

Vilas County
Snowmobile Trail Safety Committee Meeting
March 22, 2012 – 1 pm
Vilas County Courthouse Conference Room 2

Present: Sig Hjemvick, Chair; Leo Crawley; Mike Keintz; Dale Mayo; Gerald Ritter; Holly Tomlanovich

Excused: Ralph Sitzberger, Vice Chair; Brett Bockhop; Gina Egan; Stan Guif; Renn Karl

Also Present: Tim Price – DNR Conservation Ward; David Walz – DNR Trail Supervisor for Woodruff area; Ray Wolfe – LDF Conservation Warden; Ken Anderson – Media; Janna Kahl - Vilas County Human Resources

1. Meeting was called to order at 1:02 pm
2. Verification of posting of meeting by Dale Mayo.
3. Motion to approve agenda by Mike Keintz. Second by Leo Crawley. Motion carried.
4. Motion to approve minutes from the February 16, 2012 meeting made by Dale Mayo. Second by Gerald Ritter. Motion carried.
5. Chair welcome & introduction of guests.
6. **Alliance Report – Leo Crawley**

The Vilas County Alliance met last evening, March 21, 2012. The major portion of the meeting was with regard to the direction forward following the failure of the CAP/Step fee increase program at the Legislative level. The Program did not make it out of either Legislative branch sub committees.

The Alliance is in favor of a snowmobile registration fee increase in the area of \$10 per year based on the current 2 year snowmobile registration. An increase to \$50 for a 2 year period. There also was discussion of a possible gallon increase from 50 gallons per register snowmobile. Currently a percentage of gas tax, based on 50 gallons per registered snowmobile is part of the Snowmobile Recreation Fund.

The Representative from the Sayner Barnstormers asked Leo Crawley to bring back to the Safety Committee the topic of etiquette of what to do when a snowmobiler meets a groomer on the trail. Discussion followed. Dale Mayo said this might be a good topic for the PSA's next season.

Sig Hjemvick suggested posters. Ray Wolfe suggested news story. Gerald Ritter asked if the Snowmobile Safety Course addressed the approach to groomers. Mike Keintz said it was not part of the course but said that it might be a good addition to the course.

Leo Crawley said that the Presque Isle Sno-Bunnies placed a counter on Trail 6 by the Rearing Pond. In a period from December 10, 2011 through February 20, 2012, there were 18,120 snowmobiles were counted passing through this area.

7. **DNR Report**

a. David Walz - New Trail Supervisor for the Woodruff area introduced himself.

Sig Hjemvick welcomed Walz & followed with discussion & update of the area. He explained the Snowmobile Safety Committee purpose & mission of "Safe family oriented snowmobiling".

b. Tim Price

Price discussed the RSET Eagle River placement this past winter season. He said the on trail contacts were minimal. He had hoped for more contacts. His thoughts are that use in a vendor style setting might be a better use, such as the Derby Track or Snowmobile Shows. He further stated that attendance at Cruiser Fest saw somewhat the same results. Weather conditions may have been part of the reason as it was cold with blowing

winds. He also said it might be a perception issue. Perhaps signing on the trail prior to the trailer placement might alert the rider to the location & purpose of the trail.

Discussion followed regarding snowmobile rentals & renters. Thoughts were that more time needed to spent with the potential renters before they headed out on the trail. Track Side rental department reported more "wrecks" this season than previous seasons. There were 6 this season with 2-3 more normal. 25 accidents that would be considered major, which is damage of \$1500 or more, were reported. Of these 10 had damage of \$4000 or more.

8. Sheriff's Report – Gerald Ritter

February, 2012 statistics were 11 complaints & 3 OWI's. 24 hours total with 5 hours spent on administration. 11 citations issued and 4 written warnings.

March, 2012 statistics: No patrol hours by sled. 8 hours on road patrol. 11 complaints. 0 OWI's. 2 accidents.

Ray Wolf had no statistics available. He was involved in an accident in pursuit of a speeder. Discussion of pursuit methods.

9. County Coordinator Report – Dale Mayo

No fatalities in Vilas County this season. It has been 30 years+ since the last 0 fatality season. Total for the State of Wisconsin is 10. Attached to these minutes are:

- a. DNR fatality statistics
- b. Training log
- c. Fatality History
- d. Trauma Center by Center breakdown

Discussion of what else might be included on the Trauma Center report. Suggestion of a report from the Rental locations. Gerald Ritter brought forward the idea of GPS on a rental snowmobile which would track the activity of the snowmobile. There may possibly be privacy concerns. A thank you letter will be sent to Howard Young, Marshfield Clinic & other "ER's" that provided information.

10. Advertising – Dale Mayo

With Cindy Burzinski absent due to a meeting schedule conflict, Dale Mayo presented.

a. PSA's - there was good positive feedback. The PSA's have been discontinued on WRJO radio & Channel 12 TV for the season. There were some invoicing issues relative to billing & the County Budget. The invoice received in February has been applied to the 2011 budget. The second invoice for \$120 has been applied to the 2012 budget leaving \$880 in the budget.

Next season the plan is to expand on the radio stations carrying the PSA's. This will require recording the ads with & without music.

b. Photo shoot – The photo shoot was February 19, 2012 in Arbor Vitae. About a dozen snowmobiles participated. On February 21, 2012 there was another photo shoot at a bridge trail in Manitowish Waters. The cost for both shoots was paid by the Vilas County Tourism Department.

11. TINS County Side Map – Committee

Leo Crawley reported that there was concern expressed by Rocky Caffarella of the Vilas County Snowmobile Alliance & recently elected AWSC Representative, about the payment of \$15 by the EMT's fire departments & other emergency service groups. He feels that the maps should be given free to these organizations. It was reported that all were happy to pay. Sig Hjemvick will research & work on this issue & bring back to the committee in the future.

Sig Hjemvick thanked Tim Price for getting 50 of the "Dad Hugging Daughter" posters with the

words “What would she do without you?” This was followed by discussion of other poster ideas. Several themes were discussed including the usage of the U.S. Snowmobile Association & International Snowmobile Association poster and working in conjunction with the area schools for design ideas.

12. Letter & Communication.

a. Snow Plowing – Holly Tomlanovich

Reported concern over the plowing of trails shut. Sno-Eagles, Inc. gave Town of Washington an “A” for their efforts with no trails plowed shut. Sig Hjemvick said that Vilas County does the plowing for the Town of Lincoln & the City of Eagle River so a contact to Jarred Maney of the Highway Department is recommended. A contact to the Town of Cloverland was also recommended.

b. PSA’s on school computers – Tim Price

Tim Price spoke to Mr. Strong teacher of the Mass Communication Class about the usage of PSA’s computers. Mr. Strong said he is working to incorporate the PSA theme in a class syllabus. The class would produce Computer, Radio, Video & Print Media PSA’s plus a Marketing Strategy for same. This would be presented to the Safety Committee in the future. Gerald Ritter also reported that Scott Foster of the St. Germain School is also on board with the idea.

c. Setting speed limits on Town Roads – Sig Hjemvick

Sig Hjemvick stated that State Statutes require ALL MOTOR VEHICLES to comply with this Statute. This included snowmobiles. Discussion followed on way to increase adherence to this Statute.

d. Sig Hjemvick added he is working on new appointments to the committee. Tim Price & Cindy Burzinski are 2. He further added a Thank You to the Safety Committee efforts which has been integral to the opening of communications between all agencies in the County.

e. Dale Mayo issued a “Big Thank You” to everyone for their efforts.

13. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be June 21, 2012 unless Tim Price arranges a meeting with the Mass Communication Class.

14. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm with motion by Leo Crowley. Second by Dale Mayo.