



Snowmobile Advisory Council Law Enforcement Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 29th, 2023

Rib Mountain Conference Center & Dales Weston Lanes, Weston and via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Sam Landes - Chair, Joel Enking, Mike Holden, Bob Lang, Andy Malecki, Dale Mayo, Don Mrotek, Erica Volker

Other Council Members Present: Lynsey Burzinski, Bev Dittmar, Gary Hilgendorf, Abby Haas, Sue Smedegard, Lee VanZeeland, Leon Wolfe

DNR staff attendance: Jacob Holsclaw, Jillian Steffes, Cathy Burrow, Pat Anderson, Kurt Byfield, Jeremy Holtz, Jeff Pennucci

Public attendance: Dave Newman and other members of the public

1. **Call to order following Infrastructure**
2. **Agenda Repair - None**
3. **Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting**

Motion to approve previous committee meeting minutes by Mike and 2nd by Erica. MOTION PASSED

4. **Committee Chair Comments**

- **Sam Landes**

- More attention is being paid to trespassing on a national level. We'll discuss more under agenda item 6.7
- The Law Enforcement 2022 Annual Report was published. But it captures registration numbers for calendar year instead of season. Concerns that this is misleading as it doesn't match our other reports that go by season/FY. Sam would like to see that change to season/FY. Fatalities also report on CY rather than season, but easier to tease out the season details. 18 fatalities over the 21-22 season.

5. **DNR Reports and Updates – Jacob Holsclaw, LE OHV Administrator**

- Wardens saw a \$195,000 budget increase for snowmobile, ATV, and UTV purchases this year
- DNR Wardens and 40 sheriff's departments logged a total of 26,258 hours of snowmobile enforcement in 2022. Numbers for 2023 are still rolling in.
- Audits are being completed for the sheriff's patrols from fiscal year 2023. Reimbursement checks sent out no later than October 1st.
- \$600,000 funding cap for snowmobile patrols. Up from \$396,000. Based on last year's reimbursement requests, this will increase funding from around 60% to 91%.
- We launched an all hands-on-deck enforcement effort over the weekend of January 20 -22. "Sled Safe" resulted in some good numbers considering poor snow conditions in areas of the state. Officers traveled over 2400 miles of snowmobile trails and issued a total of 108 citations and 215 warnings – with 5 arrests being made for intoxicated operation. In just this weekend an estimated 1175 snowmobilers were contacted!
- Continued work on snowmobile safety curriculum – ongoing. Kalkomey Enterprises Inc.
- Will be working on following up with 'pending blood test results' which can take 6+ months.

6. Snowmobile LE Issues on the Legislative Front

(1) Aids to Local Law Enforcement

- a. Increased by \$200,000, from \$396,000 to \$600,000. Original request was to add \$400,000 but even \$200,000 will be a significant help to local law enforcement.

(2) Update on Safety Concerns around Signing Issues on DNR Properties

- a. AB 98 / SB 105 addresses some of those concerns. Bill passed full Senate, waiting for full vote in Assembly

(3) Updating Safety Course Test

- a. Updates in progress in both written and online version. Online updates are slow with the vendor. Hopefully done this fall, but may not be ready for the upcoming season. Highlights on suggested changes from AWSC include removing the recommendation to engage parking break before starting. Downplay topo map reading, substitute with reading common trail map. Update to reflect changes regarding riding alone road. More on off trail riding in mountains (so riders trained for out of state riding). Stress that riding off trail is trespassing.

(4) Glacial Drumlin Surfacing

- a. Discussion deferred till tomorrow

(5) Military Ridge State Trail – Verona – Paving and Promised Route to Fuel

- a. Discussion deferred till tomorrow

(6) Failing Structures on DNR Managed Properties (400 State Trail, Buffalo River ST)

- a. One of the bridges on the Gandy Dancer has a structural problem on an abutment. Aging infrastructure on the state trail system continues to be a concern.

(7) Trespassing Issues

- a. Nationwide issue & hot topic. Landowner involvement is important to proving trespassing, as well as defining 'riding off trail'. Penalties and fines play a roll, some states have been increasing that. Catching trespassers important as well.
- b. NY has a county ordinance that addresses riding on a closed trail (indicates WHO sets open/close date and publishing that info) and also includes language stating that riders are prohibited from leaving the trail. Tickets have been written on this ordinance and not had landowner involvement.
- c. Public has to have fair notification of trail open/close status.
- d. 350.10 Trespassing if on the property of another without permission of the landowner or lessee. Fine amount \$232. Under 943 General Trespass is \$264.50.
- e. MN has recently increased their fine amounts. And tiered for 2nd and 3rd offense

7. Public Comment

- None

8. Committee member reports, comments and items

- None

9. Items for next meeting

- None

10. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Mike, 2nd by Erica. MOTION PASSED