

Maine Snowmobile Association 536th Directors Meeting

February 20, 2018 • Millinocket - Northern Timber Cruisers clubhouse

The 536th MSA Directors meeting being held at the Northern Timber Cruisers in Millinocket was called to order at 7:03p.m. by MSA President John Monk. He asked for the kitchen crew to please come out, so those in attendance could thank them for a great meal.

Secretary's report- There were no corrections or omissions on the January secretary's report. Jack Lord made a motion to accept them as printed, and Roland Bowie made the 2nd with a vote to pass by directors present.

Treasurer's report- In the absence of both the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer, Bob Meyers read the report.

President John Monk started the meeting by thanking everyone in the room for all that is done by them and all the volunteers to make snowmobiling what it is in Maine. He spoke of his recent ride from Brownville to Portage and throughout "The County" and back to Brownville. He reported they did not hit "trail chatter bumps" until their return trip Saturday, and that was because of high traffic use. He has done some trail inspections as well and again has found great riding. He thanks Jim Splan for his help in finding someone whose sled had broken down on the trail.

John also explained to those in attendance some of what MSA does and how it works as an organization to help hold all the clubs together. He asked everyone present to help get the word out to those who may only belong to a club and not MSA and encourage them to join both a club and MSA.

The MSA annual meeting is scheduled for April 21st. MSA will be celebrating 50 years as an organization. There have been many suggestions as to what we can do at the meeting to celebrate, but he is still looking for more ideas so if you have any, please contact him.

East Branch Sno Rovers was thanked for the great Groomer Rodeo they held. Northern Timber Cruisers was thanked for a bridge that was re-planked and Jackman was complimented on their new kiosk. John Raymond also thanked Joe Higgins for his help with the bridge re-planking project.

John explained he is on a mission to meet as many club presidents as he can this year and he is keeping track of the information. He also asked how many trailmasters were in the room and presented them with a T-shirt acknowledging their work. He also presented the shirts to any groomer operators with over 25 hours of operation.

Snowmobile Division- Joe Higgins- Joe passed out financial report packets to those present. He explained that his department and MSA were two totally different organizations that work together for snowmobiling in Maine. The MSA represents clubs in the legislative areas while his department handles the funds. He feels both work well together to make snowmobiling in Maine great. His office processes approximately 400 grant applications and manages the reimbursements. They also supply the trail signs, except ITS and Connector Trail signs. The emphasis this year has been on placement of Stop Ahead and Stop signs as these are important safety pieces. His report also included the grant deadline which are as follows: Club grant April 30th, Municipal grant May 15th, and Capital Equipment Grant June 15th. He also reminded clubs not to purchase any equipment before they know if they are approved or not for a capital equipment grant.

Joe reviewed the packet that was passed out and explained some of the increases were the result of the Advisory Committee's decision last year to increase club grants. He also explained that some clubs had both a club grant and a municipal grant. In order to help some clubs streamline the grant process he did combine some of these into one grant last year.

A question was asked about when can a club start a project. The explanation was that club can apply for a municipal grant as soon as the applications are available, usually August 1st. The club should not start the project until after the date of approval on their application if they want to be reimbursed.

Joe concluded by thanking the clubs, volunteers and landowners for all they do. He advised people if they had any questions, please call his office.

Executive Director Bob Meyers-

Registration numbers are still looking good. As of last week, we had 47,101 residents which is about 4.5% less than we had at the same time last year. Non-residents are at 14,098; 3%, down 9%, mainly because some other states have a little snow this year. Overall we're at 61,199, but there's still a long way to go on registrations.

The trail conditions page has been very busy with lots of traffic. When things change, be sure to get your updates into Peg to she can post them. We're hearing from folks looking for conditions all over. If you're posting to a Facebook page or your own web site, send her the link and she'll put it up.

Things are still fairly quiet for us at the Legislature. We did do some work on abandoned roads, which keeps coming up, and will never be solved. This time it was also tinkering with the landowner liability law and would have caused problems for us and the landowners. The bill has been killed, so we're safe again for a little while.

In the good news department, Senator Katz has introduced a bill to undo the significant changes that were made to raffle laws as part of the fix on the budget last summer. Just about every non-profit that runs a raffle like us is unhappy, and we've all been fairly vocal, so hopefully this will be solved before the Super Raffle begins in June.

A reminder that nominations are due for all the contests for the annual meeting: Club of the Year, Snowmobiler of the Year, Groomer of the Year, Dealer of the Year and Business of the Year. The nomination forms are on the member's page on our web site and the deadline is February 28.

Bob and Joe had a meeting at the University of Maine today to get the ball rolling on an economic impact study. The cost is around \$60,000-\$70,000 and will take about two years to complete.

Executive Vice president Mike Grass- Mike also thanked everyone for all they do and their hard work. He reported he had attended a trail safety check in Newport and that the park in ride in Newport was filled every weekend. He asked if there were any golfers in the room and then explained the MSA fundraising Golf Tournament to be held June 23rd. This year they are in hopes of having a Snowmobile Club Cup that will become a travelling trophy each year.

Eastern Region VP Eileen Lafland- Eileen also thanked the Northern Timber Cruisers for agreeing to hosting tonight's meeting. She also thanked East Millinocket for the having the groomer rodeo. Many areas in the lower part of her region have no snow and open water, so the riding isn't favorable but in the northern sections of it, there is still some good to great riding if you are willing to trailer a ways.

She then told of her and Larry's recent ride in a remote area of downeast Maine. They came across a sled that had broken down with a couple at the sled. They stopped and the couple explained it had broken down the night before and they had walked, pulling a tote sled four miles to their camp to spend the night. They had then walked back to the sled the next day again four miles pulling the sled, which is where they were when Eileen and Larry stopped. As Larry tried to help the man start the sled the woman explained to Eileen two others had stopped and her husband had asked if he would take his wife to their vehicle about three miles away. The man told them they didn't help people and left them there. Larry and Eileen towed the sled back and brought them to their vehicle. Eileen asked everyone at the meeting to please stop and check if you see someone beside the trail, just to make sure they do not need help.

Central Region VP Jack Lord- The Central region was in good shape and then the rains and warm temperatures came. There are still some areas with good riding but he isn't sure what the warm temperatures in the next few days will do. Be careful out there.

Western Region VP Roland Bowie- The Western region is getting thin in some places, especially road crossings. Everyone is waiting to see what the weather brings in the next few days. If it doesn't improve there could be places in the lower part of his region that are done for the season.

Coastal VP David Watson- Dave wasn't present but he emailed a report that indicated they had a base but know it was gone due to rain and warm temperatures.

Trail Report Mike Grass- Mike reported there is still good snow in the northern part of the state. ITS 83 in Bridgewater is closed again this year for logging and they are using the #9 trail. Trail inspections are coming in with signage seeming to be mentioned a great deal. He did state they will explain more at the MSA Show trail workshop in the fall about the proper use of the Junction signs. They are also looking at holding a groomer operator certification at the show as well.

Safety Chair Al Swett- Al used some of his laminated posters and spoke about the five fatalities that have occurred this year and why it is important for all riders to keep safety in mind. He informed those in attendance he had laminated posters they could take tonight to put up where they see fit.

He attended a Trail Safety check in Newport recently and how well it went. He also spoke about the clubs he has visited talking about safety.

Nominations- The first reading of the nominations for next year's positions was read by Al Swett, a member of the nomination committee. They are as follows:

President- John Monk, Executive Vice President- Mike Grass, Secretary- position open at this time

Central Region VP- Jack Lord, Central Region directors- Jerry Withee, Sally Withee, David Cogley

Coastal Region VP – David Watson, Coastal Region directors- Rodney Berry, Frank Carroll, John Resmini

Eastern Region VP- Eileen Lafland, Eastern Region directors- Gary Dowling, Larry Lafland, Chuck Loring, Paul Bolstridge

Western Region VP-Roland Bowie, Western Region directors- Peter Ford, Paul Gallant, Gary Okenquist, Jon Wakefield

Northern Region VP- Mike McNulty- Northern Region directors- Lendall Buckingham, Gary Marquis, Jeff Brooks

Nominations from the floor were then asked for and Mike Grass made the following nominations

Eastern Region director- Chris Richards, 2nd by John Monk

Central Region director- Al Swett, 2nd by John Monk, Al Dugas, 2nd by Al Swett

There were no more nominations from the floor at this time. The 2nd reading will be at the March 17th meeting. John Monk did ask those in attendance to keep in mind MSA needs a secretary and a membership chair and if they have anyone in mind to let him know.

Old Business- There was none

New Business- There was none

Supervisor of Recreation Safety Mike Sawyer asked to speak briefly. He explained there are changes coming in the Landowner Relations Division. He also thanked Al Swett for all he has done with MSA Safety and stated that snowmobiling is still a relatively safe sport when you look at the number of registered sleds we have.

50/50 Drawing- Al Swett was the winner of \$75.

Pot of Gold- Litchfield SC was drawn, but there was no one present

There was no more business to discuss and the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Lafland

minutes taken in the absence of

MSA Secretary Candice Pinkham