

Montana Back Roads 4x4 Club meeting minutes, January 22, 2014  
Held at Perkins Restaurant, Missoula, MT  
Called to order by President Willie Worthy at 7:15 pm.

Members present: Dick & Sue Riebe, Jeremy Hitchcock, Jason & Joleen Summerfield & kids, Paul Schaller, Larry Garrison, Bruce Erickson, Justin Kirkbride, Willie & Jeanne Worthy, guests Dave & Tianna McCord, & Ed Jones.

Election of officers: Willie not real sure he wants to be President again, as he feels that he does not show enough enthusiasm in organizing local trips and/or finding guest speakers. Perhaps there is someone within our membership that could be capable of doing a better job? No one else wants the job either, so Willie will be President for another year. Dick will continue as Vice President, while Joe Lorenzo will continue as treasurer. Motion by Bruce Erickson to elect Willie, Dick and Joe by voice acclamation, second from floor, all ayes, motion carried.

Willie said that most of the trips he led last year were to places away from the Missoula area and may have not been of interest to club members due to the driving distances or the difficulties of the trail. This will be also true this summer. There seems to be a lack of interest from members to plan or lead trips. Why is this?

Motion made by Dick Riebe to amend Club bylaws to reflect changes in membership dues section IV: currently had said \$45, they have dropped to \$5. Second from floor, all ayes, motion carried.

Discussion of rejoining Montana 4x4 Association and consensus was that we would wait. It would cost \$25 more on dues. Long time members of the Association are tired of running things but don't want to make changes, causing some dissension. Dick will attend the February 1, 2014, regional meeting. Dick and Willie are currently individual member, and others can join as individuals as well.

Penalty for not paying dues on time, next year it will \$10 if your dues haven't been paid by the first of the year. Several members thought we should have a meeting in November or December so dues could be collected at that point. Willie had sent out three separate e-mails stating how to pay the dues, and still several members had not done so as of this meeting. Jeremy said that he would accept dues payments at J & K.

Jeremy has been discussing the Blue Mountain trail (Graves Creek Jeep trail) with the Forest Service, and has meeting set up with Carl Anderson for Wednesday, February 19, 3 pm, building #24, at Fort Missoula. We need to confirm who can attend: only three or four are needed, so check with Jeremy beforehand. Willie reiterated what Bruce had said: promise little, do a lot! The club will have to sign a contract with FS and we'll get "credit" for any work we do. In May will run the trail with a FS representative and discuss drainage issues. FS has hired an OHV trails steward. What is the possibility of going down into Graves Creek (to Highway 12 and "the Jack")? The FS can make a 4x4 trail, but cannot designate a road. OHV trails are set at 50 inches, but is this how it should be? Dick said it used to be based on whether a vehicle had a T handle steering (like an ATV or now quad) or a steering wheel. Still is that way. Dave said we should bring up using GVW instead of width. Willie mentioned that the Beaverhead Forest based out of Dillon is much more vehicle friendly. Something we do need to check on is provision that FS has that allows you to cut firewood to clear area into a hunting camp (but does it actually say firewood,

and/or can you remove the cut wood?). Laura Johnson is in charge of the Nine Mile District, and Jeremy has not yet made contact with her, but continues to try.

Bruce reported on how Utah is considering having all public lands transferred to the individual states (mostly due to mineral rights). The President of the American Lands Council spoke to several Montana county governments. Be sure to take a look at the [americanlandscouncil.org](http://americanlandscouncil.org) web site for more information. Most four wheeling east of the Mississippi River is done on private property or in 4x4 parks, as there is very little public land. Could Montana be able to enforce rules, or would it be close all the land?! There are lots of assumptions, with two definite points of view. The Montana legislature does have a sub-committee working on this matter. The Montana constitution states that "we will have a pleasing and healthful environment"...and just how do you interpret that? And who gets to decide?

Willie will be outlining places that he and Jeanne will be exploring and double checking routes for a new book. Three or four of these trails are quite difficult and in the class 4 category while others will be in the class 2-3 range. No set dates at this time for any of them as the amount of snow, fire, or smoke in the area will determine their accessibility. He will send out an email notice when and where they will be going as well as trail difficulty a week or two before.

Vehicle reports:

Paul is continuing build of 1984 Scrambler, small block injected Chevy, has the steering in, possibly on the trail this summer?

Larry is doing maintenance on his Jeep, invited all to go to Moab March 29 through April 6.

Bruce's Colorado pickup has a \$700 cracked exhaust manifold. He's going to try to "heal" it with high temperature epoxy. Jason volunteered that he had Ni-rod and could try welding it. Jeremy said to check with him on availability of part through J & K.

Dick has a bad tie rod, slack in the steering, has 25,000 miles on it. Says he drives his Jeep once a month whether it needs it or not!

Jeremy is working on CJ-5, has a bent front axle, running offset ball joints. He tried gusseting it, but it still moved. He's also playing with different versions of LED lights.

Jason is trickle charging his Optima batter that he let go totally dead.

Justin has a new front bumper from Rock Slide, and it does have a spot for a winch. He also has a Via air compressor, doesn't want to buy the brackets for it. Jason put his ARB dual compressor under the passenger front seat.

Willie has not done anything on his vehicles due to recent back surgery. He did buy a tablet with GPS and Wi-Fi today to use for mapping trails.