

Snowmobile Advisory Council Meeting Minutes  
Bangor – DACF Conference Room  
July 8, 2015  
8:30 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.

Participants

Council Members:

Marie Candeloro, Chair, Kokadjo Roach Riders  
Terry Hill, Co-Chair, Bowlin-Matagamon S.C.  
Frank Clukey, E. Millinocket, Millinocket, Medway Recreation  
John Monk, MSA  
Steve Edwards, Birch Point Lodge  
Gordon Gamble, Wagner Forest Management  
Bob Hansen, MSA  
Richard Merrill, Snow Valley Sno Goers, Andover  
Maurice Marden, Piscataquis Valley S.C.

Guests:

Bob Meyers, MSA  
Peter Poors, Airline Snowmobile Club  
Maryann Janusz, Airline Snowmobile Club  
Frank Janusz, Airline Snowmobile Club  
David Bridges, Airline Snowmobile Club  
Jack Lord, MSA  
Larry Lafland, Eastern Maine Snowmobile Club

Off-road Recreational Vehicle Office Staff:

Ron Hunt, Acting Director, Bureau of Parks and Lands  
Scott Ramsay, Director, Off-road Recreational Vehicle Office  
Joe Higgins, Snowmobile Club Grant Coordinator, Off-road Recreational Vehicle Office  
Lana LaPlant-Ellis, Senior Planner, Off-road Recreational Vehicle Office

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Marie Candeloro, Chairperson started the meeting at 8:30 AM.

Agenda Item: Approval of previous minutes from the October 23, 2014 meeting.

**Frank Clukey made a motion to accept the October 23rd minutes, Gordon Gamble seconded. Vote: 7 in favor motion carries.**

Agenda Item: Finalize the Disaster Relief Grant rules.

Scott discussed the June 23<sup>rd</sup> public hearing and that there were no comments on the record concerning the proposed Disaster Relief Grant rules. MSA did submit written comments:

“Disaster Relief Grants – We believe that the goal of carrying a cash balance of 10% revenue is unrealistic given the changes in the revenue streams over the past several years. Under the previous formula for gas tax revenues, the current system may have been adequate, but since the change to the new formula, the Program is virtually assured of year-

round monthly revenues in excess of \$100,000. Because of this, we believe that the cash balance of 5% of revenues would be more appropriate than 10%. Obviously this would increase the available funding for either the Disaster Relief Grant Program or the regular grant programs.”

Gordon asked where and why the 10%? Scott – This issue was debated at great length by the Commissioners Committee on PL48. It is standard business practice to keep 10% of your income on hand. That Committee recommended going with 10%. This was reported to the Legislature, which accepted the report. Gordon – If we want to change would we need to go back to the Commissioner? Scott – yes and the Legislature. Frank C. – This was debated at length and I think we should leave the 10% since this is normal practice. Marie – how long does the money set there? Scott – This committee decided to transfer \$50,000 into this account which will be done in August. The maximum amount that can sit in the account is \$100,000, which will stay there until applied for by a club. Gordon suggested we leave it at 10% and revisit the issue in 3 years to see if it needs to be adjusted.

**Frank Clukey made a motion to accept the Disaster Relief Grant Rules as written. Dick Merrill seconded. Vote: 8 in favor –motion carries.**

Agenda Item: Finalize the Capital Equipment Grant Rules

Scott discussed the June 23<sup>rd</sup> public hearing. There was no formal testimony, only questions. Are you trying to reach a 40% target? Yes. There is a \$200,000 cap, what if the machine exceeds that amount? We will only match to the \$200,000 the remaining balance would be up to the club. Why change the dates to June and September? We wanted to close the year out in the same fiscal year. Currently we cross the fiscal year line and it makes for a lot more work. Also NH and VT have the same June and September timeline. So Maine is not disadvantaged when it comes to buying machines, we wanted to be in the same timeline as other surrounding states. If a piece of equipment was bought in one year and the club did not get a grant, can the club apply for the same piece of equipment the following year? No. It must be in the fiscal year of purchase. There was one formal written comment from MSA:

“Capital Equipment Grants – Our concern is with section B(3), regarding the review of the applications, In order to ensure greater transparency in this approval process, we believe that a subcommittee of the Snowmobile Trail Fund Advisory Council should review and approve all Capital Equipment Grant requests. There was considerable discussion about this at the Advisory Council meetings, and it was our understanding that the consensus was to have the grants approved by the Council. This change would be simple to implement given the regular meeting of the Council, and would provide much-needed transparency in the review and approval process.”

Scott – since it has always been our intent that the Council will score the grant applications and given similar language is in the Disaster Relief Grant Rule, we can add that language to the Capital Equipment Grant Rules as well.

**Terry made the motion to add the Council scoring language to the Capital Equipment Rules. Gordon seconded. Vote: 9 in favor – unanimous – motion carries.**

Agenda Item: Second payment on the Capital Equipment Grants.

Scott – we had \$40,000 drop out. We have a choice to leave it in the CEG or make a second payment. Along with the June income we would have \$55 - \$60 thousand to redistribute.

**Marie made a motion to make a second payment. John Monk seconded. Vote: 9 in favor – unanimous – motion carries.**

Agenda Item: State maintained areas - Beddington

Scott – we held 4 meetings and invited anyone that would be touched by the state leaving these areas. We have set up second meetings for Frye Mt. and Mt. Blue because we have not received any formal proposals and we want a face to face to make it very clear the state may walk away from these areas. We did receive formal proposals from the Airline Riders Snowmobile Club in Beddington. Beddington can do it for \$720 a mile and the State does it for \$770 a mile.

- State would replace the tracks on the groomer and give it to the club
- State would give the equipment currently used to maintain the trail to the club
- The club would lease the building for a nominal fee

Turning over state owned property (groomer) to the club would require Legislative approval.

Frank Janusz from the Airline Snowmobile Club spoke:

- We have 68-69 miles of trail. We added 7-8 miles to tie to the Sunrise Trail
- We would like to keep the groomer that we know (state owned groomer)
- Tracks are going to have to be replaced with steel cleated tracks
- We would really like the state to stay in the area. We are happy with the way it is now.
- Who owns the building where the groomer is stored? Scott – BPL owns the building and Forestry owns the land
- We are ready to go whenever you hand it over.

Scott – this is a good proposal we can fine tune to make sure we understand the entire proposal. Legislation needs to be put together in order turn the groomer over to the club. Given the legislative schedule this will not happen this year. The plan will be, we will groom one more year then hand it over to the club. The additional year will also allow us to get the tracks replaced on the groomer. This may not save money initially but will save money over the long run. We will bring the proposal to the commissioner for his approval. We will present a package of all 4 areas together. Each area will have a plan.

Maryann Janusz wanted to make it clear that this shift will be hard on the Airline Snowmobile club. There is very little population in the area and few volunteers.

**Dick Merrill made the motion to have the State maintain the area for one more year while legislation is submitted to allow the Airline Riders to get the groomer and take over the area. Frank Clukey seconded. Vote: 8 in favor - motion carries.**

Evergreen Valley

Scott review – Stoneham Knight Riders does not want the machine. They want it to go to auction and receive the money from the sale. They also want to be guaranteed a Capital Equipment Grant to purchase a new machine. And they want the Kezar Trail Blazers to be guaranteed a CEG as well. The price per mile would be \$761.

Gordon asked how critical is this trail?

A: It is ITS 80 and is a major connector to Bethel, Fryeburg, Albany, Stoneham, Gilead and a major feed to NH. It is the only joint trail system that is in state statute. The US Forest Service has put \$500,000 into a bridge on this system.

Frank said he has a hard time supporting two guaranteed CEGs. Dick and Terry were on board with this. The clubs can apply for a grant with no guarantees just like all the others.

The ORV program needs to go back and renegotiate with the club to see if they would take the equipment or the equipment goes to auction and they get the money. They will need to apply like all the other clubs with no guarantees.

**Frank Clukey made a motion to have Scott renegotiate with Stoneham to see if they will take the groomer or it would go to auction and get the money, with no guaranteed CEG grant to either Stoneham or Kezar clubs. John Monk seconded. Vote: 9 in favor – unanimous – motion carries.**

For the next meeting Terry would like a definition of the term “equitable” used in LD 716. She would also like a spread sheet with the clubs that get only club grants, clubs that get club grants and municipal as well and clubs that only get municipal.

Next meeting – August 12, 2015 at 8:30 AM same place

Dick made a motion to adjourn and Steve seconded. No vote was taken.

Adjourn – 11:20