expressed a preference for Option 1 although they could live with Option 2. After considerable discussion about the order of voting on the options, **motion and second were withdrawn.**

MOTION:

Mark Reaves moved and at Poulin seconded that the Board approve Option 1 for club choice on TMA registrations. **Motion defeated, with 5 Yes and 8 No votes.**

MOTION:

Roger Gosselin moved and Mark Reaves seconded that the Board approve Option 2 for club choice on TMA registrations. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consensus was that a vote on Option C would be superfluous.

MOTION: Pat Poulin moved and Mike Daley seconded that VAST institute a Rider Relief program for one year with a re-evaluation after that. **Motion failed on a vote of 5 yes and 8 no.**

Review of FY 2020-21 Budget

Cindy Locke presented a proposed 2020-21 VAST Operating Budget as circulated and which is based on the assumption of an all-online TMA system. She noted that the change in TMA registration will result in staffing reductions by attrition and consequent payroll decreases along with decreases in travel and staff expense accounts. There was question and discussion about the line item on GPS units, which it was explained relates to those groomer units still requiring installation, and on the absence of a line item for officers and directors liability insurance, which has been moved from the operating to the SSTP budget. Question was also raised about options to decrease credit card processing for online TMAs. The rate may be required by the contract with the database.

Cindy also noted the reserves section of the proposed budget, which can be discussed by the Board as needed. She said that by a vote of the membership at last year's annual meeting that the \$5 increase from TMAs last year must roll into trails-only reserves. The other \$400,000 will be held in to the reserve accounts.

MOTION:

Pat Poulin moved and Mark Reaves seconded that the Board approve the 2020-21 Budget and reserve recommendations as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Staff Reports

Cindy Locke expressed thanks to the Long Range Planning Committee and also to Jeff Fay for his assistance in developing the 2020-21 budget. Cindy will post the results of the survey on TMA club choice.

In response to a question, Matt Tetreault said \$10,000 in the SSTP expense report was spent on groomer repairs.

Committee and Other Meeting Reports

Committees/meetings that either had reported earlier in this meeting or had nothing new to report are not included in this section of the minutes.

Law Enforcement Committee

A meeting is scheduled for next week.

VT Snow Trails Conservancy

VSTC is currently finishing up the paperwork for a land donation on Corridor 15.

Awards and Nominating Committee

Patty Companik reported on changes to the procedure for honoring awardees at the Annual Meeting in light of the Covid epidemic. Names of awardees will be announced, but writeups on each will be included in the *Vermont Snowmobiling* magazine rather than read out at Annual Meeting. Awards can be picked up at the meeting, and honorees will be asked to have photos of themselves taken with their awards for inclusion in the magazine.

Annual Meeting

Cindy Locke reported that the meeting will be held outdoors on September 12 at Farr's Field in Waterbury, VT, with registration at 10am. A pre-meeting and award announcements and lunch to begin at 11:00 AM and the business portion of the Annual Meeting to begin around 12:30. The meeting will be under tent and with a FM frequency for those in their cars. All Vermont directives will be followed including that masks will be required and will be provided for those who need them, and hand sanitizers will also be given out. Portlets will be provided and hand sanitizing stations. Safe distancing will be factored into placement arrangements of chairs and cars.

Long Range Planning Committee

The Committee met to explore the option of captive insurance as a means of stabilizing insurance costs.

Personnel

The Committee is wrapping up the performance review for the Executive Director. The Committee will meet with her and will also provide a written review.

Governor's Snowmobile Council

The Council does not meet during the summer months and will resume again in September.

Any Other Matters to Come before the Board

Question was raised about whether there are any discount opportunities for Zoom users. There are no discounts for nonprofits, but Cindy offered to open up the VAST site to clubs and committees on request and to block those out on the Zoom calendar.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for August 24, 2020.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Hill
Secretary