

LVRT Minutes

**July 9th 2008
Charlmont Restaurant**

Attending Committee Members: Laird MacDowell (interim Chair), Zeke Zucker (Vice Chair & Acting Secretary), Mike O'Hara, Dan Hale, Chip Sawyer, Alan Spitzer, Steve Larrabee & Sharon Ahern.

Absent Committee Members: Red Goodman

Other Attendees: Bryant Watson, VAST Exec. Secretary; Jim Hill, VAST President; Alan Robertson, Project Engineer; Ken Hoepfner, Fundraising Coordinator.

Guests: Jessica Leach; VAST Technical & Administrative Assistant; Todd Sumner, VTrans Representative; Ethan Ready, Bernie Sanders Rep.; David Polow, Friends Cte.;

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. by Laird MacDowell, Treasurer, as Interim Chair in the absence of a Chair (unappointed at this time).

First Order of Business:

- The secretary's report for the June meeting, as originally submitted, was unanimously accepted.

Financial Report:

- Laird reported June expenses totaling \$1,601.21, with an ending balance of \$13,691.30.
- Bryant stated that the VAST Board has approved an additional loan to the LVRTC.

Bryant Watson's Report:

An engineering firm has been selected and it is hoped that they will start their work by the beginning of August.

The plan is to pair up VAST's attorney, Steve Reynes, with Eggleston & Cramer in order to start working on permitting.

It is anticipated that the work will be expensive but we probably won't need to go through Act 250.

The public hearing on the Management Plan was held on July 8th. Four comments were presented, with the primary concern involving farm crossings in Franklin County. The final date for comments will be July 25th.

We may have to call a special Committee meeting in early August to finalize the M. P.

Project Engineer's Report:

He is arranging and conducting meetings with many of the contiguous town Select Boards

A meeting with the State Dept. of Agriculture will happen soon.

He believes that the new consultant will want to travel the length of the corridor in August.

Chip Sawyer's LAC Report:

Reports that he met with Alan Robertson.

He is still diligently recruiting for LAC membership. Reports that the Lamoille County representation is close to complete.

He will possibly propose that the term of membership be changed to 2 years.

Stated that the complaint form in the M.P. may not be the latest one.

Friends Update:

No report because the next meeting is not until tomorrow (July 10th).

Related to this is the the Friends Summit which was held just prior to this meeting. Laird reported on two items therefrom:

- Chet Munger, Bernie Sanders' Policy Advisor, informed that the original award for the rail trail has been reduced to \$4.6 million. He said he will watch carefully and advise us if that amount ever appears to be in jeopardy.

- The Friends Newsletter will be out on the 10th.

Sub Committee Reports:

- Law Enforcement – Dan Hale reported that the available balance is down to about \$5,000.

- There have been no known complaints lately.

- Communications – Sharon reported that her group is in the early stages of organizing and that she will present a plan at our next meeting.

- She sent a story idea to VPR/WCAX/The Free Press

- She discussed potential core ideas for stories, including the announcement of the new Engineering firm, Alan's roadshow and the significant environmental clean up positives associated with the development of the trail.

- Maintenance: NTR

- Policy: Zeke submitted a recommended LVRTC Donor Naming Plan (attached) and made a motion to have it accepted as official policy.

Discussion included one member recommending that it include specifics on such items as donor sign wording. It was explained that this could be done later and that this was simply providing the policy framework. The motion was accepted.

- Fund Raising: Ken Reported: 298 requests sent out to date, 264 are outstanding and he has received 34 rejections.

He is still concentrating on the potential \$200K donors.

He reports that there are 548 Vermont foundations, 17 brewers, 32 banks and credit unions and Madeline Kunin's Sustainable Futures Committee yet to tap

He has another idea for Legislative involvement

- Establish a Governors Row for donations from former and present State officials, including 180 legislators and 47 judges.

New Business:

- A new mailing will be sent to Greensboro landowners on town letterhead

- The M. P. update is nearing completion. The latest comments will be run by the Executive Committee, after which the final plan will go to VTrans for approval.

-Laird discussed the idea of perhaps using the corridor for various underground utilities. Among the possibilities would be fiber optics, electricity, water or natural gas.

He felt that there might be a possibility of our getting assistance with trail maintenance if we allow such use of the corridor.

He stressed that any of these uses could be imposed upon us by the State and that we should be prepared in the event that any should materialize.

- David Polow, of the Friends Committee announced that a walk will be held on the trail on the 2nd of August. The approximately 3-mile long route will begin at the Long Trail crossing point in Johnson and go the Nyes B & B.

The motion for adjournment was made and passed at 8:11 p.m.

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