

April 21st, 2018

Maine Snowmobile Association

Directors Meeting

Secretary's Report

At 10:32am, President John Monk called the meeting to order.

Secretary's Report - There were no corrections or omissions on the March secretary's report. Jerry Major motioned to accept the minutes as distributed, second by Brad Barker, all in favor.

Treasurer's Report, Bob Meyers read the treasurer's report.

President, John Monk reported by many indicators the MSA had a great season. The banquet hall is full and John is impressed and is very appreciative. Membership is up significantly and many clubs were interactive with the snowmobile program with questions and concerns, and communication with municipal and club grants. "Mother Nature was a bit finicky with the temps of the snow, especially for the southern and coastal friends, but with significant work the clubs put into trails, it doesn't take as much snow to make good trails and I'm sure you all recognize that." John had set two personal goals for this year: ride all the ITS trails and meet all the club presidents. He fell short but there are 289 presidents and 3500 miles of ITS. He met almost 60 presidents and rode 900 miles of ITS trails. John can't thank everybody enough for the shout-outs and support he's been given in this organization. He was blessed to be in all five regions and thoroughly appreciated the respect, openness, and willingness to go above and beyond to make these events happen. Clubs appear again to be setting the standard for small volunteer organizations. This year John also set out to ride with somebody new. It happened for him on multiple occasions. Bruce Poliquin enjoyed a great day on the trails. John thanked the Rangeley club for setting that up. John cast a giant thanks to everybody that invited him to landowner dinners, membership suppers, and general club meetings. Each one he attended he learned new things such as struggles clubs face and concerns in going forward. "You all have contributed in me being a better president and person in general." Landowners and land managers are such an important part of our 50 year heritage. Without them we would have nothing. John gave a huge shout out to Mike Grass Jr. He works double duty as Vice President and Trails Chair. John recalls many 7am conversations with Mike in regards to previous day events and depending on the current day, it might warrant a 5pm conversation as well. During the snowmobile season, John and Mike had an introduction with meteorologist Anthony Macari. They all met in January on the rail bed in Presque Isle. Anthony interviewed John and Mike for his segment of Sledding the County. Lastly, together they went to the top of Coburn and watched the 6:29am sunrise. John wants to remind everybody of a few things for this summer. Keep an eye out for the membership materials in August. Sell your memberships early, between August and November. When it's warm and people are happy, they more likely to buy a membership and support your club. When you catch them during the cold weather, doing firewood, Christmas shopping, and their winter prep, it's a tough sale. Look for summer events clubs are putting on. Tell them who you are and which club you're apart of, and strike up a conversation.

Executive Director, Bob Meyers reported things are looking pretty darn good as things start to button up. As of the beginning of April, we were showing 75,573 registrations. That's down about 6% from last year; but remember last year was 40% ahead of the year before. Residents were at 55,464, down 6% from last year and non-residents were at 20,109, down 4% from last year. The 3-day registrations were up 14% at 3,754. The 10-day non-resident registrations were 1,475, just about the same as last year. Maybe we should give it another year or two and if there's still nothing happening with it just get rid of it. We'd make more money converting them to season registrations anyway. Club grants were increased and the fuel assistance is kicking in for the folks that needed it. The new management at the Snowmobile Program is doing a terrific job getting money out where it needs to be ó with the clubs. Membership has also done pretty well too. The clubs have done a great job this year and family memberships were up just over 10%. We have also been very successful with our online store, selling over a hundred memberships a month all winter. We'd be talking more about membership later. Joe Higgins and I have met with the School of Forest Resources at the University of Maine, and it looks like work will begin on a new economic impact study this fall. We'd be working on some planning for that this summer and start figuring out how to pay for it. The Legislature has gone home, at least for now. They got all mad at each other and had a big blow-up right after

midnight on Thursday of this week, so they all went home, leaving a mess that will need to be cleaned up. Fortunately for us, we didn't have much going on. They did fix the mess they had made of the raffle laws last year, it wasn't everything we wanted, but we can work with it. The bill that was tabled from last year which provides additional funding for the Landowner Relations Program at IF&W is still hanging out there. Under the circumstances, Bob is not optimistic about that. They did manage to stop fighting long enough to unanimously vote out a resolution congratulating all of us for our 50th anniversary. Just a little bit of trivia for our anniversary. The earliest Maine Snowmobiler I could find without getting dirty was April 1977. The annual meeting that year was at Husson College in Bangor and 638 people attended. We had a lot going on: Jimmy Carter's administration had just proposed a snowmobile ban on all federal land. Charlie Pray who was the President of the Maine Senate had introduced a bill to reinstate snowmobiling on the Perimeter Road in Baxter Park which had been banned a year earlier, and the legislature passed a law allowing municipalities to sell snowmobile registrations instead of making people buy them at IF&W. Some important things to remember heading into the summer: Super Raffle tickets will be available by July 1 so you can start making a few bucks at events that you might have this summer. Membership packages will be available for pickup at the August director's meeting, so we can all start all over again. Also, save the date. The Maine Snowmobile Show is Oct. 19-21 this year.

Snowmobile Program, Bob Meyers for Joe Higgins, I would have to say the biggest accomplishment of this year would be putting together great staff I have here at the office. Both Lana and Candice care and go the extra mile to follow up with the clubs. Communication with clubs and combined effort building bridges and trails to keep connections like Connector 117 in Byron, ITS 83 in Littleton, and ITS 85 in a Fort Kent were very good plus many more. Lastly, thanks for the continued efforts by our office, the MSA Trails Committee and staff to work together with volunteers to make snowmobiling in Maine the best in New England. Goals for the upcoming year would be, we are sending each club this summer a detailed map of their trail system to verify so we can work better with first responders. Second, I plan to continue to simplify and streamline grant applications for an easier more efficient use of time and money. Thirdly, to continue to get the word out that our office can't help a club with a specific task if we don't know about it. Give me a call if there is something we can do to help, we will. Whether it's materials for a bridge or added costs because of a reroute. Please let me know.

Vice President, Mike Grass thanked everybody who came out to celebrate the 50th anniversary for the Maine Snowmobile Association. It's hard to believe we've been doing this for 50 years. It's all because of the passion for snowmobiling the people in this room have and clubs across the state that we are here 50 years later. You're the most optimistic, determined, and hard working group of volunteers I know and I'm proud to be a part of this group. MSA is the group that interacts with clubs state wide to make sure we're all working together to make snowmobiling in Maine the best snowmobiling experience you can have. MSA is also your voice in Augusta. If a bill comes before the Legislature that may affect snowmobiling, good or bad, that information gets out to clubs and membership to make sure the MSA is supporting, or not supporting, depending on membership feedback that you all make happen. The MSA voice in Augusta is well respected with 50 years of hard work and stellar landowner relations.

Coastal Region, Dave Watson, "Great job this year." The MSA is doing fantastic. Groomers and clubs have all stood up and done a great job. Let's make next year better.

Western Region, Roland Bowie reported we're at the end of another snowmobile season. Looking back throughout the season there was a good and bad weather, a lot of working together on trails and grooming, fundraising activities to help with expenses, interacting with communities, working with landowners, but most of all enjoying trails with friends and family. Roland would like to thank all the clubs in the western region who reached out and welcomed him in the snowmobile community this year. Having a chance for him to meet club leaders, members, and landowners made him see that much can be accomplished just by working together. "It was a great experience." Roland would also like to thank the MSA for their support as he completes his first full year in his role as western region Vice President.

Central Region, Jack Lord reported the central region is mostly buttoned up for the season. There might be some snow left up by the windmills because there was twelve foot drifts up there. Aside from the central region, Jack has rode from Allagash down to Lewiston and it was a good season. Jack can't thank everyone enough for all the support that's given to the MSA.

Eastern Region, Eileen Lafland thanked everybody in the eastern region as well as the whole state. She also thanked her regional directors, Paul Bolstridge, Larry Lafland, Gary Dowling, and Chuck Loring for all their hard work and support throughout the season.

Northern Region, Mike McNulty reported the northern Region had an outstanding year. He thanked Joe Higgins from the snowmobile program for helping out clubs with their fuel bills so they could continue grooming at the end of the season. He also thanked Gary Marquis for his efforts throughout the year. Mike ended by saying the crowd in the banquet is fantastic and for everyone to enjoy the rest of their day.

Scholarship, Dick Peck reported scholarship is looking for some individuals to do the judging of the score sheets. There's about thirteen applicants and the deadline for scoring is May 15th. There is two one-thousand dollar awards this year for the winning applicants.

Trails Committee, Mike Grass reported it was a busy year for the trails committee. A lot of work was done by volunteers to make sure everyone had a safe ride this season. The trails committee had a big scare last fall when a landowner in the Bethel area shut down his land due to an ordinance adopted by the town of Bethel. That one landowner affectively closed trail in nine towns including the ITS trail connections. MSA clubs and businesses in that area educated local residents and town representatives of the negative impact the ordinance was going to have on their upcoming winter season. Luckily, the town was convinced to have a special meeting to vote on that ordinance again which went in the landowner's favor and he opened up his land for snowmobiling again. The MSA played a key role in getting information out to clubs telling them who to call and how to get in contact with key individuals. It showed how affected the MSA email alert system can and did work to resolve a potentially devastating closure. ITS 83 had a big reroute again detouring near the Number Nine mountain in the Mars Hill area and ITS 81 in the Grand Isle area. Next season Mike will be stepping away from trails chair and will be a coordinator so he can focus his drive and work in the executive vice president position helping John get MSA representation into local club meetings, pushing membership, and other projects such as the Golf Scramble coming up on June 23rd.

Safety, Al Swett reported the season has come to the end and unfortunately six people lost their lives this year. There were a lot of accidents and OUIs. Al is hoping for a better year next year. Snowmobile safety needs to get out. He'd like to see more snowmobile safety checks out on the trails. Al passed the snowmobile safety class from the state in order to teach and quiz snowmobile safety. Al would like to work on a workbook for when you post something online. How it should be said and who to contact. Not just say "The ice is safe on Moosehead," or it will be safe in seven days. He'd also like to have a safety workbook on equipment use and situations surrounding equipment. Al will be working with Joe Higgins and Mike Sawyer during the off-season to develop more safety stuff.

Fundraising, Aleta Rioux thanked all the businesses who donated items to the silent auction and members who went out of their way to make some very unique items. The idea of a MSA cookbook to celebrate 50 years has come up and Aleta is looking for as many clubs to come forward with their club recipes to share. They must be original to you and not something you can find online or in a book. The deadline for submitting your recipe is June 1st. Contact the MSA office for more details.

Membership:

Family Members: 10,472
Business Members: 2,219
Total Members: 12,691

Central Region: 2,489
Coastal Region: 1,599
Eastern Region: 3,029
Northern Region: 1,914
Western Region: 3,628

Nominations:

President: John Monk
Executive Vice President: Mike Grass Jr.
Eastern Region Vice President: Eileen Lafland
Central Region Vice President: Jack Lord
Coastal Region Vice President: Dave Watson
Northern Region Vice President: Mike McNulty
Western Region Vice President: Roland Bowie
Treasurer: Barry Ryan
Assistant Treasurer: Harvey Chesley
Secretary: Lori Hemmingdinger
Eastern Regional Directors: Paul Bolstridge, Larry Lafland, Gary Dowling, Chuck Loring, Chris Richards
Central Regional Directors: Jerry Withee, Sally Withee, David Cogley, Alan Dugas, Alan Swett
Coastal Region Directors: Rodney Barry, John Resmini, Frank Carroll
Northern Region Directors: Mike Gurette, Lendall Buckingham, Gary Marquis, Jeff Brooks
Western Region Directors: Peter Ford, Paul Gallant, Gary Okenquist, Jonny Wakefield

Voting director to make the nomination that the secretary cast one vote, it is moved by Bob Corthell, second by Gary Marquis. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 11:56am.

Submitted,

Candice Pinkham
MSA Secretary