

**VT Trails & Greenways Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, January 20, 2005**  
**National Life Building, Montpelier**

**Present:** Paul Moffat, Brian Cotterill, Alexis Nowalk, Julius Goodman, Ed Leary, Jonathan Wood, Sherry Smecker, Amy Bell, Kevin Russell, Wendy Chilkott, Cindi Wight, Lenore Budd, Jen Lamphere, Gray Stevens, Everett Lyon, Walter Opuszynski, Beth Ann Finlay, Luke O'Brien, Tim Tierney, Virginia Lancaster, Rebecca Brown, Mike Stafford, Ben Rose, Steve Ovenden, Jennifer Waite

1. Kevin Russell, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM and declared a quorum was present.
2. Those present introduced themselves and the organizations they represented.
3. The minutes from the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved (Paul/Jennifer).
4. Treasurer's report
5. Commissioner Jonathan Wood reiterated the importance of the Council's continued volunteer support for recreation in Vermont.
6. Nominations Committee will be Luke, Sherry, Lenore and Paul.
7. **Government Affairs**

**A. Ancient Highways**

Kevin gave overview of the issue. VTGC position was well received at the VLCT workshop. Everett Lyon of VASA voiced some of their concerns with the position developed by VTGC. Jonathan gave his overall support for VTGC's position however he could not back up the second suggestion because of its implications on the State budget. The Council agreed their course of action should be to monitor the situation and testify if necessary. The Council moved to accept the position with a few typo revisions as well as the inclusion of "These rights-of-way may provide a vital and often the only connection the public has to trails, public lands, and other resources" (Luke/Paul).

**B. Legislative Cap on Appropriation from Trans. Fund to Rec. Fund**

Letter sent to Jonathan from the Council explaining the need for increased funding to support recreation in Vermont. No action will be taken this year.

**C. Legislation for this Session**

ATV Collaborative has more work to do developing a proposal. Jonathan explained that there may be an administrative move to draft legislation for this session. The Council discussed the possibility of changes to ACT 250 as it relates to trails. Currently the Vermont Trails System is not recognized as the list of trails to be exempt from ACT 250. VNRC is making it a high priority to oppose the exemption of trail development from ACT 250 review. Government Affairs will monitor the issue during this session.

**D. F&W Access Areas**

Gray gave overview of the issue and brought the Council up to date from the last Council meeting. A permit process may be adopted in which non profit groups would not need a permit until their group exceeded 10 people. Commercial groups would be limited to parties of 10 and would require a permit. The Council decided to sit on the letter to the Agency Secretary until Gray felt the timing was more appropriate. The group also noted that Thomas W. Torti's name would need to be added to the letter.

8. **Operations Committee**

**A. Vermont Trails System**

The Operations Committee explained the process by which this first draft was created and some of the key points that were kept in mind while drafting. Several specific revisions to the draft were suggested by members of the Council. Jonathan made it clear that he wants applicants to respond to his question of the trail's compatibility with multi-use management of lands and other recreation types in the State. Additionally, the Council discussed the possible repercussions of promoting the additional protection afforded landowners whose trails are part of VTS. Further discussion of the VTS process was tabled to two meetings from now. In the meantime the Operations Committee will continue to meet in order to further develop this process.

**B. Trails & Greenways Manual Revision**

Beth Ann updated Council on the status of the manual revision. Subcommittee will meet immediately after Council meeting.

**C. Recreation Trails Grant Program & New Ranking Cmte Members**

Sherry provided an overview of the amount of funding available in the Recreation Trails Program this year. \$365,407 available for competitive grants in FY05. New ranking committee members are Walter Malmquist (Private Landowners), Virginia Lancaster (Non-Motorized) and Ken Robbins (Motorized).

**9. Membership Committee**

Kevin passed out membership report which showed 54 paid members (up 8 members since Sept meeting) and a proposed membership recruitment budget. Kevin promoted the idea of having board members visit RPC's to improve partnerships. Ed said the Department can cover costs for renewal mailing. Cindi agreed to email a copy of the member solicitation to Betsy Orselet for VRPA's recreation check in. In addition, the VASA newsletter and VOGA are good avenues for soliciting membership.

**10. Public Affairs**

**A. VTGC Website**

Website launched, the address is [www.vtgc.org](http://www.vtgc.org). Sherry's assistant (when hired) will be trained to maintain the website.

**B. Newsletter**

No NPS money for next newsletter. Jennifer thought of asking Kate to donate her services for the design and layout of the newsletter. The Council's first priority would be to print some copies but if there is no funding it could be posted on the web and distributed via email. Deadline for submissions is February 10<sup>th</sup>.

**C. Governor's Conference Trails Track 2005**

Paul is chair of committee, will be holding first meeting February 7<sup>th</sup>. Amy Bell, Virginia Lancaster, and Walter Opuszynski have volunteered to be on the committee. Peter Jensen will be giving one of the workshops. Mike Stafford has volunteered for a panel discussion to talk about organizing projects and getting them off the ground. GMC staff would be interested in doing a session on trail maintenance. It was also suggested that it might be appropriate to have a session on road classifications. Anyone with ideas should contact Paul Moffat at: [paulmoffat@aol.com](mailto:paulmoffat@aol.com).

**11. Future Meetings     March 24<sup>th</sup> 2005 – Marsh Billings Center  
                                         May 19<sup>th</sup> 2005 – Seyon Ranch State Park**

Meeting adjourned at 2 PM

Rebecca Brown, Recording Secretary