

Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission

Executive Committee Mtg – Friday, 10 Dec 2010 @ 10am • Dane Co. Hwy, 2302 Fish Hatchery Rd, Madison, WI

1. Karl Nilson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. Commissioners present for all or part of the meeting:

Crawford	Tom Cornford	X- Committee	X
	Rocky Rocksvold		X
	Vacant		
Dane	Gene Gray	Treasurer	X
	Jim Haefs-Fleming		X
	Forrest Van Schwartz	Advocate	X
Grant	Ivan Farness		
	Margaret Ruf (arrived at 10:15)	Secretary	X
	Robert Scallon	2nd Vice Chair	X
Iowa	Charles Anderson	X- Committee	
	Gerald Dorscheid	Vice Treasurer	X
	Robert Zinick		

Rock	Ben Coopman	Alternate	
	Wayne Gustina		
	Alan Sweeney	Vice Chair	
	Terry Thomas		X
Sauk	Joel Gaalswijk		
	Rob Sinklair	Assistant Secretary	X
	Scott Alexander		X
	Marty Krueger	Alternate	
Walworth	Jerry Grant		
	Richard Kuhnke	X- Committee	X
	Allan Polyock		
Waukesha	Karl Nilson	Chair	X
	Richard Manke		
	Fritz Ruf		

Others present for all or part of the meeting:

Amy Seebth (SWWRPC / WRRTC Administrator); Frank Huntington, Ron Adams, & Roger Larson (WisDOT); Ken Lucht (WSOR); Alan Anderson (Pink Lady RTC); Jim Matzinger (Dane County, WRRTC Accountant).

3. Motion accepting Seebth's certification of Public Notice. *Thomas / Kuhnke - passed unanimously.*
4. Motion accepting the Agenda with noted changes (Executive Commission should be "committee", add a subject line to the Commission Meeting memo notices and change financial report to just November), prepared by Seebth. *Kuhnke / Sinklair - passed unanimously.*
5. Motion approving the draft Nov. Minutes. *F. Ruf / Farness – passed unanimously.*
6. Public Comment – None
7. Correspondence & Communications – Chairman Nilson passed around a copy of Shanghais High Speed Rail Plan, Commissioner Van Schwartz passed around yesterdays Federal Register with an FRA notice about an Environmental Impact Statement for the Milwaukee, WI to Minneapolis, MN Rail Corridor. Seebth informed the Commission that they received notice of liability insurance coverage from the Sno Busters Snowmobile group.

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. **WRRTC Financial Report**– Jim Matzinger, Dane County CPA / WRRTC Accountant provided copies of the treasurer's report to each Commissioner. He pointed out that the budget is a concern, that in the past there have been county assessments for administrative expenses and WSOR voluntarily increased their lease payment, but that is not enough. Van Schwarz said that it is important that the RTC continue to pursue having Jefferson County join the Commission.
 - Motion accepting the treasurer's report for Nov. and payment of bills - *Kuhnke / Gray – passed unanimously*
 - Motion to move Item 13 (Audit Review) to after Item 8 – *Sinklair / Crawford – passed unanimously***Consideration of approving 2009 WRRTC Audit by Johnson Block** – The Commission reviewed draft copies of their 2009 Audit that they had received in the mail earlier. Nilson said that in his review he found more boiler plate in the Audit than he used to find and it looks like Johnson Block is trying to be held not responsible for more than they used to be. On Page 18 the Audit commented on the format of WRRTC Financial Statements, Matzinger addressed this by saying he will change the format to match the needs of the Audit in 2011. Nilson said that page 18 journal entries do

not make sense and asked Matzinger to work with Johnson Block to sort this out. Nilson said that the audit is not ready to be sent to the Counties in this condition. Van Schwartz raised the question of whether Johnson Block wants the WRRTC to establish an internal Audit Committee and asked if the RTC has ever had an internal audit committee - Huntington said the Commission has not. Commissioner Gray asked if Matzinger and Seeboth can include notes in the January minutes based upon conversations Matzinger has with Johnson Block and Seeboth has with HUD regarding SWWRPC and an internal Audit Committee. Seeboth was also asked to check if the Commission has a contract for 2011 with Johnson Block.

- **Motion to have Jim Matzinger review the conflicting language in the Audit with Johnson Block – Gray / Van Schwartz - passed**

9. Wisconsin & Southern Railroad's Report on Operations – Ken Lucht, WSOR, reported on the following:

- *Monthly Maintenance Activities* –WSOR has been quiet the past couple of weeks. They have been plowing the lines and brush cutting on Reedsburg Line, starting from Madison. They have been doing a lot of work on bridges and are about to start work on a bridge outside of Reedsburg which suffered damage during the 2008 flood.
- *Update on Capital Projects Underway* – They are still finishing up work on the welded rail project between Milton and Madison. They just hired a contractor for the switches. Hopefully WSOR will get state/local funding for the welded rail into Madison to complete that project next year. They are finished with the Janesville-Monroe welded rail project. Lucht added that business has been expanding and there is a lot of interest on the northern and southern division. They are still pursuing the UW-Madison heating plant biomass project, but the media has been reporting that they may operate entirely on natural gas. The topic of the asphalt pile in Spring Grove, IL came up and Commissioner Sinklair offered that he will stop by and look at it on a future trip out to that area.

10. WRRTC Administrator's Report – Seeboth had no report.

11. WDOT Update – Huntington reported that the High Speed Rail project was placed on hold last month and that that caused a pause in the decision on the freight rail grant projects. With the announcement yesterday that the HSR project is not going to happen, the DOT now has a clearer vision for where monies may need to be allocated and they are ready to move ahead with allocating those program funds. Some projects in the WRRTC area that have applied for funding, include the Madison-Milton Jct. welded rail project, a re-alignment in Waukesha, and a few projects in the East Wisconsin Counties Rail Consortium. WDOT is not sure yet which may fund, but they will be able to fund quite a few of them. In next week or two, WDOT should be ready to proceed with those project announcements and they should be able to break ground this spring.

Ron Adams added that the WDOT submitted their budget for the next biennium including bonding authority at \$60 million, which is the same as the current level. They are now waiting to see what the new governor does.

Huntington added that the proposed UP acquisitions discussed in prior months are not dead by any means, but if they move ahead on the negotiations at a reasonable pace, WDOT will still not be able to spend money on it by July 1st, so funding will be spent into future years.

12. Update on Sauk County Rails to Trails Stakeholder Group – Sauk County cancelled the last meeting. Mary Krueger said that the options that were to be discussed at that meeting were no longer available. No one at the WRRTC meeting knew more about this- Lucht said that WSOR had two meetings with both villages and discussed their interests and needs. Lucht said he thought that the second meeting was very productive where WSOR and the villages (Sauk City and Prairie du Sac) came to an understanding that WSOR was very happy with. WSOR said that after that decision, the conversation took a different direction. Lucht is unclear of what happened between that second meeting and the cancellation of the current meeting. Van Schwartz said that he wants more details submitted to the group.

The Commission recessed for a 10 minute break at 11:05

13. Review and possible changes to the WRRTC Fee Schedule – Seeboth requested that the Commission review the fee schedule to create a set rate for private crossing requests. The Commission discussed the various ways that a private crossing fee structure could be established, requiring a different rate for the size of the applicant, etc. The Commission eventually agreed that a single, flat rate was the easiest fee structure, as well as the most fair.

Huntington explained to the Commission that the WRRTC has historically not had the institutional memory for annual permit renewal fees, that is why the Commission does not have these.

- **Motion to change the WRRTC Fee Schedule to require initial and transfer of private crossings to cost a minimum of \$500, paid up front with the application, and require that the crossing be completed within 12 months or is voided.** – *Van Schwartz / Gray – Passed Unanimously*

14. Consideration of transferring WRRTC website to SWWRPC office. Seeboth explained to the Commissioners that she would transfer the website to another site and manage it at no additional costs to the Commission. She said that there are several benefits to this, including a greater ease of making updates on her end, as well as ease of management for the organization by having the website information kept in the same location as their other information. Hosting the website would also be free which would save the Commission approximately \$180 / year. Seeboth provided the Commission with an example of another website she created (www.swsaferoutes.org). Their current hosting contract ends March 26th and their current web designer, Pat Weeden, has been volunteering for the work, but has agreed that it makes sense to have the WRRTC Administrator host and manage the website.

- **Motion to transition the WRRTC.org website to WRRTC Administrators management by the end of March-** *M. Ruf / Thomas – Passed Unanimously*

15. Consideration of the 2011 Staff Services Agreement with SWWRPC for Administrative Management – Seeboth brought her contract up for Commission review at the same levels as the past two years. Scallon recommended that Seeboth request an increase of the Contract value in 2012.

- **Motion to contract with SWWRPC for Administrative Services in 2011, with direct costs to not exceed \$22,5500 without authorization by the WRRTC** – *Scallon / Van Schwartz – passed unanimously*

16. Motion adjourning the meeting at 11:48 a.m. - Scallon / Cornford - passed unanimously.