

MISORVA
Board of Director Meeting (regular) – Saturday January 8, 2022
Location: Electronic (Zoom) Meeting

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/Welcome:** Meeting was called to order by President John Newman at 10:02 a.m.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** The roll call of the BOD was taken and recorded by Secretary, Stephanie Hubbarth-Bergen. The recording is available upon request. Absences include: Don Britton, Keith Churill, Keith Lynch, Chad Leiter, Rob LaLonde, Roy Hart, Grant Dewitt, John Houk, Kaye Houk, Alan Kava, Lyle Curry, Emerson Corder, Dan White, Dave Nuechterlien, Randy Belliel, and Brad Beardsley. Guests include: Jessica Holley-Roehrs (MDNR), Roger Kilbury, and Karl Davenport.
- III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** “Support the Sport” added as line “a” under New Business by John Newman. “ORV Funding” added as line “b” under New Business by Gary Blazer.
Motion by John Griffin to accept the agenda. Agenda approved as corrected by unanimous vote.
- IV. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Minutes were emailed and are available at this meeting. Errors brought to our attention include Sections VII/e (change “off trail riding” to “trespassing”) and XI (change “\$2000” to “2000 permits”). There were also a few typographical errors to be corrected. (Placed on file.)
Motion by John Griffin to accept the minutes with corrections. Motion approved by unanimous vote.
- V. **TREASURER’S REPORT & PAYMENT OF BILLS: Mark Pankner.** Balance Sheet and Statements were reviewed. Life Member Savings under Checking Account Balances should read \$16,010.64. (Placed on file.)
Motion by Archie Cole to accept the Treasurer’s report with correction. Motion approved by unanimous vote.
- VI. **COMMUNICATIONS: Karen Middendorp.** Karen received a disgruntled email from Gogebic Range Trail Authority. They were upset that there was an updated trail report for their system on our webpage. Karen explained that the website belongs to MISORVA, not the individual clubs, and that she updates trail pages on occasion when clubs have not as a courtesy to our members. She will begin to include the source of her info. Office has been busy as Carly has been out for personal reasons. Karen requested that the remainder of the agenda be taken out of order.
Motion by Dave Gentry to take the agenda items out of order. Agenda approved as corrected by unanimous vote.
- VII. **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
 - a. **Legislative: Lyle Curry.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. (Placed on file.)
 - b. **Membership: Brad Beardsley.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. (Placed on file.)
 - c. **Publication: Ron Schroeder.** No report. The committee will be meeting soon.
 - d. **Trails Region 1: Rob LaLonde.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. (Placed on file.)
 - e. **Trails Region 2: Alan Kava.** No report.
 - f. **Trails Region 3: Jim Berens.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. Local clubs are dealing with low snow as well as some trespassing issues. Jim has had a request for lease info that could be shared with landowners. Jessica Holley-Roehrs stated that MDNR is currently working on a pamphlet. (Placed on file.)
- VIII. **OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS**
 - a. **ACSA: John Newman.** Next meeting is January 10. Manufacturers have recently begun an ad campaign for the Snowmobiler’s Pledge about legal riding. The No Trespass Slogan Challenge ends January 15. ASCA calendars are still available through the office.
 - b. **Charity: Kaye Houk.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. (Placed on file.)
 - c. **By-Laws: Roy Hart.** No report.
 - d. **Friends of the Forest:**
 - i. **Ottawa Forest: Ernie Reimann.** No report.
 - ii. **Hiawatha West: Keith Churill.** No report.
 - iii. **Hiawatha East: Roy Hart.** No report.
 - iv. **Huron: Gary Blaser.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. (Placed on file.)
 - v. **Huron Manistee: Pete Finch.** There’s about eight inches of snow. Groomers are doing damage control due to the low snow. Pete has been given some names of the Dirt Dudes (the group discussed last month). He has forwarded the names to the local forest ranger. Jessica Holley-Roehrs stated that MDNR law enforcement is also investigating the group.
 - e. **Public Relations: Jeff Mariucci.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. The committee will begin working on being proactive instead of reactionary. (Placed on file.)
 - f. **Snowmobile Advisory Workgroup: Don Britton.** Report was emailed and is available at this meeting. (Placed on file.)
 - g. **ORV Advisory Workgroup: Keith Lynch.** No report.
- IX. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. **Committee Chairpersons: John Newman.** Committee assignment list was emailed and is available at this meeting. Please contact the office to set-up your meetings. (Placed on file.)
- b. **2020 Appropriations: John Newman.** The \$1.2 Million that was removed will be funded by MEDC (MI Economic Development Corporation) to repair the trails in the Lake Linden area. Thanks go out to Senators McBroom and Benzie for seeking this funding opportunity. SAW will now ask for that amount as a supplemental budget item for equipment. Karl Davenport stated that the \$2.15 Million for equipment and \$1.35 Million for the Mesick Bridge Project have been approved as of this week!
- c. **Law enforcement: John Newman.** John stated that this will be a long-term project. He is still waiting to hear from his contacts. Law enforcement agencies are currently experiencing hiring difficulties.
- d. **ORV Groomer Workshop: John Newman.** We would still like to pursue this workshop, possibly with the help of the Kalkaska County Sand and Snow group.

X. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Support the Sport: John Newman.** The meetings will be changed to the second and fourth Tuesday evenings and will not be regional based. This will allow committees to have additional time periods to meet.
- b. **ORV Funding: Gary Blazer.** Does December dirt grooming fall within the snow or ORV program? Jeremy Valley stated the club should document it as an allowable expenditure under the specific grant request (dirt vs snow). The late timing of dirt grooming may be cause for a restoration fund request. Karen Middendorp and Jessica Holley-Roehrs agreed that MDNR can use monies from either program if it is a dual use trail. Grant sponsors should seek help through their trail specialist as well as SAW and ORVAW.

- XI. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Ted Truckey questioned resident versus non-resident fees. John Newman replied that the issue gets raised periodically but never seems to gain any ground in the discussions at the state level. Karen explained that one reason it fails to progress is due to our program structure as well as our tourism initiatives. The Legislative Committee would need to investigate the pros and cons of resurrecting this issue. The legislation for the ORV license and permit fee spending formula will sunset in April 2024. The entire structure will go away and we would have to start the program from scratch. This is another item that would need to be investigated by the Legislative Committee. Karen Middendorp will request an itemized spending list for the ORV program. There were lengthy discussions regarding both of these issues. Ted Truckey will present both requests to the Legislative Committee. A March Ride is being planned. More information to follow. Groomer Workshop is tentatively scheduled for March 3-5. There is a distinct possibility that it will be virtual. More information to follow.

- XII. DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING:** Electronic (Zoom) meeting on Wednesday March 16, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. Committee chairpersons are requested to have a written report turned into the office by March 9, 2022.

****If you cannot attend, please contact the MISORVA Secretary via email, call, or text prior to the beginning of the meeting. ****

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- XIII. ADJOURNMENT: *Motion by Archie Cole to adjourn. Adjournment of meeting approved by unanimous vote.***

Meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Electronically signed by Stephanie Hubbarth-Bergen on March 16, 2022.

Committee Reports Jan 8 2022

Standing Committees

- **Legislative** – HB4535 going through language updates as requested by ORVAW to address landowner access to their properties by trail. Meeting was held, with Karen in attendance, before the end of the year (2021). SB 0106, 0210, 0211, 0556 / HB 4026, 4138, 4205, 4206 which are bills being followed have no updates per www.legislature.mi.gov
2020 funding still being held back based upon previous COVID restricted spending initiatives. Supplement for the funds has passed the House, but requires Senate approval yet.
Still waiting for the 1.15M grant for trail maintenance groups to be distributed.
- **Membership** - Good news! We have had two mailings go out, one was to those who have bought permits or items from the web site and the other was to past members that did not renew last year. Carly reports we have received 175 memberships from both mailings combined. It really seems to me once people hear about us and what we do for motorized recreation they are inclined to become members. Please everyone keep spreading the news of what we do for both dirt and snow.
- **Publication** - no report committee will be meeting soon.
- **Trails**
 - ❖ **Region 1** - Not much to report given the holidays and such. Typical early season challenges across the UP. Not enough snow yet in many places and LOTS of anxious riders. The new R1 trail committee is planning to meet via conference call this Thursday night to get organized and get to know each other, etc.
 - ❖ **Region 2** – no report
 - ❖ **Region 3** - Having just been appointed to the position of chair of this committee, I haven't had a lot of time to get contact info for all the clubs and councils in region 3. I have contacted as many as I could find info for and assigned the members of the committee to a club or two to contact and get their report. 3 of the committee members have gotten back to me with info on their assigned clubs, the other members have not responded. Below is a brief summary of the reports received. West shore council (Muskegon area) is ready for the season and like everyone else, awaiting the snow. They have a new warming trailer provided by the 231 club to take the place of the TeePee that was so popular for many years in that area. Lots of tree removal and brushing were done on the trail system from storm damage. West Michigan Snowmobile council reported that trails are in, leases are signed and checks are sent out. They have over 150 private landowners. The Tucker groomer received new tracks, and rebuilt the drive chain, costing around \$33,000. Land was lost near middleville and the clubs are working with the DNR to secure passage through the Barry game area, there is also a long stretch of pavement by the Thornapple river crossing that is needed to connect to the Alto trail. Not the best situation but necessary. New maps are being printed in partnership with the Allegan club as their trail systems are connected. Driftskippers have a few new landowners that would not sign a lease so re-routes were needed. 1.2 mile of trail was lost and is now routed on the road side, working on a solution for next year. Snowbusters down by the Indiana border report they are in talks with the four winds

casino about a possible trailhead there. Their groomer is down for repairs, should be done soon. Working on trying to connect to the four flags trail system, and additional landowners to try and get off the road sides. No reply from Allegan club after several attempts. Trying to find a contact person for Pere Marquette club. Made contact with the secretary at one point then no further contact. No response from Four Flags yet, need a good contact for them. Now response from the SW snowstompers, but they posted on facebook that they were ready for snow. No response from Gobels club...not sure if they are still active. left message for Edwardsburg club, no response. Thumbs up club, no response. If anyone has good contacts for these clubs please let me know

Other Committee Reports

- **ACSA**- See minutes
- **Charity** - nothing to report
- **Bylaws** – nothing to report
- **Public Relations** - As the riding season for ORV's is pretty much over, with the exception of the small minority that prefers to ride in the snow and cold, the activity on most social media sights that are ORV oriented has slowed to a trickle. Along with it, most comments, either positive or negative about MISORVA's involvement in ORVing has been minimal. One notable exception was a rather lengthy but well written post on the Exit 222 Facebook page by a Craig Pinkel on Dec 1st, coinciding with the opening of the snowmobile trails. He's clearly an ORV enthusiast and plainly stated he's not in favor of HB4535, but went on to implore his fellow riders to avoid riding groomed snowmobile trails. He garnered 76 likes and only 1 emoji laughing at him, and mostly positive comments like, "let them have their season".

Prior to that, there was a flurry of activity on both snowmobile and ORV social media sites coinciding with the passage of HB4535 by the House. There seemed to be a lot of confusion and lack of understanding about how this bill would affect trail riding. Most comments seemed to favor the bill's passage, but of course there was that small but vocal group that dissented, and from the tone of some of their comments, there appeared to be a malicious attempt to cause further confusion about the bill's impact beyond what I call the "innocent" confusion that already existed. This committee's members, along with many other BOD members, lent their voices to spread the facts but there needs to be a bigger education effort put out by both us and the DNR if this bill moves forward. There also seems to be a need for a civics lesson as a lot of people don't seem to understand that just because a bill passes the House it doesn't become law yet!

It seems Senator Ed McBroom's recent post on Facebook asking for input on HB4535 caused a bigger stir than when the bill was passed by the House. His post has gained 265 like, 5 loves and 2 wows as I write this. There's been a ton of comments made on this post, more than I've taken the time to read through. Most comments are civil and well thought out by both those supporting and opposing the bill. From those that I have read, there seems to be a lot of comments about people being able to access private property that's landlocked by snowmobile trails. As expected, some of our biggest detractors made their feeling known, which is their right. This post has been shared to multiple other sites, both ORV and snowmobile centered, and the comments continue to accumulate there. Of course, I'm not sure whether Senator McBroom's staff will track down those shares to see what comments are being deposited there, or if those folks' comments are all for not.

The news about the Straits Area Club not grooming made headlines on social media but when their problems were resolved and they resumed operations, the word was slower to spread so we helped share the good news. Similarly, the members of this committee help spread the information posted by all grant sponsors concerning their

trail conditions, closures, logging operations, etc., by sharing their posts to the many snowmobile related sites that are out there so it's available to as many riders as possible.

One thing this committee needs to work on as we enter the new year is to develop a number of documents that can be used to educate the riding community on various subjects that affect them, but yet so many seem totally unaware of. The idea is to proactively get snowmobilers and ORVers educated with the facts to head off some of the ignorance and misinformation that gets posted, leaving us to have to fight the misrepresentations reactively.

- **Friends of the Forest -**

- ❖ **Ottawa** - nothing to report

- ❖ **Hiawatha West** - nothing to report

- ❖ **Hiawatha East** - nothing to report

- ❖ **Huron** – We had a lot of trees down from the windstorm couple weeks back. Took a couple days to clean them all up. My question is this? Why are snowmobile funds being used to clean this up? Half of this cost should come from the ORV funds. This sort a tree blow down doesn't happen during the summer it happens during the winter. We clean it up in the winter so we ORV people can enjoy it in the summer .? We are trying to get some trail maintenance done, but the amount of money the DNR wants to spend and what it actually cost don't even come close.

- ❖ **Huron Manistee** – see minutes

- **SAW ~ Snowmobile Advisory Council** - SAW notes from December 2, 2021 meeting

Discussed merging SAW and ORVAW - Verizon testing GPS in 5 units; Soo, Seney, Grand Traverse, North Country and Keweenaw.

Requested funding from Covid year 2020 for equipment for the third time, submitted by DNR November 19, 2021. Equipment sub-committee met 11/20/2021 and recommended just using language in the handbook for equipment purchases. If sponsors want additional accessories, they will need to pay with Club funds. Appointed Karen Middendorp to head committee for handbook language sub-committee. Pinney Bridge Road meeting will include Karl Davenport, Joe Bartlett, Conservation Officer and DNR contact. Hopefully, this will resolve Issues with the landowner.

- **ORVAW ~ ORV advisory Workgroup** – no report