



CITY OF MANITOWOC
WISCONSIN, USA
www.manitowoc.org



TO: Public Infrastructure Committee

FROM: Curt Hall, Parks and Rec Division Manager

RE: Volunteer Grooming Policy

Local bike enthusiasts reached out to the City of Manitowoc interested in grooming snow bike trails. Volunteer trail grooming has been taking place ad hoc in Manitowoc Parks via man powered grooming equipment and, on the rare occasion, with gas powered mechanical groomers call “snow dogs” and/or snowmobiles. Snow dogs were borrowed from local businesses owners. A local bike group has expressed the interest to initiate a fund raising effort to raise funds to purchase their own “snow dog” to groom trails in City Parks. The bike group and Park and Rec dept. agree that it would be wise to establish a formal policy specific to volunteer grooming in an effort to seek official approval/permission to perform trail grooming in Manitowoc Parks prior to initiating the fundraising efforts to purchase said equipment.

Staff has had multiple meetings and conversations with the local bike group to coordinate efforts. If approved by committee, staff will work with the City Legal Dept. to finalize all necessary policies and procedures and present final Volunteer Grooming Policy to Council for final approval. Attached is a draft copy of the policy and proposed trail route.

DPI staff recommends approving Volunteer Grooming Policy for the following reasons:

1. Snow Biking and snow bike trail grooming is a growing trend in the Parks and Recreation industry. Many park depts. are already allowing volunteer grooming. Manitowoc Parks Manager has a lot of experience grooming snow bike and ski trails and has already implemented a very similar policy with much success in previous role.
2. There is a strong demand for this service. This coordinated effort will meet the needs of this group but also provide an additional outdoor recreation opportunity for many other residents and tourist to utilize. This approach will meet the demand with little additional work load for park staff.
3. This is a good trial format. If this operation is successful we could explore bringing back volunteer ski trail grooming at other parks, which has also received a lot of requests from park users.