



Snowmobile Advisory Council
Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes
Sunday, September 20th, 2020
Dale's Weston Lanes, Weston, Wisconsin
And via Zoom

Committee Members Present - Committee Members Present: Abby Haas - Chair, Tom Chwala, Sue Smedegard, Leon Wolfe, Bob Lang, Bev Dittmar

Dept of Tourism staff attendance: Drew Nussbaum

Other Council Members Present: Sam Landes, Gary Hilgendorf, Dale Mayo, Joel Enking, Andy Malecki, Mike Holden, Don Mroteck, Erica Keehn

DNR staff attendance: Marty Stone, Jillian Steffes, Cathy Burrow

Public attendance: Nathan Matters, other members of the public

1. Call to order at 15 minutes after the LE & Safety Committee adjourned.

2. Agenda Repair

- None

3. Public Comments

- Kerry Severson – Farms in SW WI are being fragmented. More landowners means increased difficulty in obtaining permission for trails, increased risk of trail closures.

4. Committee Chair Comments – Abby Haas

- None

5. Committee Member Issues

- The WI Department of Tourism's Office of Outdoor Recreation does not have any snowmobilers on the membership. Committee would like to see snowmobilers represented. The office is currently only funded through June 30th, 2021

Motion to have Drew Nussbaum look into getting snowmobilers represented in the membership of the Office of Outdoor Recreation by Sue, 2nd by Bev. MOTION PASSED

6. Tourism Update – Drew Nussbaum (Dept of Tourism)

- Wisconsin Department of Tourism is currently administering the TRAVEL Stimulus Grant that will help the Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development organizations in our state. This includes Chambers of Commerce, CVB's, and similar tourism entities. The WDT is also assisting with sharing information about the DOA Cultural Grant.
- A group of legislators drafted a letter to DNR Secretary Cole over concerns with uncompleted trail damage repair on Elroy-Sparta Trail. Tourism was contacted for information about economic impact.
- Tourism continues to collaboratively work with the DNR on safety messaging that can be used by tourism promotion and tourism development entities across Wisconsin. April Dombrowski, DNR Law Enforcement and Martin Stone, DNR Administrative Warden have been resources for project.
- Travel Wisconsin will launch the Winter Trail Conditions Report in November, and a thank you and reminder was presented for current snowmobiling conditions reporters to please continue to support the updates.
- Tourism will launch a survey in February 2021 (tentatively) focused on snowmobiling economic impact and travel trends as it relates to the tourism sector businesses in communities across Wisconsin.

7. Ways to Improve Mapping

- Digital statewide mapping would be beneficial to the trail riders, but local clubs are hesitant about the potential loss of revenue from map sales. Ultimately, paper maps are still going to be in demand, helpful for riders when they actually GET to the trail system. Communication with the clubs may help them understand the benefits to a statewide digital map, and reassure them as to the potential for future map sales
- GTS (Groomer Tracking Systems) already shows all of the trails online with their Smartphone app.
- Local sponsors (businesses) already contribute to the clubs. If there are multiple map source platforms, how can we avoid sponsors getting \$\$ requests from multiple sources? Nathan with GTS is working on a club driven sponsorship aspect to the app. Clubs could have their local sponsors added to the GTS app, which would be a good selling point for the clubs. Would increase exposure to potential visitors from outside the area and outside the state.

8. Engaging Businesses in Local Clubs

- Discussion about local businesses contributing/sponsoring clubs. Trends (increasing or decreasing support) seem to be variable by location. May be dependent on the local club's ability to communicate with sponsors.

9. Loss of Tourism due to Trail Closures

- Closure on the Elroy-Sparta is an example. If the trail is closed, tourism dollars will be impacted. No clear solution other than to try and get trails reopened as promptly as possible.

10. Current Legislative Action

- See Drew's Report #6

11. Housekeeping and Wrap-Up

- Tourism Committee will try to meet again in November or December.

12. Adjourn

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