

Finance Committee of the Snowmobile Council
Thursday, June 30, 2005
Portage County Annex Conference Room #1
Stevens Point, WI

Present: Bev Dittmar, chair, Karen Carlson, Mike Willman, Mike Cerny

Others: Larry Freidig, DNR; Danny Carlson

Meeting called to order at 10:00 AM.

Larry distributed a copy of a revised agenda that added the law enforcement committee item of the specialty snowmobile accident reduction teams to the agenda.

There was no motion for acceptance of minutes as the new members had not received copies of the previous minutes.

Larry distributed and discussed a narrative description of common finance-related terminology, appropriation sources and important times of the year regarding finance committee activities.

Larry distributed a draft 2005-2006 county snowmobile program noting the gas tax amounts and the ch. 20 appropriation for registration revenues. Larry discussed with committee members the potential impact on unobligated funds that the Joint Finance Committee motion recently passed. Larry indicated that if the budget is approved as proposed in the Finance Committee version that there would be no unobligated motor fuel or non-resident trail pass funds available in the effort to reduce the disparity between spending authority and actual revenues generated. He indicated that there were sufficient funds in the registration account to accommodate the reduction in spending authority. Larry indicated that he was in contact with management and budget folks in hopes that a partial veto of the Joint Finance motion might be possible.

Larry then briefly reviewed with committee members the requests received regarding infrastructure and new projects. He emphasized the distinction between project categories and priorities defined by the statute and those that were more descriptive in nature under the title of development. Larry briefly discussed the reason for listing new development requests associated with abandoned railroad grades and two high profile projects in light of funding decisions that will have to be made at the funding meeting. Larry distributed copies of the results of the recent federal recreation trails program ranking, noting where the approved projects had an impact on projects seeking snowmobile funds as well.

Larry also summarized the revenues generated for snowmobile supplemental maintenance payments (\$1.848 million) and an estimate of the total county request. Larry indicated that based on an AWSC survey of counties and clubs intending to make requests, it appears there will be no prorate and in fact may leave some funds available for infrastructure improvements.

There was a brief discussion on the Eagle River bridge/trail project and the Mole Lake bridge/trail project.

It was the consensus of the committee that under the category of new development the Council direct its initial attention to mandatory relocation project requests.

Bev Dittmar read for committee members the proposal regarding specialty snowmobile accident reduction teams coming from the law enforcement committee. She noted that the total cost for the activity would be \$94,400 with roughly \$42,000 being available in FY 04-05 funds. A funding source for the balance of \$52,710 is being sought.

There was a vigorous committee discussion of the proposal with the following noted:

- Some lack support for this type of flashy visibility
- Conversely, the opinion that past desires for more visibility of law enforcement presence was incorporated in this proposal
- This enforcement approach has the ability to put the enforcement where the snow falls on a more timely basis
- This proposal utilizes existing law enforcement in a more effective manner

Mike Cerny summarized the major points of the law enforcement committee meeting. He indicated that the law enforcement committee had approved the following: specialty snowmobile accident reduction teams concept, promoting user cultural changes, a nighttime speed limit of 50 mph, checkpoint stops and trail ambassador program. He reported that the law enforcement committee had put a hold on further progress on tougher OWI laws tied to the driver's license. Mike stressed that the law enforcement committee felt it was the responsibility of the Council to act proactively to these issues rather than wait for someone else to propose solutions less acceptable to the snowmobile community.

Discussion again returned to the specialty snowmobile accident reduction team concept. While the committee expressed a desire for additional information on the proposal before making a recommendation, there was a general air of support, particularly if there was a significant effort at media exposure to the proposal.

There were no member items.

Motion by Mike Willman, second by Karen Carlson to adjourn at 12:05 PM. Motion Carried