



Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 24th, 2023

Rib Mountain Municipal Center, Wausau, Wisconsin

And via Zoom

Council Members Present: Rob McConnell (Chair), Mike Biese (Vice Chair), Bobby Donahue, Ed Slaminski, Daniel Thole, Dave Traczyk, James Wisneski

DNR Staff: Jillian Steffes, Jacob Holsclaw, others

Public: Rebeka Luedtke (WCFA), members of the Snowmobile Council (Sue Smedegard), and members of the public

1. Call to order – 10:00 AM by Rob

2. Agenda Repair

- None

3. Chair & Vice Chair Report

- **Rob McConnell** - Chair
 - 'RideSafe Foundation' video at [RIDE SAFE FINAL FULL VIDEO.mp4 - OneDrive](#)
 - Been traveling to numerous schools in Wisconsin and giving a 3-4 hour event on motorized rec safety (snowmobiles, watercraft, ATV/UTV, helmet stations, etc). If you know of a school that is interested in having this event, contact Rob.

4. Public Comments

- None

5. DNR Report

- **Jillian Steffes (Grants)**
 - County Coordinators Workshop on Oct 5th for county staff who work with the motorized recreational trails and associated grant programs. Great turn out (~100 people), well received, recording will be online at <https://vimeo.com/873874153/f4f5a77408>
 - Grants are going out the door as DNR staff complete their more detailed reviews.
 - Some pending legislation to allow two-up riding on single units, also bill in circulation to shift the communication equipment, etc from ATV Trail Aids to DNR Law Enforcement prevue/oversight.
 - Revisions to NR 64 may begin soon via Law Enforcement. Please review and notify Jillian if you spot areas that need revision.
 - DNR Secretary has resigned/returned effective Nov 1st.
- **Jacob Holsclaw (Law Enforcement)**
 - Law Enforcement enjoyed working with the RideSafe Foundation.
 - ATV passenger bill in circulation, LE made observations that the bill did not specify where the passenger could be sitting.
 - UTV whip light bill in circulation. LE would prefer to keep blue and red color reserved for law enforcement.
 - 27 fatal ATV/UTV crashes so far this year. Most are not wearing helmet and/or seatbelt. Alcohol also a factor. Driving too fast for conditions.
 - Patrols active and trying to keep people safe on the trails, issuing citations for helmets and seatbelts.
 - 3rd or 4th year doing a "Ride Smart Before You Start" to get all hands on deck at the start of the season.
 - NR 64 revision suggestions? Send to Jillian. Very involved and time sensitive process, we'll try to be as efficient if we can.

6. ACTION ITEM: Review of and funding recommendations for grant applications

- Price County has reduced their project scope and is asking if ORV Council would consider funding the reduced scope. Only asking for cost share assistance on parking areas and campground roads, seed/much, picnic tables, fire rings, campsite markers and fish tables. Electricity, vault toilet, septic, toilet/shower buildings and other expenses will be covered by County or other grant funds, or removed from scope. Has \$250k in Stewardship, \$600k in County funds.
 - Council wanted to discuss topic #8 first, then revisit.
- See motion addressing Price Co request under agenda item #8

7. Discussion on Troutes

- NR 64.02 (9M) “Hybrid Trail (Troute)” means an all-terrain vehicle trail and route combination that allows all-terrain vehicles and motor vehicles to utilize the same linear surface and the combination is used as a trail connector as defined in sub. (15).
- NR 64.02 (15) “Trail Connector” means an all-terrain vehicle trail that connects one trail to another trail or services.
- Discussion: Troute was originally introduced to 1) clear up & grandfather EXISTING “trails” that didn’t correctly meet the definition of a trail (they were open to motor vehicles), and 2) provide funding for integral, low or non-gas tax routes that were part of a trail system. At that time, there were only a fraction of the routes that exist now. Council and ATV Trail Aids program still wants to focus support on the off-road trail systems.
- Continue with strict interpretation of trail-to-trail or trail-to-services. If the linear surface is interrupted by other non-troute routes, they do not qualify. Also applying logic that the proposed troute has to be integral to the trail system. This program is an off-road trail system, so troutes have to be in support of the trail system. Expanding road-riding loops do not qualify.

8. Discussion on funding Campgrounds

- Campgrounds are expensive, and are utilized by other recreationalists besides ATV/UTVs. Is it a wise use of the ATV Trail Aids funding to invest in these expensive projects? If so, would prefer we are not the primary funding source, but rather a secondary contribution.
- Proximity to off-road trail systems should be a factor.
- Long term seasonal campers would displace the average ATV/UTV rider and maybe should be prohibited where ATV/UTV funds are paying for the campground.
- What is the fate of the revenue generated by campground fees? Is it designated for support of the campground, or does it go into the municipalities general fund? (Varies by site)

Motion to support funding campgrounds at up to 50% if they are primarily used for ATV/UTV campers, and are adjacent to the existing trail system by Ed, 2nd by Jim. **Motion rescinded and replaced below.**

- Would this apply to existing campgrounds, or new? BOTH. Development or rehabilitation? BOTH Dollar threshold? NO

Motion to rescind original motion and support funding campgrounds at up to 50% if they are primarily used for ATV/UTV campers, and are in close proximity to an existing trail system by Ed, 2nd by Jim. Motion carries.

- Price County is requesting \$164,940 which is significantly less than the original \$1,019,615 request. County or other funds will be paying for well over 50%, so the request falls in line with the motion above.

Motion to recommend funding Price Co's Solberg Campground Expansion at \$164,940 by Jim, 2nd by Dave. Motion rescinded and replaced below.

- The cost estimate presented to the Council includes fish cleaning tables. We do not wish to cost share on those. Remove that from the ATV grant.

Motion to rescind original motion and recommend funding the Price Co Solberg Campground Expansion at \$160,140 by Jim, 2nd by Dave. Motion carries.

- We could consider developing a scoring document for campgrounds in the future. But we typically only receive a couple a year, so may not be of great value.

9. Discussion on adopting a SNARS-like database for ATV Trail Maintenance Expense Tracking

- Nathan Matter of Groomer Tracking Systems provides a demo of the product that was developed for the Snowmobile Trail Aids program.
- Winter ATV maintenance can be recorded in SNARS.
 - Comment from a user that they are printing SNARS reports on winter ATV and keying that into the 8700-005 and 006 forms to apply for reimbursement. This is not necessary, can simply submit for reimbursement with a copy of the SNARS report. Just use 005 and 006 if you are *not* tracking winter ATV in SNARS.
- The Snowmobile Trail Aids Program has found increased accuracy and efficiency with adopting this system.
- Counties have expressed an interest in getting an online system similar to SNARS to eliminate paper record keeping.
- Some of the differences for ATV would be that we do not need a grooming vs. non-grooming split. Also, more force account staff involved, may need design to accommodate that.
- If utilizing the GPS units, the attachment tags that notify the system which piece of equipment is attached to the puller would be useful (grader, mower, etc.)
- Nathan needs to know more about what the design should include before coming up with a cost estimate.
- Jillian will compile a group (counties, DNR staff, etc.) to provide wish list/ideas on what a SNARS-like system would need for the summer ATV Program.

10. Council members' matters

- Rob – FYI, Bryan Much has been appointed as President of the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council.

11. Housekeeping matters

- Jillian will compile a group to provide wish list/ideas on what a SNARS-like system would need for the summer ATV Program. Once we have a design proposal, Nathan can more accurately estimate a development cost.
- Jillian will investigate what would need to be done to move forward as far as going to bid with a system design proposal, or if a waiver could be issued.

12. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Dan, 2nd by Bobby. Motion carries.