



Snowmobile Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 31st, 2021

Dale's Weston Lanes, Weston, Wisconsin

And via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Dale Mayo - Chair, Bob Lang – Vice Chair, Bev Dittmar, Joel Enking, Abby Haas, Gary Hilgendorf, Mike Holden, Erica Keehn (via Zoom), Sam Landes, Andy Malecki, Don Mrotek, Sue Smedegard, Leon Wolfe, Lee Van Zeeland

DNR staff attendance: Jillian Steffes, Annie Loechler, Faith Murray, Kurt Byfield, Jeff Pennucci (via Zoom)

Tourism staff attendance: Drew Nussbaum

Public attendance: Members of the public

1. **Call to order at 8:30 AM**
2. **Agenda Repair**
 - None.
3. **Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting**

Motion to approve previous meeting minutes by Andy, 2nd by Bev. MOTION PASSED

4. **Council Chair and Vice-Chair Comments**
 - **Dale Mayo – Chair**
 - Good committee meetings yesterday. The program is doing well financially and we're in a good place.
5. **Public Participation**
 - **AWSC (Sam Landes)**
 - Pending legislation to eliminate the 40' distance from road requirement for nighttime two way travel, and modify the stationary sound test – change to replace the 2004 version of the SAE J2567 test with the 2015 version. Also improve the language for dimming of lights when meeting other vehicles. Hearings are happening, this legislation could be voted on in Sept or Oct.
 - AWSC Fall Convention is October 23rd, 2021 in Wisconsin Dells.
 - **Tourism Report (Drew Nussbaum)**
 - Travel Wisconsin will launch the Winter Trail Conditions Report in November, and a thank you and reminder was presented for current snowmobiling conditions reporters to please continue to support the updates.
 - **Public Comments**
 - Question. GPS units are required for Class A and B groomers, correct? If a club WANTS to use a GPS unit in Class C, can they? Yes, and the DNR can still pay for the annual lease.
6. **DNR Report**
 - **GRANT REPORT**
 - **HANDOUTS**
 - Snowmobile Funding Report FY21, Available Funds FY22
 - 2021-22 Snowmobile Funding Summary
 - Snowmobile Trail Passes Sold
 - Snowmobile Active Registrations
 - Snow Supplemental Prelim Requests 20-21
 - Snow Supplemental Seasonal History (1990 through present)

- Spreadsheet of FY21 Grant Requests
- State budget included ability to pay Groomer Tracking Systems for the cost of the GPS units directly out of the Snowmobile Trail Aids funds. So we will cover that cost for this coming winter rather than having clubs pay out of their \$300/mile allotment.

● **LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT**

- As of 03/20/2020 there were 19 fatal snowmobile crashes during 2020 in Wisconsin
 - 11 occurred on public trails
 - 5 occurred on frozen waters
 - 2 occurred on roadways
 - 1 occurred on private property
 - 12 of the 19 crashes involved Alcohol. Speed continues to be contributing factor as well.
- DNR initiated “Think Smart Before You Start—Snowmobile Safety Campaign” in January 2021. Will be renewed for 2022. First campaign was a success – over 100 wardens & local LE participated, patrolling over 2,400 miles of trail. 1,500 snowmobilers were contacted, 350 warnings issued, 48 citations including 2 OWI arrests. Majority of violations were lack of trail pass or trespassing issues. Wardens distributed free Culverts ice cream coupons to reward safe behavior
- Safety messaging put forth by Wisconsin DNR include: Zero alcohol, Slow down, Stay on marked trails, Avoid traveling across bodies of water, Never travel alone, and Carry a first-aid kit and dress appropriately.
- A total of 186 in-person snowmobile safety classes took place in 2020. Between in person and online, a total of 8,243 students were certified.

7. Reports from Standing Committees *and*

8. ACTION ITEM: Action on recommendations arising from committee reports.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MOTIONS

Recommend to the Council to keep \$1,000,000 in nonresident trail pass revenue in reserve and make \$6,143,939.28 available to awarding to pending grant requests.
Motion Passed.

Recommend to the Council to set aside \$200,000 from Groomer Tracking Systems to pay for GPS units.
Motion passed.

Infrastructure Committee Report

- Ad Hoc group will be reviewing New Miles Scoring and may propose changes for next year.
- Ad Hoc group will also be reviewing the language of the drag measurement specifications, particularly involving wings, to recommend changes for the 22-23 season.

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MOTIONS

Recommend to the Council to fund New Miles applications through score 4.
Motion Passed.

Recommend to the Council to accept updated equipment rates, and approve 20-21 grooming rates for the 21-22 season.
Motion Passed.

Recommend to the Council to establish a moratorium on allowing drags to move up in class for the 21-22 season due to modifications to length, width or wing changes.
Motion Passed.

Law Enforcement & Safety Report

- The current allocation to Aids to Local Law Enforcement has been insufficient. Last year, the pro-rate to county law enforcement was 54%. Total requested funds was \$730k, but only \$396k available.

LAW ENFORCEMENT and SAFETY MOTIONS

**Recommend to the Council to support raising the Aids to Local Law Enforcement to \$800,000.
Motion Passed.**

Tourism Report

- Discussed mapping tech and utilizing GTS website as a tool for visitors to plan their trip, especially those from out of state.
- Discussed engaging with businesses not normally consulted, such as boutiques, coffee shops, antique stores, etc.
- Other organizations can promote snowmobiling such as local tourism offices, chambers of commerce, ATV/UTV clubs, etc
- Recommend that counties and clubs list where maps can be purchased locally (name the businesses and give address) so visitors can stop by those businesses and pick up a printed map.

9. ACTION ITEM: Review of and funding recommendations for grant applications

- Below are recorded questions/comments/discussion and the motion. Details on each project available in the meeting attachments.

Grant Number	County	Discussion/Questions	Motions
Amendment Requests			
90 – 96	Multi Counties	Notes and discussion recorded in funding spreadsheet (meeting attachments)	Motion to approve all in this category: By: Andy, 2nd: Sam Motion carried.
Bridge Rehab			
1 – 34, 60 – 63 but not including projects listed below.	Multi Counties	Notes and discussion recorded in funding spreadsheet (meeting attachments)	Motion to approve all projects in this category except 2, 7, 25, 26, 29. Project 30 to include 3 year LUA contingency: By: Abby, 2nd: Lee Motion carried
2	Iron	Application withdrawn, landowner purchasing materials	
7	Vilas	Seems very expensive for a 30’ bridge, much more costly than other bridges of this size.	
25, 26	Trempealeau	Need detailed cost break down	
29	Wood	No response to question about cost estimates	
Trail Rehab			

35 – 45	Multiple Counties	Notes and discussion recorded in funding spreadsheet (meeting attachments)	Motion to approve all projects in this category except 42 By Abby, 2 nd Sam Motion Passed.
42	Vernon	Council requested cost break down and photos, not provided	
Mandatory trail relocation			
46, 47	Multiple Counties	Notes and discussion recorded in funding spreadsheet (meeting attachments)	Motion to approve all projects in this category By Abby, 2 nd Sue Motion Passed.
Discretionary trail relocation			
32, 49 – 52, 55, 58, 59	Multiple Counties	Notes and discussion recorded in funding spreadsheet (meeting attachments)	Motion to approve all projects in this category By Abby, 2 nd Don Motion Passed.
New Bridges			
53	Vilas	Concerns about expense, value to the program	Motion to deny By Abby, 2 nd Mike Motion Passed.
54	Door	Application withdrawn. Not funded.	

New Mile Discussion

- b. Discussion about the value to the program to fund very short segments of trail, spurs. Mixed support.
- c. Discussion about reviewing the scoring for next year, want to verify it's capturing the most desirable projects.
- d. Applicants were asked to *PROVIDE WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION* of projects that scored points on Question 1 – written land use agreement or easement of 5 year minimum. Applicants were given 30 days to provide documents. If not received, those points were removed/score adjusted.
- e. Many incomplete applications. Fields left blank, lack of quality maps, lack of supporting documentation. In future, incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. It is not DNR staff responsibility to remind applicants to submit complete applications and chase down missing documents. See funding spreadsheet for final adjusted scores of individual projects.

Motion to recommend funding New Mile projects through Score 4 by Gary, 2nd by Andy. MOTION PASSED

Application	County	Discussion	Motions
Non-Trail			
56	Door	Concerns about setting precedence on funding paving of parking lots. Not a high priority for the program.	Motion to deny By Andy, 2 nd Mike Motion Passed.
57	Douglas	Council doesn't feel this is a good use of program funds.	Motion to deny By Gary, 2 nd Leon Motion Passed.

10. Council Elections

Abby Haas and Gary Hilgendorf nominates Dale Mayo as Chair.

**Motion to close the nominations for chair and pass a unanimous ballet for Dale by Mike, 2nd by Sam.
MOTION PASSED**

Andy Malecki and Sue Smedegard nominate Bob Lang as Vice Chair.

**Motion to close the nominations for chair and pass a unanimous ballet for Bob by Bev, 2nd by Sue.
MOTION PASSED**

11. Member reports, comments and items

General comments from all – Good work. Need to strive for consistency and remove incomplete applications from funding consideration. Need to review new mile ranking and see what changes may be in order.

12. Items for next meeting

- a. Continued discussion of reimbursement of groomers traveling on routes.
- b. Review of Equipment Rate drag definitions
- c. Review and possible modifications to New Mile ranking sheet.
- d. Next meeting will be at the Groomer Show, Feb 2nd and 3rd in St. Germain. Snowmobile Council will aim to meet on Thursday, Feb 3rd. Exact time and location TBD.
- e. Date for summer funding meeting 2022 TBD. Will try to avoid conflict with first days of school.

13. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Bev, 2nd by Joel. MOTION PASSED