



## Snowmobile Advisory Council Infrastructure Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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

**Committee Members Present:** Gary Hilgendorf - Chair, Joel Enking, Bob Lang, Andy Malecki, Dale Mayo, Don Mrotek

**Other Council Members Present:** Mike Holden, Sue Smedegard

**DNR staff attendance:** Jillian Steffes, Patrick Anderson, Jeff Pennucci

**Public attendance:** Rebekah Luedtke (WCFA), Nathan Matter (GTS), and other members of the public

### 1. Call to order at 9AM

### 2. Agenda Repair

- Update from Nathan Matter on anything related to SNARS and GTS

### 3. Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting

**Motion to approve previous meeting minutes by Dale, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob. MOTION PASSED**

### 4. Committee Chair Comments – Gary Hilgendorf

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

### 5. Public Comments

- None

### 6. DNR Funding Report – Jillian Steffes

- HANDOUTS
  - Snowmobile Grant Application Summary for 2024-25
  - Copies of Grant Applications Available Online
- Low snow year. Trail pass revenue sales down which will affect our available funding, but also not expecting much or any supplemental requests so it may all balance out.
- Lots of requests this year, double or triple oversubscribed. ATV/UTV is in a similar situation with \$12 million in requests and likely around \$6 million starting balance.
- Bridge Rehab projects are ranked by the score, those scores may change again before August as bridge inspections come in (or fail to materialize). Likewise for relocation project applications.
- Published a list of bridge contractors on our webpage. Anyone can be added to the list, this is not a list of 'recommended' contractors. Just a resource for counties who don't know many contractors.
- Jillian attended the International Snowmobile Congress in Green Bay, and attended the International Association of Snowmobile Administrators (IASA) meetings. Jillian is now Secretary of the IASA. Next year's meeting is in Prince Edward Island.

### Added: Groomer Tracking Systems, Inc. Updates

- 9 new groomers added this year.
- Possibility in the future for adding pucks to the groomer attachments to allow for the groomer to automatically know what it's pulling (drag, roller, mower, etc) and can add the correct rates and equipment into SNARS as opposed to assuming everything is grooming.
- Nathan will work on a proposal for cost to the program if we adopt this. Maybe we only want to use pucks for those pullers that have multiple pieces of equipment.
- Initial estimate might be \$50/puck. This could potentially be an optional expense to the club (reimbursable via maintenance). Would save users data entry so it may be worth it.

- When brushing, unit is going to be moving much slower. Will that be a problem? Per Nathan, no, system can recognize it's pulling a mower and could disregard the speed.
- Contract groomers continue to express disappointment on how the system works for those. Less than a dozen contract groomers.

**7. Information & Action: Equipment/Groomer Rates, Labor Rates**

- DOT equipment rates have some notable changes. Infrastructure members will review those in the coming weeks and discuss possible at the August meeting.
- Snowmobile and Winter ATV labor rate is \$9/hr, while Summer ATV labor rate is \$12/hr. Should Snowmobile and Winter ATV increase to match? Will only spend that \$300/mile faster, and hit supplemental non-grooming cap faster. Snowmobile is already oversubscribed.

**8. Information & Action: Review Snowmobile Grant Applications**

- Questions recorded on the funding request spreadsheet, see attachments.
- If the project has a bridge inspection report but it doesn't 'support the need' (ie, bridge is in good shape), do we give them the points? Points can be an aid, but we don't have to fund projects solely based on score. If a lower score project is in critical/failing condition, Council could make a recommendation we fund the failing structure over a 'good' structure.

**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 Bob, Andy. MOTION PASSED**

**9. Information & Action: Wisconsin Representation at ISC 2025**

**Motion to support the Department send Jillian Steffes to International Snowmobile Congress in 2025 by Joel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Gary. MOTION PASSED**

**10. Information: 2025-2027 Executive Biennial Budget**

- S. 350.145 Wis Stats has specific language on a timeline on which the Dept shall consult the Snowmobile Rec Council on biennial budget items that affect snowmobiling. Realistically, do not have a draft budget on that timeline. Dept can take recommendations from the Council, but has nothing to share with the Council on a proposed budget at this time.

**11. Committee member reports, comments and items**

- Gary – Please continue to review applications and think about which projects are most in need of funding.
- Andy – Encourage counties to do ongoing maintenance, and minor rehab with \$300/mile maintenance funding.
- Don – How does funding to state trails work? The DNR collects \$300/mile for funding snowmobile state trails regardless of the snow situation. Typically clubs do the grooming, but the state employees handle non-grooming. In a low snow year, clubs should work with their DNR property manager if they have ideas on non-grooming projects to tackle like redecking.

**12. Items for next meeting**

- Draft biennial budget discussion in Feb if possible.
- Invite DOT to attend future meetings, possibly set up a meeting with ORV, Snow and DOT.

**13. Adjourn**

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