

VORA Minutes  
February 4, 2010

Present: Ken Robbins, Carlo Micheli, Robert Cruickshank, Doug Weber, Tom Butland, Danny Hale, Dani Davis, Ian Shulze, Anah Tuttle

Doug calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

There are some people who are attending the meeting who are new to the group so introductions are made around the table.

1.) ANR Proposed Rule Change Update

Danny Hale gives some brief history of the rule and explains the latest news. ANR has enacted the rule and so far, it has not been brought up in the legislature at all. VASA is still expecting that there will be more controversy regarding the rule- it still may be discussed during the legislature and it is possible that ANR could end up in court. As of now, VASA is simply trying to keep quiet on the topic and see what develops as the legislative session goes on; meanwhile VASA is working with the agency to develop the criteria needed for proposals. The first project is in Island Pond.

2.) GMNF Trail Collaborative Update

Danny Hale explains that the collaborative is moving forward, and Doug explains that there are VORA representatives who are participating in each of the collaborative's committees, and also mentions that Tom Meyers can no longer participate in the landscape committee and suggests that The Green Mountain Plonkers volunteer a representative to the committee. There will be two public meetings to come.

Danny also gives an update regarding VT&GC (VT Trails & Greenways Council):

There is news that VOGA is trying to pass some legislation regarding waiver forms; it is important that we all support this legislation.

Also, Vermont's SCORP plan is expiring. We need this plan in place in order to receive RTP funds. Do to cutbacks and layoffs for State Employees, much of the responsibility for administrative trail duties have fallen onto the council.

Danny explains that he will be meeting with Commissioner Gibbs next week and plans to discuss topics regarding all of the groups he is involved including VASA, VORA, and VT&GC and welcomes any input the group has.

3.) GMNF OHV Access Update

Doug explains some of the history that has occurred regarding motorized access in the GMNF. Right now, Doug is just waiting for the new ranger to come in so progress can resume. Danny Hale explains that the Bennington Trail Conservancy were able to complete their mapping project, so this may allow for continued efforts. Basically, everything depends heavily on the new ranger who is coming in; Doug isn't too hopeful on the subject, but stressed the importance of our presence nonetheless.

4.) Berlin Trail Restoration Project

VORA received an award from VT&GC for this project (2009 Trail Project of the Year). Doug explains that there is still enough money to continue the work in the spring. This project is an effort on our part to keep motorized access in this area.

5.) Secretary's Report and

6.) Treasurer's Report

Dani explains that the previous checking account that was opened in Ray Atwood's name has been closed. VORA has obtained its own EIN and has opened a new checking account with it. Dani has completed the incorporation paperwork and mailed it along with the \$75.00 fee (a check from the new checking account) to the VT. Secretary of State. We are awaiting a reply. As of today there is a balance of \$566.09 in the checking account.

Dani also explains that VASA began a facebook page last week and so far it has been fairly successful. Everyone agrees that facebook seems like a good way to get our information out to more people. Anah Tuttle motions that Dani as VORA Secretary make and maintain a VORA page; Tom Butland seconds the motion. All in favor, the motion passes. Dani explains that fresh content is needed for both the upcoming VORA facebook and the already existing website. She can update/add any information that the group wants, but she needs help thinking of ideas to keep everything fresh. The group would like to see something new once per week on the site. Dani says that everyone should email her ideas/pictures/news that they would like to see on facebook and the website.

7.) Expenditures

Our membership is \$10.00/ individual or \$25/association or business- the low fees make it difficult for us to accomplish some of our goals. Danny reflects back to the original incorporation meeting- our hopes were to have 1000 members. Basically we all need to work harder at promoting VORA in every way possible. We all need to push VORA membership within our own groups. The option of raising the dues is discussed; the group decides to take a year to really push membership before making any changes. We are still a new/young group so financial instability is to be expected. Basically, we must keep in mind that we are still active, so we are doing okay, but to improve we must get others to be active as well.

- A.) NOHVCC Workbook: NOHVCC puts out an educational workbook and allows for sponsors of the workbook to have their logo on the back. Doug would like to see us raise enough money to do this.
- B.) Decals: Doug would like to see our group purchase some decals with our logo in an effort to promote the organization. Dani has obtained three quotes. The group votes to purchase decals.
- C.) Newsletter/Brochures: Doug will update the old brochure. Doug will also be working on a newsletter. The topic of paid advertisements or articles from the supporting groups within the VORA newsletter is discussed. VORA will be asking each supporting group within VORA to sponsor a page in the newsletter for \$50.00. The groups may use their page as an advertisement or an informative article and the cost would simply be to cover printing and postage.

8.) Review of 2010 Goals:

Our main focus for 2010 will be to increase membership and awareness.

#### 9.) New Business

##### Green Mountain Crawlers:

Carlo Micheli, a representative from the Green Mountain Crawlers explains that this is a new 4x4 group- they just formed last year. They are politically active regarding trails for motorized use. They ride, obtain private land to use, and get involved politically to keep their sport alive. They promote responsible recreation. They are based out of Swanton, but the majority of their members are located in Rutland.

##### Green Mountain Riders:

The GMR are a new club that were formed from members of the CCC who wanted to focus more on single track and trail riding. The group wants to focus on landowner relations. The CCC will stick with dual sport riding and the GMR will focus on trail riding. They are a brand new group of about 15-16 people.

##### Action Items/Duties:

Dani: Create facebook page; order stickers

Doug: Update brochure, provide information to be included in the VASA newsletter, and start preliminary work on the VORA newsletter.

Danny: Speak with a VAST representative to see if they would like to have representation within VORA.

ALL: Push for memberships.

##### Next Meeting Date:

Normally we have been meeting every other month, but tonight's meeting was so productive that the group would like to meet again next month.

The next meeting date is set for Thursday March 4, 2010 at 6:00 pm at the VASA Headquarters in South Barre.