

MICHIGAN SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting
March 18, 2017 St. Ignace, MI

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order by President Jeff Goss at 9:30 am.
- II. **INTRODUCTIONS:** Jeff thanked all in attendance, and said it doesn't go unnoticed.
- III. **ROLL CALL:** The roll call of the Board of Directors was taken and recorded. Tim and Sarah Long, Stu Volkers, Don Reed, Bill Bradfield, Don Wing, Jim Dickie, and John Griffin were Excused. There were several unexcused absences.
- IV. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Additions:(Old Business) {D} Snow Bikes Revisited/Tracked ATV's (New Business) {A} New Council Development {B} Revenue Ideas/Online Store {C} Clean Snowmobile Challenge Recap
Moved by Mark Saigh, second by Jeff Biggs to accept the revised agenda. Motion carried.
- V. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Minutes were emailed to the Board of Directors, and are available at this meeting.
Moved by Jeff Biggs, second by Mark Pankner, to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.
- VI. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** John presented the budget vs actual. He explained are about half way thru our fiscal year to this point. Fixed expenses are right in line with where they should be. John went over the highlights. Fundraising/Non-dues Income is doing Fantastic, Donations are strong. The Groomer Workshop we haven't received the bills for as of now, and the Legislative, we received an ISMA grant for. Membership dues are coming in steady, but are down from where they should be. We are still expecting income from the magazine. Last issue will be out soon. Trail Permits are up from last year, on the revenue side about 10% that's come thru MSA. We won't know final numbers until the season is over and the agents start returning their permits. The question was asked how we are sitting this year as compared to before. Is there a deficit? John said we are not too bad off, we are in fairly good shape. He said he does a lot by credit card where he gets more bang for the buck. Jeff explained to the group that the officers will be meeting by webinar in the next month and also in the fall to discuss the budget
Moved by Jeff Biggs, second by David Low to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.
- VII. **COMMUNICATIONS:** Jeff started off by thanking Jim Kelts and Ron Corbett, for working the booth at the Birch Run Sneak Peek. And stated that he and Rich Rottier also went to the Delta Plex. Jim Kelts said there were more people coming to the booth this year than last year. They signed up some new members as well as returning members, and talked to a lot of people. The majority of members signed up were past members that had that their memberships lapse, so he does believe we are missing the boat somewhere. He stated communication is the key. Ron Corbett recognized Dave Cooper because while at the show, a few separate people came up and mentioned "Santa Claus" getting off the groomer and talking to them. That goes a long way. Ron also mentioned attendance was down at Birch Run and the Delta Plex.
- VIII. **REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Bill provided a report to everyone in attendance, placed on file. Some items of interest are: Bill participated in the first Snowmobile/ORV sub-committee conference call. Each side is getting familiar with the other program. After the call was done there were more questions than answers, ranging from route overlaps, to shared equipment, and shared costs, and more. Bill participated in the PRD Strategic Plan. Attended a meeting with Rep. Vanderwall regarding sponsoring some of our legislation. He has continued meetings with Jackie Blodgett regarding the final numbers of what we need as far as program dollars for new equipment and infrastructure for the snowmobile program. Attended the Ride In in Grayling which was a great event. Had a good Legislative ride, and unfortunately had to cancel the Congressional ride. Bill attended the Groomer Workshop. The end of Bill's report gave a list of 10 priorities that the PRD is requesting from the MNRTF. Not sure if the committee will fund any or some or all. More to come. For a complete list please contact the Secretary, and she can send you a copy of this report.
- IX. **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
 - A. **LEGISLATIVE:** Several representatives attended the Legislative Ride. It went very well. Indian River Motorsports, Nelsons Lakeside, and Fox Motorsports donated sleds. Several volunteers helped make the event a success. Thank you. The Congressional Ride was cancelled. Bill talked to Sen. Dave Hildebrand and Laura Cox from the House about our Return on Investment (ROI). It was decided that he would ask for a \$2-million-dollar line item in the budget for equipment purchases. Bill is working on a Tourism Multiplier. The committee is working to firm up what the definition of a snowmobile is, Snowmobile only between Dec 1-March 31, increase in fines, law enforcement, and fixing the Historic snowmobile dates.
10 Minute Break
 - B. **MEMBERSHIP:** Ron VanderVliet reported the committee passed out the cards at the last meeting. He talked about the competition of sign up the most members. There will be door prizes at the convention. Jeff stated John Griffin has purchased 2000 of those cards out of his own pocket, so Thank You John! They are easy to put in your pocket and hand out.
 - C. **TRAIL COORDINATION:** Jeff Biggs reported the weather didn't cooperate this year. The question was asked if there was a state wide master plan to connect the trails? That will be discussed.
 - D. **PUBLICATION:** Donna Cody reported that they are moving forward. The last issue has just been proofed so watch for that. She stated she's looking for more articles on things like kid friendly rides, saddle-bag rides, and

destination rides. Jeff said something he would like to see is a new member of the month in the magazine, with a picture, and a short bio. Publication Committee has a meeting on May 12.

X. OTHER REPORTS:

- A. CONVENTION:** Jim Duke said there wasn't much new to report. Per the Board's recommendation, we have signed the contract with Shanty Creek Resort for the 2017 Convention and will be working on a registration package in coming months to come up with a cost per person. Rates will be \$89- \$109. Also looking into options for a competitive, but fun, Friday evening event. He will notify everyone when they are ready to take reservations. Dates are October 20th – 22nd. Jeff mentioned looking for things for people to do that don't attend the meetings like massages, wine tastings, etc. The committee is working on it.
- B. SWAP MEET:** Jamie Bellman stated he would love to work with us again at Martin. Unfortunately, right now, that falls on the same dates as our sway meet at Saginaw. Those dates will be Sept 22 and 23, 2017. It's on the calendar with the Fair board. If there are suggestions, please let Jim Dickie know. Camping is available there with Electric, and there is a dump station. It was mentioned that perhaps we should try to work out something for free camping for the volunteers. Mark Coe asked about the possibility of an online swap meet.
- C. WEBSITE:** Bill said the website is moving along. The web guy runs hot and cold. Bill stated Karen has a great handle on it, and handles all the social media tremendously. Jeff asked if there is a counter yet. Bill stated they are still working on it, but they did get the report from last year. All web ads from last year renewed except one, and we gained about 15 more.
- D. MICHIGAN TRAILS & GREENWAYS:** Nothing to report.
- E. FRIENDS OF THE FOREST:** Jim Duke reported he received an invitation to participate in a National Collaboration Cadre for the Hiawatha National Forest to gather perspectives and determine methods of how to better work together with communities in the future. Unfortunately, the dates for this event conflict with the ACSA Fly-In, but there is an opportunity to comment via conference call in such instances. He requested this option but have not, at this time, received confirmation. At the Eastern U P Citizens Advisory Council meeting on Thursday, February 23rd, a discussion by DNR Law, with the assistance of Paul E. Gaberdiel, of an overview of rules for modified vehicles (ATV/ORV/Dirt Bike) conversions took place. He believes they were able to correct misconceptions about what was legal and what was illegal to be used, both on and off trails in Michigan. The Officer's opinion was that if the machine is manufactured for over the snow use it will be considered legal but no conversions will be. The NFS & DNR held a Forest Service Comprehensive Trail Plan Organizational Meeting on Monday evening March 6th in Trenary. There were approximately 35 individuals present. The purpose of this meeting was to establish teams of all user groups and select one representative and one alternate to bring the team's recommendations for trail improvements to the NFS for consideration, and will meet every other month to do so. After the informational introduction, breakout sessions by user groups were encouraged. The "Over Snow Vehicle" group consisted to seven individuals who discussed the guidelines and requirements of the team. Selection of delegates were completed with myself for representative and Don Britton as the alternate. The first meeting will be scheduled for a date in April, location to be determined. The annual Joint meeting of the Western & Eastern Citizens Advisory Councils was held on the evening of Tuesday the 14th in Marquette where we discussed issues of mutual concern. Nothing much pertaining to snowmobiling was on the agenda but they did have an update on progress of the Iron Belle Trail. Also there was discussion of permitting fat tire bike use on the newly developed Presque Isle trail in Marquette which has previously been strictly a pedestrian & Jogger's venue. The question came up again about classification of "E-bikes" being allowed and whether they were considered motorized or not. Steve Debrabander gave a power point presentation on the Natural Resources Trust Fund Grants program and who is eligible to apply. The Outdoor Recreation Planning meeting was postponed until May 3rd due to the sponsor's inability to be present. That meeting will take place at 2:00PM in Marquette. DNR Law has also stepped up their patrols for snowmobiles and are focused on the sound issue. During the weekend for the I-500, an enhanced patrol of area trails resulted in more than 500 contacts with 20 citations written and 66 verbal warnings issued. For the most part, even those cited had a positive attitude for this action. Lt. Skip Hagy stated that they will continue this enforcement into the future across the Upper Peninsula, and has received positive comments from both landowners & snowmobilers.
- F. GROOMER WORKSHOP:** Jeff Goss started off by saying what a fantastic event it was, from the food, to the breakouts, and vendors. He stated Karen did just an awesome job and should be commended. He asked Jeff Biggs for a recap. Jeff Biggs stated he felt the DNR involvement was key. Jeff also stated Karen was the key. Thank you Karen. The question was asked how many grant sponsors attended, and the answer was 26 they believed.
- G. ACSA:** Jim Duke reported on Tuesday the 21st, the Executive Committee meeting was held via webinar with both Bill & myself participating. Several ongoing items were discussed and will remain on the agenda for future action by the full Board meeting to be held at the DC Fly-In. Of primary interest, however, is the large number of fatalities in New York, New Hampshire, and Wisconsin this season. Not sure what the reason is here in Michigan, but would like to think it has something to do with our zero tolerance and other safety campaigns, because we've had the least that he can remember, in forever... only 5 that I know of, and none were on our groomed trails. The NFS/RRAC will meet in Louisville, KY on April 20th & 21st, with the DC Fly-In coming immediately after on the 22st thru the 25th for the Michigan delegation, including travel time. This will be an exciting time in the Capital City

with so many new Congressmen & Women. Finally, Christine reported the calendar sales continue to be good in some states and not so good in others. The MI/WI competition as of the last meeting has Michigan leading by almost 100 in sales. Donna Cody stated she believes social media is the key in keeping the trails safe. If you see a danger, say something. Bill stated the fatality report may need to be adjusted from 5 to 6. That will be up to the DNR. Jeff stated that the Hand Signals will remain in effect. The recommendation will be if you don't feel safe, keep your hands on the handlebars.

- H. **CHARITY:** Kay stated to everyone to please keep track of all the charity hours you do on an individual basis, as well as a club. She also reminded the group it doesn't have to be snowmobile related. The list has been sent to the club representative. It needs to be in by April 30. Jeff asked if an article could be done on a charitable ride that a club had done, and if she would work on that. Jeff said that would maybe help get things going.
- I. **MIDWEST CHAPTER:** Next meeting will be at the Fly-In.
- J. **BY-LAWS:** Per the recommendation of the Executive Committee at the January meeting, the committee researched the requirements necessary for councils to maintain active status and appoint delegates to the Board of Directors. This has been done and the resulting recommendation for bylaw amendments are presented. Copies are available on the paperwork table. These are only recommendations for possible solutions to the matter of councils being unable to maintain eligibility, and the procedures for the delegates wishing to remain on the Board and active to do so. If approved by this Board, the amendments can be presented, published, and voted on in October. Other options can certainly be considered as well. Jeff asked if this was going to cause a hardship. Jim replied this came about because there are some councils that are not really councils anymore, but are clubs. And we don't want to eliminate the delegates, so we need to re-establish the council areas. Some councils are grant sponsors and need to remain councils. Donna Cody stated she feels this is a very good idea. She believes more people will get involved. Bill mentioned the councils are allowed to request a waiver from the Board if they are not in compliance. The councils are supposed to have 5 entities, whether it's one club and 4 commercial members, or 2 clubs and 3 commercial members. As long as there's 5. Jeff thanked Jim for doing the research.

***Tabled Until The July Board of Directors Meeting
Lunch***

Bylaws continued after lunch. There was another proposal given to reinstate the Recreation Committee to a Standing Committee. It was also stated in the proposal handed in that the Ride In and Campout should be open to non-members as well as members because these events can show how much fun we have. If there is a motion the By-Laws committee will research it. Bill explained every event is open to non-members, so that isn't an issue. And Jeff said everyone is welcome on any committee, but to Chair a Standing Committee, you must be a member of the Executive Committee. Bill explained the reason for taking it out of the Standing Committees was because while the Chairs were doing a good job, there was no office communication. Jeff stated the communication has to be through the office, and we are all volunteers. No one gets their way paid, whether you chair the committee or not. Another reason was at that time there were members not on the Executive Committee that were willing to Chair the Recreation Committee.

Motion Made by David Low, second by Dave Cooper to Research putting the Recreation Committee back to a Standing Committee. Motion later Rescinded. Tabled Until July Board of Directors Meeting.

- K. **NON-DUES REVENUE:** Jeff said he will talk about this down under New Business Item B (Revenue Ideas)
 - L. **RECREATION:** Lizz reported the Ride In was held at the Ramada Inn in Grayling. There were 4 groups that went out Saturday. Lizz thanked everyone for their help for making it a successful event. The next Ride In has not been planned as of yet. The Campout will be at the Timberline Campground in Benzonia. Phone number (231)882-9548. Lizz asked that when you make your reservation you say it's under Lizz from MSA. There are 15 FHU and 15 Water and Electric sites. The dates are June 22-25. Ogema Hills Snowmobile Club will be donating the money for the food for Friday, Lewiston Trails will do Saturday night, and Benzie Manistee Sno Birds will donate for the Sunday breakfast. The website is timberlinecampgroundinc.com. Lizz has stated she will be unable to do this after the campout due to her son graduating. Jeff mentioned there has been talk of doing a Tri-State Ride In with Indiana, and maybe someone else. More to come.
- XI. OLD BUSINESS:**
- A. **CLUB/COUNCIL MAILING:** Bill explained this is on here because it's very confusing for all. A while ago, the dues were raised, but not for the clubs, the discount comes in if your club members are 100% MSA members. That takes a long time in the office to research, and some clubs weren't paying the correct amount. There were also only one or two clubs participating. Jeff said he would forward the email to the membership committee as well as Bill and Karen sometime in April. They will work together and bring a recommendation to the Board in July. John Houk brought up we are lacking revenue and we need it right now. He stated no research is needed. No special club rate is needed.
Moved by John Houk second by Jeff Biggs to do away with the Special Club Rate/MSA Discount effective August 31, 2017. Motion Carried.
 - B. **APPROVAL OF DELEGATES AT LARGE:** Jim Duke explained how the process works to become a Delegate at Large, which is putting a letter in the magazine. There are 2 pending. This will be done at the May meeting.

- C. **DECAL RE-ORDER:** Bill showed the two decals we have and gave everyone a recap what was discussed at the January meeting. Bill suggested 2000-4000. They only go to new members and people who request them.
Motion by Ron VanderVliet, second by Donna Cody to go with the Oval Decal. Motion Carried
Motion by David Low, second by Jeff Biggs to purchase 4000. (2 Nays) Motion Carried
- D. **SNOW BIKES REVISITED/TRACKED ATVS:** Dave Neuchterlein stated he believes MSA needs to get in front of the issue of the snow bikes. If we don't bring them into the fold, we are losing potential revenue and looking at trespass issues. He is not buying the damage to the trails argument. The question was asked should we look at making these snowmobiles. Jim Duke stated that at this time, the DNR is not considering them as such. Bill Manson said after Polaris bought Timbersled they wanted us to embrace this. The issue we have is over 50% of our trails are on private property. So the consensus is if it was born a snowmobile, it's a snowmobile, if it was born an ATV, it's an ATV, etc. Joe Chavis stated he sees no reason to worry at this time, as there is a conversion kit still wrapped in plastic next to the dirt bikes at one of the manufacturers he has gone to.

XII. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **NEW COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT:** Jessica asked how MSA/DNR gets involved in re-establishing a council. This is regarding the Gogebic Range Grant Sponsor. There are a few that would like to get back together as a council. Bill stated there used to be a council over the called the Western UP Snowmobile Council. Bill said that is still an active council now. Bill will research the council boundaries and see where they lie, and if they are in the council area or if they need to establish a new one, and get back to Jessica. Jim Duke said it is spelled out in the By-Laws what the councils need to do. Jim Duke will send the pertinent sections to Jessica. MSA is more than willing to help. Jeff thanked Jessica for all of her help and what she's been doing for us.
- B. **REVENUE IDEAS/ ONLINE STORE:** Jeff stated we need to generate some revenue, and adding some items to our store is a great idea. The lady we've been going through does a great job with the embroidery, and it looks fantastic. We just don't want to have a lot of stock. Jim Duke stated the ACSA online store has no inventory, you order, they ship. John brought up smile.amazon.com. MSA will be going on and becoming a Charity of Choice. It isn't much, but it's something. Jeff said if anyone has any suggestions, please let him know.
- C. **CLEAN SNOW CHALLENGE RECAP:** Jim Kelts said for it was a great time. There are the CSC books available in the back of the room. There were 12 gas snowmobiles, 6 diesels, and 6 electric. MI Tech won the 0 Emissions, and ETS won the Overall. It was a fantastic time and the kids did a great job.

XIII. TRAILS & SAW COMMITTEE REPORT:

REGION 1: Jim Duke reported they have experienced both excellent and deplorable trail conditions due to the ever-changing weather conditions, but overall there have been fewer complaints than in seasons past. The groomers and associated equipment has been taking a beating trying to keep up with the traffic and conditions, and the program is seeing an increase in requests for reimbursement of repair costs. The SAW had a meeting on Thursday the 2nd preceding the Groomer Workshop and discussed many of the issues facing the sponsors and the program. Don Britton gave an update on Trail 14.

REGION 2: Joe Kuchnicki asked about Trail 4 being moved to the south side of the road. They referred to Jessica Holley. Jessica will contact Karl from Jordan Valley and work on this issue. Mark Coe asked if we were aware that Consumers Energy is receptive to us using their power lines for a fee. Mark said it would be \$300 per mile, but they said it would be negotiable. Bill said Paul Yauk is working on this with Consumers now. Mark stated he believes they are open to suggestions.

REGION 3: Nothing to report. There's no snow.

- XIV. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Lizz reported our Snowmobiler of the Year got 30,000 miles on his sled this year, and the bad news is for those of you that know him, Bob Emerson passed away yesterday. He spearheaded the Oscoda CO. trails back in the 70's.

- XV. **DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be May 13, 2017 Location at Audie's Restaurant.

- XVI. **ADJOURNMENT:** *Moved by Ron VanderVliet, second by Larry Eder to Adjourn. Motion carried*
Adjourned at 2:56pm