



Snowmobile Advisory Council Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 26th, 2023

DNR Service Center, 107 Sutliff Ave, Rhinelander WI and via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Gary Hilgendorf - Chair, Bev Dittmar, Bob Lang, Andy Malecki, Dale Mayo, Don Mrotek

Other Council Members Present: Mike Holden, Sue Smedegard

DNR staff attendance: Jillian Steffes, Cathy Burrow, Patrick Anderson, Kurt Byfield, Jeff Pennucci, Annie Loechler

Public attendance: Rebekah Luedtke (WCFA) and other members of the public

1. Call to order at 9AM

2. Agenda Repair

- None

3. Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting

Motion to approve February 2023 minutes by Bev, 2nd by Andy. MOTION PASSED

4. Committee Chair Comments – Gary Hilgendorf

- Meeting today to review applications for completeness and ask clarifying questions.

5. Public Comments

- Dave Newman – AWSC
 - Bill to increase the supplemental reimbursement rate to 5x the base rate has passed out of committee.
 - Bill that addresses posting business names on state trails has passed senate, on to the assembly.
 - State budget includes increasing aids to local law enforcement by \$200,000, and tribal gaming money secured for snowmobile program. And SNARS maintenance of \$10k per year can be paid out of the snowmobile program funding.

6. DNR Funding Report

- HANDOUTS
 - Snowmobile Grant Application Summary for 2023-24
 - Copies of Grant Applications Available Online
- New regional grants project manager out of the Spooner office has been hired – Pat Anderson
- A new LTE has been hired – Annie Loechler, will be helping with SNARS support
- We are working on some guidance on requirements on what an invoice should include. Stay tuned.
- Club members are supposed to use the established rates. This ensures all clubs are reimbursed the same. If the club member wants to invoice as a business, we may require an EIN in order for us to reimburse a rate above the established rates.
- We will be hosting a County Coordinators Workshop to help train newer county coordinators and provide networking opportunities. Stay tuned.

7. Information & Action: Equipment/Groomer Rates

- Request for a grader rate – this is an infrequently piece of equipment, can this be addressed by invoicing this work?
- Discussion about eligibility of paying groomer time outside the geofence such as to go around a swamp when it is not yet frozen down. Difference of opinion on if this was funded in the past. DNR perspective is that it is not an eligible expense. The groomer is not actively grooming, and not on a trail. Moving equipment during groomer operation is part of doing business.
- In an effort to clarify this for future questions, the following motions were proposed...

~~Motion to recommend that groomer time outside the geofence, such as going around swamps do not get paid groomer rates by Dale, 2nd by Bev. MOTION FAILED~~

- In this scenario, they are outside the geofence, not grooming, not on a trail, etc. The discussion didn't disagree with this, but were uncomfortable with the wording, would prefer to not directly address swamps. Alternate wording provided.

Motion to clarify that moving equipment during groomer operations is part of doing business by Bob, 2nd by Bev. MOTION PASSED

- This includes time spent navigating around swamps, etc.
- This does not supersede the previous recommendation that integral road route between funded trails be reimbursed at 50% the groomer rate, as non-grooming expense.

8. Information & Action: Raising Supplemental Cap

- Pending legislation to increase the supplemental reimbursement rate to 5x the base rate has passed out of committee. Still needs to pass full senate and assembly. If it is passed before the end of the 22-23 supplemental cycle, DNR should be able to implement payments based on the passed legislation.
- Supplemental requests for the 22-23 season are due August 1st, 2023.

9. Discussion & Action: Review Snowmobile Grant Applications

- Questions recorded on the funding request spreadsheet, see attachments.
- Many incomplete applications. In the future, we may start declining to consider incomplete applications.

~~Motion to recommend that moving forward (2024 and beyond), DNR should require that all components of the application be submitted by April 15th with the exception of quotes and photos (due by June 1st) by Bob, 2nd by Dale. MOTION FAILED~~

- Discussion – quotes should be due by April 15th too. Only allow photos to arrive later, when snow melts.

Motion to recommend that moving forward (2024 and beyond), DNR should require that all components of the application be submitted by April 15th with the exception of photos (due by June 1st) by Andy, 2nd by Dale. MOTION PASSED

- DNR will review checklist to make sure it is sufficiently clear on what is needed.

- NEW MILES – The sheer volume of applications make it difficult to review and make decisions on these by the August meeting. Last year, we held a meeting in October to review New Miles. We will plan to follow that plan again this year.

10. Committee member reports, comments and items

- Gary – some groomers are inactive but have a groomer tracking #. Are we paying for GPS units in inactive machines?
- Dale – Thanks everyone.

11. Items for next meeting

- Define storm damage for the future.
- Clarify required components of invoice.

12. Adjourn

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