



## Snowmobile Advisory Council Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Rib Mountain Municipal Center, Rib Mountain, Wisconsin  
And via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Dale Mayo, Bob Lang, Bev Dittmar, Joel Enking, Andy Malecki

Other Council Members Present: Mike Holden, Sam Landes, Sue Smedegard

DNR staff attendance: Jillian Steffes, Jeff Pennucci, Faith Murray, Annie Loechler

Public attendance: Nathan Matters, other members of the public

### 1. Call to order at 10:00 AM

### 2. Agenda Repair

- We will rearrange order of presentation so #7 goes before #6

### 3. Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting

**Motion to approve September 2020 minutes by Bev, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andy. MOTION PASSED**

### 4. Committee Chair Comments

- Reminder: Purpose of this meeting is to see if Council needs additional info. No funding decisions will be made.
- We may be seeing cost increases coming in – steel and lumber have gone up.
- Thanks to Abby Haas for creating a video of the GPS install. Will be helpful for the public.

### 5. Public Comments

### 6. DNR Funding Report

- HANDOUTS
  - Snowmobile Registration Summary for Last 5 Years
  - Snowmobile Trail Passes Sold for Last 5 Years
  - Spreadsheet of FY22 Grant Requests
- DNR proposes we sideline the scoring requirement for relocations and new bridges
- 3 mile minimum distance for trail rehab projects in code. However, most of the “trail rehab” requests are for a concentrated problem area such as an erosion issue, major earthwork to eliminate safety issue, etc. Variances can be issued on a case by case basis, or Council may make a motion that the Department accept applications for trail rehab regardless of length of trail being rehabbed.
- Vilas County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in support of legislative changes to increase the per-mile trail maintenance rate from \$300/mile to \$500/mile, and increase the funding support for law enforcement patrol grants to support at least one full time rec officer.
- Financial statement should be available in mid-August, which will inform us on how much funding we have available going into the late-August funding meeting.
- Current draft budget (not yet signed) includes a change that would allow Snowmobile Trail Aids to pay Groomer Tracking Systems directly for the annual GPS lease. This would ensure clubs/counties do not have to take the cost of the lease out of their \$300/mile allotment.
- Bill introduced to eliminate the need for trails to be 40’ away from a road surface (or one way on each side of the road, or separated by a headlight barrier).

### 7. SNARS /Groomer Tracking Systems Update

- Clubs have been submitting orders for new GPS units, but GTS will hold off on sending units (and billing clubs) until the state biennial budget passes (July). There is currently an item in the draft budgets that

would allow DNR to pay GTS directly for the cost of the annual lease for the GPS units. This would save the counties/clubs money but not requiring them to pay that cost out of their \$300/mile. Stay tuned.

- A video has been made showing how to install the GPS units in a groomer. It is currently posted on Facebook under the Groomer Tracking Systems Facebook account. Thanks to Abby Haas on her efforts to create this video. (A request has been made to also have it uploaded to YouTube for easier access.)
- Nathan and Faith had a meeting with a contract groomer last week. Concerns about how the GPS unit and SNARS upload will work when one groomer is grooming for multiple clubs. One possible solution would be to generate an automatic report that shows more detailed report of grooming activity from the previous week, showing grooming by particular trail. Would allow contractor to bill appropriate club. Nathan is looking for guidance from DNR and Council on how to address this, so he can get to work on programming a solution.

#### **8. Discussion: Equipment Groomer Rates**

- It was brought to the attention of the Council that a number of the groomers claiming the rate for an 11'6" drag don't actually meet the minimum measurements. Council members are gathering further information and will report back to the Council with their findings.

#### **9. Discussion: Rec Trail Grant Program (RTP) and "Buy America"**

- Snowmobile grants are often paired with federal Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grants. The RTP grants have a "Buy America" requirement that stipulates that all iron and steel products permanently incorporated into the project be produced in the USA USA. Particularly applies to bridge projects – major beams, supports, bolts, wood fasteners, etc. must be USA-made. Unfortunately, some of the hardware is simply not manufactured in the USA. Exemptions can be sought, but the federal government is currently considering any exemptions. This is an issue that impacts both non-motorized and motorized projects nationwide at this time, including highway projects, but no solution has been proposed.
- The project may contain non-conforming materials that do not exceed 0.1 percent of the total project cost, or \$2,500, whichever is greater. This may be helpful for decking-railing projects that are already a low dollar amount, but may not be helpful on major project projects where the non-conforming materials may exceed the \$2,500 cap.
- Grant recipients who have RTP funding on their project should be aware of this requirement and craft their bid requirements accordingly. If this becomes an insurmountable obstacle, then RTP grants may be better utilized on projects that do not use steel, such as trail rehabs.

#### **10. Information & Action: Review snowmobile grant applications**

- Questions on individual projects recorded in separate document (spreadsheet of projects)

#### **11. Member reports, comments and items**

- None

#### **12. Items for next meeting**

- Schedule a phone call with full Council in July to review/approve cost increase requests
- A meeting will be scheduled for July 23<sup>rd</sup> for infrastructure to review New Miles applications.
- Have Finance Committee look at program "surplus" on annual basis and see how much of a per-mile maintenance increase could be supported.

#### **13. Adjourn**

**Motion to adjourn by Bev, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joel. MOTION PASSED**