



Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 7th, 2025

Rib Mountain Municipal Center, Wausau, Wisconsin and via Zoom

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

DNR Staff: Jillian Steffes, Kurt Byfield (Zoom), Chris Halbur (Zoom), Jeremy Holtz (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 Dan, 2nd by Dave. **Motion carries.**

4. Elections

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

Motion by Jim (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 Dan (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

- Draft bill AB221/SB221 prevents reciprocity from people registering rec machines outside of Wisconsin and allowing them to ride on any road as a motor vehicle. Ensures that motorbikes, ATVs UTVs etc are recognized as recreational vehicle.
- SB 331 (no AB yet) is an omnibus piece of legislation that touches on several ATV/UTV topics. Still early days, focus right now is on the biennial budget so this may get more attention after that.

6. Public Comments

- None

7. DNR Report – Jillian Steffes

- HANDOUTS
 - Spreadsheet of FY25 Grant Requests
 - Copies of Grant Applications Available Online

- Draft budget includes a DOT earmark for Washburn Co for the Trego Co request. If that makes it to the final version of the budget, we may not need to award additional funds from Snowmobile and ATV Trail Aids. But we'll likely keep the existing awarded grants open in case there are valid expenses that DOT won't cover.
- "ATV for SNARS" development is at a bit of a standstill. The ATV/UTV Trail Aids program doesn't allow for us to use that funding for development/maintenance of a database, and we don't have any other suitable funding types at this time. A legislative change would be needed to allow us to access ATV funds for development of an ATV maintenance expense tracking database. Snowmobile was successful in passing similar legislation a few years back.
- Snowmobile Council is meeting tomorrow, and will be looking to update the equipment rates. I will distribute a copy of their proposed changes, and try to schedule a meeting prior to the August funding meeting for ORV and reps of Snowmobile to go over those proposed changes together, with the hopes that both Councils can agree on the changes.

8. Information and Action: Trail/grant issues

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

- One storm damage and seven cost increases were reviewed. One storm damage and three cost increases were recommended for immediate funding, and the rest deferred until August. 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).
- Admin code doesn't differentiate bridge rehab from trail rehab, but it may be easier to review all bridge rehabs in one go, and all trail rehabs collectively. For August, DNR will split them into two groups rather than grouping all rehabs together.
- 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.

9. Council Member Matters

- Jim has approached by clubs requesting to raise tractor rates. This only spends the maintenance funding faster. Should the per mile rate be increased? This is a legislative matter, but it's been raised multiple times in the last few years. UTVs do more damage to the trail than an ATV, should registration on UTVs be increased so they are paying their share?
- FYI - Current legislation to increase weight limit to 3,500 lbs, advocated by Polaris.
- Ed – What happened to effort to increase the spending cap? It's included in the omnibus SB 331.
- FYI - Biennial budget assigned \$1,080,000 to communication technology project via ATV safety enhancements. This comes from the ATV/UTV program's "surplus" that Trail Aids cannot access due to spending authority.

10. Housekeeping Matters

- Additional work will be needed to get spending authority increased. Council members, the public, grant recipients etc welcome to share their thoughts. WATVA is working on it, and DNR will also raise

the issue on the government side. Jillian will draft a list of projects of that DIDN'T get funded due to the spending cap.

11. Adjourn

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