



## Snowmobile Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2025

Arbor Vitae Town Hall, 10675 Big Arbor Vitae Dr, Arbor Vitae WI and via Zoom

**Council Members Present:** Bob Lang – Chair, Sue Smedegard – Vice Chair, Lynsey Burzinski, Ann Degenhardt, Joel Enking, Abby Haas, Gary Hilgendorf, Tara Krall, Mike Holden, Sam Landes, Dale Mayo, Don Mrotek, Sue Smedegard, Holly Tomlanovich, Erica Volker

**DNR/Tourism staff attendance:** Jacob Holsclaw, Jillian Steffes, Drew Nussbaum (Tourism), Pat Anderson, Kurt Byfield, Chris Halbur, Jeremy Holtz, Annie Loechler, Jeff Pennucci

**Public attendance:** Lori Heideman, Dave Newman and other members of the public

1. **Call to order after Tourism Committee**
2. **Agenda Repair - None**
3. **Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting**

**Motion to approve previous minutes by Gary, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Abby. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### 4. **Chair and Vice Chair Comments**

- **Bob Lang – Chair**
  - Committee assignments will rotate over time. I encourage all Council members to listen in and participate in all of the committee meetings so you are well informed.
  - The Infrastructure Committee's pre-funding application review meeting (in June) – all Council members are encouraged to attend via Zoom or in person, but DNR will only cover travel expenses for those on the Infrastructure committee.
- **Sue Smedegard – Vice Chair**
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#### 5. **Public Participation**

- **Lori Heideman (AWSC)**
  - January directors meeting in Siren, discussing dues increase by \$5 based on recommendation of directors. 36,353, down from last year. Will see a spike in membership and trail passes if it snows.
  - Convention in March, Saturday we will have an SRC round table – many of you are already confirmed. Thanks for taking time out of your day to come and meet with our membership.
  - Met with Senator Felzkowski and Rep Swearingen about fee increases, moving that legislation forward.
  - Annual KAOS weekend this weekend, KAOS and Next Gen will be participating.
  - ACSA is working on a future leaders weekend, looking for volunteer leader and youth leader.
  - Doing calendar raffle, fairly successful, looking for sponsors for 2026.
- **Sam Landes (AWSC)**
  - Friends of Blue Mounds State Park has multiple lawsuits against DNR. Might get as far as the supreme court with appeals. Courts have sided with DNR on their environmental assessment. This case is potentially precedent setting as far as snowmobile trails on the state trail.
  - Still no word on snowmobile access to the Stower Trail

## 6. DNR / Tourism Report

- **Jillian Steffes – DNR Grants Report**
  - Snowmobile Vehicle Registration
  - Trail Pass Sales
  - Snowmobile Supplemental for 2022-23
  - Snowmobile Supplemental 10 Year Average
  - Current Budget Balance
- Decreased registration and trail pass sales has resulted in reduced revenue.
- The program currently has \$487,000 balance. That will increase in August when the revenue from fiscal year's registration, trail pass and gas tax revenue gets deposited.
  
- **Jacob Holsclaw, LE OHV Administrator**
  - See Committee Report
  
- **Drew Nussbaum, Dept of Tourism**
  - See Committee Report

## 7. Reports of Standing Committees

- **Finance Committee – Abby Haas**
  - We have \$487,000 in unspent funds we *could* consider allocating to previous applications.
  - Increases in registration fees and trail pass costs could bring additional revenue into the program.
  - Likely to be another lean year as far as available grant funds next year.
  
- **Infrastructure Committee – Gary Hilgendorf**
  - Discussed bridge overloading ad hoc.
  - Will review rates for potential changes for 25-26 season. No changes for 24-25.
  
- **Law Enforcement & Safety Committee – Sam Landes**
  - Discussed potential changes to yellow turn arrow, and trespassing fine increases.
  - It's time to review the signage handbook and see if any changes are needed.
  - Four fatalities so far this season. 3 were on frozen waterbodies, 1 on a public road.
  
- **Tourism – Lynsey Burzinski**
  - Snow Report continues to be an incredible tool, keep it updated.
  - Local organizations can help promote snowmobiling by hosting events.
  - Drew Nussbaum shared his most recent 'talking points' document.

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

### FINANCE COMMITTEE MOTIONS

**Recommend to the Council to adopt a policy in which cost increase requests that are under \$10k or less than 25% increase over the original grant amount (up to \$50k) and the scope of work remains the same be considered under the "Cost Increase" funding category. Otherwise, cost increase requests that fall outside this parameter be considered alongside new applications in the appropriate category.**

**MOTION PASSED 14 to 1 (Dale)**

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MOTIONS**

**Recommend to the Council to support the addition of a 4<sup>th</sup> piece of equipment option to SNARS.**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **TOURISM COMMITTEE MOTIONS**

**Recommend to the Council to approve Drew Nussbaum's Snowmobile Talking Points document for use. (attached at end of minutes)**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

**Motion to not consider funding any new grant requests at this time by Andy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ann. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

- Consensus to hold on to the program balance to ensure sufficient funding for maintenance for next year. Any potential bridge projects that would be funded today only have to wait another 6 months before being considered in August.

#### **10. Committee member items**

- Sam – Construction of the Wisconsin River Bridge will start this week. Excellent PR for the snowmobile program via TV and radio station coverage.
- Mike – Let's look more closely at the signage handbook, show where signs are supposed to be placed. Prefer a bigger arrow.
- Gary – Everyone did great with the new committee appointments, thank you to the new committee chairs.
- Drew – Thank you for trusting me to do PR for this industry. Glad to work with all our partners.
- Andy – Good meeting with important issues. Let's try to get the Wisconsin River Bridge PR spread out around the state, outside of just Madison. AWSC will work on highlighted that on the FB page.
- Sue – Thank you to the county coordinators for joining us in person and via Zoom. SNARS audit ad hoc committee met earlier today, would appreciate any assistance in participating. Contact Sue if you are interested.

#### **11. Items for next meeting**

- Infrastructure will meet in **June** for preliminary application review.
- Funding meeting tentatively scheduled for last week of August.

#### **12. Adjourn**

**Motion to adjourn by Andy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Gary. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**