

Our next meeting is Tuesday, February 15, 2022, 7:00 PM at the community center.

Notes from the last meeting held on February 1, 2022.

In attendance:

Mark Steinke	upconstruction33@gmail.com
Rich Williamson	richard@gmpowersports.com
Rod Lowe	rainbowcharters@hotmail.com
Sara Secrest (phone)	saraasecrest@gmail.com
Dianna Bell	drbell@jamadots.com
Lee Britton	lrbritton@hotmail.com
Bob Stocking	reneestocking@gmail.com
Christine Roberts	crobertsmetoo.com@me.com
Phil Bontrager	pb9works@gmail.com
Aleta Hubbard representative	jhubbar2@jamadots.com
Mike Lawless	mclawless79@gmail.com
Jack Hubbard	jkhubbardinc@gmail.com

Planning Commission member ****
Chamber of Commerce

Grand Marais Sno Trails *****
Alger County Road Commission

Absent:

Bob Hughes rjhughes@jamadots.com

Meeting led by: Lori McShane – Burt Township
with Elise Cormier – facilitation assistant

Also in attendance:

Andrew Smits – Grand Marais Pilot reporter

We started by reviewing the recap from the previous meeting. Then we went around the room and everyone got a chance to talk about specific items they thought were important to be included in the educational materials:

1. MAP and trail locations - snowmobile trails already exist but we need designated ORV trails and will have to reach out to the DNR for assistance.
2. Keep the list short – 6-10 bullet points.
3. Not allowed on the beach!
4. Need to clarify the rule for ORV/sleds regarding the right hand side of the road or the far right of the “maintained” road which would be the shoulder! And then inform the riders to be on the right side of the road!
5. Township and Chamber websites to promote educational flyers as well as using social media to get the message out.
6. Speed limit!
7. Possibly large signs in several places around town.

Then we talked about enforcement:

1. Township responsibility to decide millage or other funding
2. Reach out to DNR for help with enforcement – conservation officers
3. Everyone agrees that law enforcement needs to be focused in the problem areas to be effective.
4. Pressure the Alger County board of Commissioners to better fund the sheriffs department

Do we need additional regulations?

1. How about a consistent speed limit throughout town for all vehicles?
2. Need to follow up with ACRC to get actual procedures for asking to close certain roads to ATV/ORV/Snowmobile traffic.

Items for discussion at next meeting:

-Additional regulations – IF we might consider closing any county road to ATV/ORV/sled traffic, it would require a letter from the township to the Alger County Road Commission. It would then go to the Road Commission board and a public hearing would most likely be recommended. ACRC mentions they have not had good experience with this due to communities being divided.

-Speed limit – must go through State police – speed study etc . .

-Designated ORV trails for egress and ingress - SEE ATTACHED EMAILS FROM THE DNR AND MICHIGAN ATV/SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION

-Green space parking/street edge parking/where could we find additional parking in town

-Diversified economy – what would this look like for Burt Township and Grand Marais.

This email is a summary of the last meeting – see attached document for detailed notes.

Notes from ORV-Sled Committee Meeting

Date: February 1, 2022, 7:00pm – 8:30pm

Location: Burt Township Community Center

In attendance:

Mark Steinke	upconstruction33@gmail.com
Rich Williamson	richard@gmpowersports.com
Rod Lowe	rainbowcharters@hotmail.com
Sara Secrest (phone)	saraasecrest@gmail.com
Dianna Bell	drbell@jamadots.com
Lee Britton	lrbritton@hotmail.com
Bob Stocking	reneestocking@gmail.com
Christine Roberts	crobertsmetoo.com@me.com
Phil Bontrager	pb9works@gmail.com
Aleta Hubbard	jhubbar2@jamadots.com
Mike Lawless	mclawless79@gmail.com
Jack Hubbard	jkhubbardinc@gmail.com

Planning Commission member ****
Chamber of Commerce representative
Grand Marais Sno Trails *****
Alger County Road Commission

Absent:

Bob Hughes rjhughes@jamadots.com

Meeting led by: Lori McShane – Burt Township
with Elise Cormier – facilitation assistant

Also in attendance:

Andrew Smits – Grand Marais Pilot reporter

Agenda:

1. Recap of last meeting
2. Education
3. Enforcement
4. Additional Regulations

1. Recap of last meeting

Much discussion about snowmobile traffic and ATV's. Majority of committee members felt that the laws currently in place were sufficient and that an increased law enforcement presence in town would help immensely. Also need to educate the ATV/snowmobile enthusiast with regards to the rules of operation in Burt Township/Alger County. So for this next meeting we will try and focus on the following topics:

Education – distribute maps/bullet points of important rules for handouts at all business and short term rentals. Everyone in Grand Marais is a tour guide – make sure we are all giving the correct information.

Enforcement – Do you support the township paying extra funds to the sheriff for additional road patrol? Where would you like to see the township direct the officers to get the most out of our money spent?

Additional regulations – Do we need to make any new and additional rules to control the ATV/Snowmobile traffic. Most committee members felt the existing laws were sufficient for snowmobiles, I think more discussion regarding the ATV/ORV is necessary.

I would also like to discuss the parking on the green space problem. The township is currently looking to add some landscaping and enhance the greenspace area and that would include some sort of fencing or enclosure to prevent

driving/parking in the area. What would that look like? Can we provide another area for parking in town? Possible staging area outside of town?

Also, with regard to the issue of redaction of the names on the letters. I have contacted MTA and the rules are that it is within the law to redact names and identifying features from correspondence that will be used in a presentation. But Jack and Aleta are correct in saying that if there is a formal FOIA request for the unredacted information, we are required to provide it. So that being said, please let me know if you would like copies of the letters without the names redacted. I have attached a couple more letters that I have received since our last meeting.

2. ORV / Sleds – Education

- Opportunities to instruct when police tickets / safety incidents happen.
 - Recent example on H58 east, social media posting.
- Sleds speeding is a problem
- Group notes on primary education points for the “bullet list”:
 - Bob Stocking – MAP. Trail locations. You are here. Place the map at lodging and gas station.
 - Dianna Bell – sno trail reports – heavily read. Post behavior expectations with the reports. Is there an ORV social media community too? If so, post there. Especially ORVs. Map and expectations posted to social media.
 - Jack Hubbard – need designated ORV trails. DNR coordination.
 - Mike Lawless – grant sponsorship leads to ORV trails. Provides maintenance money. Dual purpose for sleds and ORVs? In favor of a list with top 6-10 rules. Keep it short.
 - Richard Williamson – clarify allowed travel area on road. State law. County ordinance. “far right side” = ? Prefer for ORVs to not travel on the shoulder so as to protect the road surface. Business owners to post and share the bullet point list.
 - Christine Roberts – law about no Beach travel. Protect the beach and dunes. Can the sleds ride on the bay ice? Prefer no sleds on the bay ice.
 - Mark Steinke – which roads are affected? Township to coordinate with the road commission. As to a millage, this should be determined by effectiveness of law enforcement. For bullet points, the flyer should set the tone at the start of the season. Chamber to do a flyer with Township.
 - Aleta Hubbard – brochures – info in conjunction with Township. Map, bullet points. Chamber participates. Education materials are #1 priority. Can sno trails funding be used for this? Not in favor of new rules. Place brochures / bullet point flyer in all business and public areas.
 - Lori – Summary of short bullet points on the flyer, with a website link on the flyer for people to find out more. Township to post directly to social media for ORV communities, sno trails, and chamber.
 - Rod – bullet points effective way. Concerned about speed in town. 25 MPH? guidance on flyer to include how to navigate the park and H58, use hand signals, stop signs, correct side of the road.
 - Lee – trail system in and out of town to be improved by signing it well. Bulletin board size sign with rules, map. Place the large sign several places in town. Precedent for this in other places like Canada and other UP tourist towns.
 - Phil – ride on correct side of road. Concerns about driveway safety. Send brochure to all residents to help people be informed on what’s allowed or not, and to help direct tourists who ask questions.

3. Enforcement

- Lori – millage or other funds? If using millage, will get a full time deputy for Grand Marais with a 5yr contract. If using other funds, will be a part time deputy, as needed, adjust seasonally.
- License plates for ORVs – group in favor of this (?)
- Law enforcement – group in favor of this.
- Mike – law enforcement has a capacity problem.
- Jack – we need more DNR patrols. Trail stickers fund DNR.

- Rod – set a boundary for the patrol and write it in the contract. For example, Airport Road to Cemetery Road to ... Local residents should write letters to the Alger BOC (not ask Twp to do all the talking) and also call all the law agencies when a problem happens to make noise and get help (DNR, state, county).
- Richard – speed limit / signs / education. Taxes / millage pay for EMS. There is a full county tax for the sheriff. Try education, then see if need more sheriff.
- Phil – where is it safe to go fast? (Mike – Kingston Lake – 8 mile stretch)
- Bob – yes on law enforcement “presence”. ORVs and sleds are only part of the enforcement work. Sleds/ORVs are in town about 3/4s of the year. Want law enforcement to have designated areas. Bullet points only work if enforcement is available.
- Mark – Public education session – hold off on sending more money to sheriff. (Lori – township can add public education on law enforcement and the bullet points to the upcoming master plan charrettes)
- Dianna – presence needed. Open to funding. Suggest a “look alike” or “decoy” moveable police car in downtown.
- Christine – support full time if practical. Public conversation with police. Invite DNR too and the state police.
- Mark / Rich – support law enforcement funding if effective. Did the state troopers do less this year?
- Mike – yes if effective. Incremental approach preferred. Speeding tickets on M77 are pointless. (Note that speeding tickets bring in the most revenue for sheriff department)
- Aleta – pressure Alger Board of Commissioners to better fund Alger Sheriff. Better service. (Lori – Au Train also has this problem and tried paying for additional patrol. Not just Munising. Burt Twp talks to our BOC regularly. They have limited funds.)
- Jack – on the road commission. Not getting due services. (Lori – will schedule more sheriff meetings with the public to help people communicate what they need from law enforcement.)
- Lee – not a high crime area and probably needed. Law presence helps. (Lori – township notes that recent crimes in the past few months are serious and those affected by those crimes do consider this area to have a crime problem.)
- Phil – even if get a dedicated deputy, will not be 24/7. Realistic about availability of a local deputy. Years ago there was a “constable”. If cost effective. Small to bigger. Yes on the radar signs.
- Lori – township working on a specific contract with sheriff for continued services.

4. Additional regulations?

- Speed limit –
 - Mike Lawless – confusing. Have one speed limit for all vehicles.
- MDOT 2023 improvements.
 - Lori – MDOT discussed 2023 improvements. Crosswalks. Parking. Lake avenue parking will be angled. striping is required. MDOT will do angled backin parking. Township is not in favor of this and prefers angled front in parking or parallel.
 - Aleta – Wilson street and Ridge road are the speed problems, not town.
 - Mike Lawless – add sidewalks at Ridge road to get crossings and slow traffic?
 - Group – backing into parking is hard for everybody. Let’s not do this.
 - Group – the public would like information on the MDOT 2023 improvements. Rumors are going around (will the gas pumps be moved? No). Township to provide info to public.
 - Lee - Noise is a problem. Stock mufflers only. Publish this info.
 - Some have concerns over how to enforce. Stating expectations can be effective and useful even without enforcement.

Next meeting:

- DATE: Tuesday 15-February at 7:00pm.
- Additional regulations
- ORV trails designation

- Greenspace and Parking: street edge parking? Where can parking happen?
- Diversified economy –
 - what would this look like for Burt Township and Grand Marais.
 - ORVs and sleds are important. Some towns limit travel in town. Balanced? Designated routes in town (for example – Newberry). Phil – Keweenaw has designated ORV trails.
 - Promote quiet sports. Document tourism dollars from quiet sports. Examples from other UP areas (Keweenaw tourism board has dollars documented for quiet and power sports).

From: [Holley, Jessica \(DNR\)](#)
To: [John Newman](#)
Cc: [Bennett, Kristen \(DNR\)](#); [Yesney, Ronald \(DNR\)](#); clerk@burttownship.com
Subject: RE Grand Marais: ORV designated trails/snowmobile traffic
Date: Thursday, February 10, 2022 10:52:01 AM
Attachments: [Outlook-agg5tu3l.png](#)

Hi all,

I took a minute to check out Burt Township's webpage and read the info about their ORV Snowmobile Committee.

I have made a request to LED to ship some ORV Law Handbooks out to Lori. I will email her information on the DNR's County Sheriff Grant program. I will be mailing out Snowmobile Safety tri-fold brochures and Ride Right posters to them as well.

And I've also asked if our LED Rec Specialist, Cpl. Hearn if he might be able to coordinate with the CO Lt. in Alger County to see if they could contact Burt Township and the local Sheriff.

Let me know if I can be of further involvement. I feel that this group's efforts may be a model for other counties that are discussing the same concerns.

Jessica

Jessica L. Holley-Roehrs
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Statewide Motorized Trails Program
Mobile # 517.331.3790



"Even this, I get to experience..."

From: <clerk@burttownship.com>
Date: Wed, Feb 9, 2022 at 3:00 PM

We have developed an advisory committee to discuss the increase in ATV/ORV traffic in our township as well as the snowmobile traffic. We have had two meetings so far and have come to an agreement that a big part of the problem is education and enforcement.

Education: We would like to distribute information regarding the laws and the rules for riding to all the motels/hotels/short term rentals as well as the local markets and taverns. We thought we could develop a small map of the town showing the nearest entrance to the trail system for snowmobiles and would like to have a designated trail for the ATV/ORV in the spring/summer/fall months for getting into and out of the downtown and residential areas. Can you direct me to the organization that could assist us, first to figure out a trail and determine if we are allowed to do this, and if we could afford to do this. Also, do you know of any resources that may provide us with printed

brochures or flyers summarizing the current laws that we could distribute?

Enforcement: We currently are in a contract with the Alger County sheriff for additional road patrol and we are looking to increase that to try and get a handle on the additional traffic we are seeing with the ATV/ORV and snowmobiles. We just want to keep them on the trails and within speed limits and off of personal property, as well as a curfew maybe to reduce the noise at night. You mentioned grant funds possibly available from the DNR to help with this cost, can you refer me to the correct person for us to follow up on that ?

We welcome the snowmobilers and the ATV riders into our community, our economy thrives on tourism, but we need to make an effort to control the traffic and not be overrun.

Thank you in advance for any assistance you can give.

Lori McShane
Clerk
Burt Township
Alger County

Letter from a Grand Marais full time resident

Snowmobiles/ORVs in our town should:

- Drive on the right side of the road;
- Obey the speed limit posted;
- Stay off private property & beaches.

As to the problem of noise pollution, we don't use our front porch much or our living room which is in the front of our house. This is due to the noise of speeding snowmobiles/ORVs in all seasons.

ORVs driving with right-side wheels on the shoulder of the streets in town kick up a lot of dust and flip stones onto sidewalks and yards--not pleasant for residents who want to visit on porches or front yards or have open windows and doors.

When snowmobiles/ORVs drive on any side or middle of the road, in addition to car/truck traffic, this makes for hazardous conditions for pedestrians. What can be done to promote pedestrian safety?

I would recommend having a police presence in our town to help lessen these issues.

FOR THE COMMITTEE. ←

PLEASE FORWARD TO

Snowmobiles / Side by Side, 4 wheelers

Immediately - Involve school kids to draw pictured, friendly signs to "encourage" "NO Engine Revving" Anywhere there's a residence.

These "pleasant" signs could be placed at check-in areas of Rentals, on tables in the bars, in the businesses.

It should be done in a positive way and all business owners should have every desire to agree to this. Happy Residents make's a happier town atmosphere.

Generally, I think there are way too many signs everywhere - but these could be different. Encouraging, Not demanding gets better results. Word will spread and can be helped along by everyone.

Side by Side, 4 wheelers - these are becoming more of an issue than snowmobiles - Loud, constant in town driving, revving - When windows are open, Very young (under 10) kids are driving these also. They Race also. Now these are used during winter. Please apply your collective ideas on Side by Side & 4 wheelers - before Summer.

Please Note: I'm NOT opposed to either but →

will be, if they continue this way of increase.

Yes this is anonymous
So is the master plan survey