



Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 23rd, 2020

LOCATION: DNR Rhinelander Service Center, 107 Sutliff Ave, Rhinelander
DNR Spooner Service Center, 810 W Maple St, Spooner

Council Members Present: Rob McConnell (Chair), James Wisneski, Adam Harden, Bobby Donahue, Mike Biese, Daniel Thole

Council Members Absent: Dave Traczyk

DNR Staff: Jillian Steffes, Cathy Burrow, Ed Slaminski, Annie Loechler, Faith Murray, Kurt Byfield

Public: Randy Harden (WATVA), Mike Peterson (Washburn Co), Mark Heil (Washburn Co)

1. Call to order – 3:05 PM by Rob

2. Approval of previous meeting minutes

Draft minutes from August 28, 2019 and October 9, 2019 are posted online.

Motion to approve minutes by Bobby, 2nd by Jim. Motion carries.

3. Agenda Repair

None

4. Chair Report – Rob

- Let's keep working together and keep communication going.

5. DNR Report – Jillian

- The majority of the projects approved by the ORV Council this summer have received their grant funding, just a few projects still under review by DNR staff.
- Registrations continue to grow, particularly UTVs (See attachments)
- Fatality report published by Law Enforcement, 22 fatalities in 2019. (See attachments)

6. Discussion: Proposed Legislation AB652/SB583

Presentation by Randy – This legislation contains items that have been accumulating since 2012 on a variety of issues including registration, law enforcement and grant funding. WATVA has been meeting with stakeholders around the state including clubs, county coordinators and law enforcement to get feedback and collaboration on items. Representatives Felzkowski and Senator Marklein were the initial sponsors of the current legislation but have heard from DNR about items of concern. Rep Felzkowski and Sen Marklein are in the process of deciding what changes they may choose to make, in the hopes of moving this legislation forward yet this session.

7. Information and Action: Proposed legislation regarding NR 64.14 (2r) Maintenance Funding of Hybrid Trails (TROUTE)

Representative Felzkowski has reached out to DNR and WATVA to get feedback on drafting legislation that is desired by the bear hunting public, to ensure they continue to have access to historic county forest roads. The concern as relayed to DNR staff was that those constituents wish to prevent a scenario in which county administrators may close a county forest road to vehicle traffic in order to convert it to a trail, in order to access grant funding. One way to address this concern may be to increase maintenance funds on "troutes" (trail-route hybrids). There are currently 40 miles of non-gas-tax roads that meet the definition of troute and have been approved for maintenance funding. Further discussion is needed, WATVA will reach out to Rep Felzkowski and work to meet with the bear hunting representative. This proposed legislation is in the works for a future session, so there is time to work on language.

8. Information and Action: Trail/grant issues

a. Action required on grant, storm damage and/or amendment requests

COST INCREASE REQUESTS

Grant #	County	Amt Req	Motion
ATV-3915	Oneida	\$1,934	Motion to approve by Jim, 2 nd by Bobby. Motion carries.

9. Emergency Storm Damage Applications – when should DNR accept an application outside the normal grant cycle

Historically, applications for emergency storm damage were only considered if there had been a state or federally declared emergency as a result of a storm event. Over the years, that benchmark was relaxed. The Snowmobile Grant Program is currently seeing an increase in small dollar, primarily labor “storm damage” requests. The Department is looking for guidance from the Snowmobile Council on thresholds or benchmarks that we should set to consider accepting an out-of-grant-cycle “Storm Damage” request. Snowmobile Council is meeting Feb 10th, we will update the ORV Council on what insight or feedback they may have had for the Department.

10. Council members’ matters

ROB: The Joint Committee on Finance has approved funding to purchase the railroad grade that would extend the Wolf River State Trail north of Crandon.

BOBBY (question): Looking at the fatality report, what kinds of trends are we seeing from year to year?

MIKE (response): It appears most fatalities involve a lack of helmet use, and/or alcohol. Also observes an increase in registered machines, but a decrease in fatalities.

11. Public Comments

a. WATVA (Randy Harden)

The portion of AB652/SB583 that pertains to safety signage is intended for use of educational signs at welcome centers. WATVA will also be working towards increasing the ATV grant program spending authority in future legislation.

WATVA Annual Meeting – April 3-5, 2020

WATVA VIP Ride – September 18th, 2020

b. Public

no comments

12. Housekeeping matters

None

13. Adjourn

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