



NORTHWEST VERMONT RAIL TRAIL COUNCIL

c/o Northwest Regional Planning Commission
75 Fairfield Street • St. Albans, VT 05478
Phone: 802-524-5958 • Fax: 802-527-2948

Minutes of Board Meeting held Monday, September 18, 2023

APPOINTED

Berkshire-MVRT

Carol Hickey

Enosburg Falls-MVRT

Ellen Stanley

Enosburgh Town-MVRT

Robert Gervais, Sr.

Richford-MVRT

Vacant

St. Albans City-MVRT

Richard Stahl

St. Albans Town-MVRT

Randy Chadburn

Fairfield-MVRT/LVRT

Jane Williams

Sheldon-MVRT/LVRT

Vacant

Swanton-MVRT/LVRT

Joel Clark

Bakersfield-LVRT

Vacant

Fletcher-LVRT

Vacant

Highgate-LVRT

Sharon Bousquet

VAST

Mark Bushey

At Large

Don Mueller

Alisha Sawyer

David Stanley

Ex-Officio

* VT Agency of

Transportation

*Northwest Regional
Planning Commission

*VT Dept. of Forests,
Parks, & Recreation

*Franklin County Industrial
Dev. Corp.

Present: Dave Stanley, Ellen Stanley, Mark Bushey, Jane Williams, Bill Gray (Vtrans), Richard Stahl, Don Mueller, Sharon Bousquet (Highgate) and Amy Adams.

Chair Dave Stanley called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

R. Stahl moved to accept the minutes of the May 15, 2023; seconded by D. Stanley. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT-

E. Stanley presented the 2nd quarter 2023 financial report (Apr-Jun 2023). M. Bushey moved to accept the 2nd quarter report as presented; seconded by R. Stahl. Motion passed.

D. Stanley recommended the Council look into moving \$10,000 into a money market account or other options, the Council decided maybe in the future if they are eligible.

Updates

• LVRT Community Grant updates (Sheldon & Swanton)

Sheldon Gristmill Project: NRPC has a signed contract with the Town of Sheldon and the group will be reviewing the Consultant options next week. This is for a scoping & feasibility study for a location for a parking area, look at expanding/enhancing the outdoor basketball court to cover the bike racks/repair stations. Feasibility of a small pavilion that would include a bathroom and kiosk for information to be displayed.

Jackie Cassino forwarded a message that there is a possibility of a funding announcement coming later this Fall, with a March application deadline.

- **LVRT Update (B. Gray, Vtrans):** B.Gray gave an update on the LVRT trail conditions, 164 sites needed work from the flooding. B. Gray shared footage of some of the damaged sites that took place. They are working to get the trail open with a deadline of December 1st, but it is dependent on 3 bridge sites that are still a lot of variables to work out. The open sections are Swanton to Wolcott Town Trailhead and Walden Heights to St. Johnsbury, he is politely reminding trail users to stay off from the areas that are "Closed" and has advised Contractors to continue working and ask trail users to "turn around" in those sections for everyone's safety.

B. Gray brought up a concern on the LVRT in the Highgate area where someone is pulling metal and debris from off the trail and leaving it on the side of the trail. Vtrans doesn't have the resources currently to pick this trash up and has asked that whomever is doing this to be notified to stop this process. S. Bousquet said she would reach out to the individual who is doing this and will request them to stop as they are creating a hazard on the trail. S. Bousquet will work with B.Gray and the Highgate Public Works crew to help with the removal of what is out on the trail right now, which will require dump trucks.

M. Bushey asked B. Gray what the procedure will be for the upcoming snowmobile season for putting out the signs. B. Gray suggested to continue the process that they have used in the past and continue to keep him and Matt Tatro in the loop for when they will be on the trail.

- **Trail Etiquette** - J. Cassino sent some details for the benefit of trail users on the sharing of the trail with the variety of trail users. There will be a new video once the final edits and formatting is complete, this will be on the State website and we are encouraged to spread the word to our communities for use on websites and social media sites. A. Adams will share once the final version is available.
- **Summer Season** – B. Gray updated the plans for MVRT for heavy cut back the last week of September into the first week of October from MM 10 (Sheldon) to the end of MM 26 (Richford) to prep for the resurface project on the MVRT. There was no damage from the summer storms. B. Gray requested that whomever is putting flags in all the little chipmunk holes to please stop as he doesn't have the resources or time to fill each small hole.

A. Adams updated that NRPC installed pedestrian and bike counters on the MVRT. That data will be gathered and shared on the number of counts were recorded. While the counter was out in Sheldon, it was vandalized but was repairable and is still continuing to count efficiently. A picnic table was also stolen from the same area and same timeframe.

- **VAST**- M. Bushey reported VAST had their annual meeting in September. He reported out what last season numbers looked like:
 - 4,147 Miles of groomed Trails
 - 230 miles of secondary trails maintained by 114 clubs.
 - 20,164 registered snowmobiles
 - 14,690 resident
 - 5,474 non resident
 - \$71,000 spent on law enforcement
 - \$9,000 in fines issued
 - 86 citations
 - 296 warnings
 - 3 accident investigation
 - 0 fatalities investigated

OTHER BUSINESS – D. Stanley asked about mowing around benches, he will take on the tasks in the coming weeks. B. Gray noted that Green's Corner parking lot has been filled in for holes as well as the entrance at the St. Albans Trailhead. E. Stanley noted the passing of long-time member, Marie Brouillette, and suggested a donation in her memory, the Council was in favor of a \$25.00 donation. E. Stanley mentioned that she had seen an event "Franklin 40 Gravel Ride" and wanted to make sure the Council and State knew about the event. A. Adams updated that the ones coordinating the event have been working with J. Cassino on the special use permit process. J. Williams asked what the rules are for snowmobiles on the trail when they meet x-cross skiers, M. Bushey commented that most use common sense and slow down, E. Stanley spoke from last years' experience that encounters were very respectful.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will take place on Monday, November 20, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Minutes Approved: _____

