



Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 26th, 2024

Rib Mountain Municipal Center, Wausau, Wisconsin And via Zoom

Council Members Present: Rob McConnell (Chair), Mike Biese (Vice Chair) Bobby Donahue, Ed Slaminski (via Zoom), Daniel Thole, Dave Traczyk, Jim Wisneski

DNR Staff: Jillian Steffes, Pat Anderson (Zoom) Jeff Pennucci (Zoom)

Public: Members of the public

1. Call to order – 10:00 AM by Rob

2. Agenda Repair

- None.

3. Approve Minutes

Motion to approve minutes of the previous meeting by Jim, 2nd by Bobby. **Motion carries.**

4. Elections

- Jim nominates Rob McConnell as Chair of the ORV Council. 2nd call for chair, 3rd call for chair.

Motion by Bobby (2nd by Dave) to close nominations for Chair of the ORV Council and cast unanimous ballot for Rob McConnell as Chair. MOTION PASSED

- Jim nominates Mike Biese as Vice Chair of the ORV Council. 2nd call for vice chair, 3rd call for vice chair.

Motion by Ed (2nd by Dave) to close nominations for Vice Chair of the ORV Council and cast unanimous ballot for Mike Biese as Vice Chair. MOTION PASSED

5. Chair Report – Rob McConnell

- How does DOT handle recreational trail crossings when DOT projects impact that area? Some problematic incidents have come up in the past couple of years, where a costly-to-our-program solution is being sought AFTER the fact. Could these have been prevented?
 - Ad hoc committee will be formed including Rob, Ed and Mike Peterson (Washburn Co). Snowmobile Council members will also be invited.

Motion to authorized Rob to form an ad hoc committee to discuss trail crossing issues with DOT by Dave, 2nd by Ed. MOTION PASSED

6. Public Comments

- **Dave Kafura – Wisconsin County Forest Administrators**
 - **SB 999** was proposed in the last session to allow for ORVs to access private properties. If this bill resurfaces in the future, it would be good if ORV Council could be involved to try and address some of the issues identified in the previous version.

- **Rob McConnell – WATVA**
 - [Economic Impact Study](#) was completed and shows the billions of dollars that the ATV/UTV industry brings to Wisconsin.

7. DNR Report – Jillian Steffes

- HANDOUTS
 - Spreadsheet of FY25 Grant Requests
 - Copies of Grant Applications Available Online
- Don't know our starting balance until August but likely we have more requests than we will have available funds this year, due to the Ch 20 spending authority.
- Jillian will be setting up a Zoom meeting for a brainstorming session on a future ATV version of "SNARS", to track maintenance work and expenses on ATV trails. On that team will be Jeff Wolfe (Barron), Nate Beaver (Clark), Susie Tollander (Burnett), Tara Krall (Iron), Mike Biese (ORV Council) and likely either Kurt Byfield or Annie Loechler from DNR, as well as Jillian and Nate Matter from GTS. After we think up some of the similarities and differences between what Snowmobile SNARS does vs what ATV might need, Nathan can come up with a proposal and cost estimate for the Council to review and weigh in on.
- At the International Snowmobile Congress, the topic of UTVs on Snowmobile Trails was a point of interest for other states and provinces. A study was performed in 2021, "[Assessment of Wheeled UTV Use on Groomed Snowmobile Trails with Recommended Management Considerations](#)" and was shared with the other states and provinces.

8. Information and Action: Trail/grant issues

a. Action required on grant, storm damage and/or amendment requests

- Two cost increase requests were reviewed and approved via Council motions. See separate spreadsheet of projects for details.

b. Review ATV/UTV grant applications for completeness; request additional information if needed.

- Questions on individual projects recorded in separate document (spreadsheet of projects)
- Reminder that October 24, 2023 ORV Council Meeting established a policy that campgrounds will be funded at up to **50%** if they are primarily used for ATV/UTV campers, and are in close proximity to an existing trail system.

Motion to request Dept of Transportation investigate funding and implementing a safe rec user crossing of Hwy 53, as was originally planned in 2015. Existing crossing footprint is insufficient for safe crossing BY MIKE, DAN. MOTION PASSED

9. Council Member Matters

- None

10. Housekeeping Matters

- Discussion on how to calculate troute rate. Current language only based on ATV per mile rate, does not include UTV rate. Should we?

11. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Dan, 2nd by Mike. Motion carries.