

WISCONSIN RIVER RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING - FRIDAY, JUNE 6TH, 2014 @ 10AM
 DANE COUNTY HWY GARAGE, 2302 FISH HATCHERY RD, MADISON, WI

1. 10: 02 AM **Call to Order** – *Alan Sweeney, Chair*

2. Roll Call. **Establishment of Quorum** – *Mary Penn*

Crawford	Tom Cornford, 2 nd Vice Chair (XComm)	x	Rock	Ben Coopman, Alternate	
	Rocky Rocksford			Wayne Gustina	x
				Alan Sweeney, Chair	x
				Terry Thomas	x
Dane	Gene Gray, Treasurer (XCom)	x	Sauk	Marty Krueger, Alternate	
	Jim Haefs-Fleming	excused		George Johnson	
	Chris James, Vice Secretary (XComm)	x		John Miller, Vice Treasurer (XComm)	x
				Dave Riek	
Grant	Gary Ranum	x	Walworth	Jerry Grant	
	Vern Lewison	x		Richard Kuhnke, 2 nd Vice Chair (XComm)	x
	Robert Scallon, 1 st Vice Chair (XComm)	x		Allan Polyock	
Iowa	Charles Anderson, Secretary (XComm)	x	Waukesha	Karl Nilson, 4 th Vice Chair (XComm)	x
	William G Ladewig			Dick Mace	
	Jack Demby			Fritz Ruf	
Jefferson	Mo Hansen 3 rd Vice Chair (XComm)	x			
	Laura Payne				
	Augie Tietz				

Commission met quorum.

Others present for all or some of the meeting:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Penn, WRRTC Administrator Forrest Van Schwartz, pro bono consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ken Lucht, WSOR Frank Huntington, Kim Tollers WDOT Alan Anderson, Pink Lady RTC, 10:21 AM
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3. Action Item. **Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice** – *Noticed by Penn*
 • *Motion to certify posting of meeting – Cornford/Gustina, Passed Unanimously*

4. Action Item. **Approval of Agenda** – *Prepared by Penn*
 • *Motion to approve agenda – Kuhnke/Cornford, Passed Unanimously*

5. Action Item. **Approval of draft May Meeting Minutes**– *Prepared by Penn*
 • *Motion to approve May minutes – Cornford/Gray, Passed Unanimously*

6. Updates. **Public Comment** – *Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair*
 Robert Scallon said that a Mr. Dull approached the County Board on the Bike Trail proposal. Scallon said he had invited the man to this meeting to explain the project to the Commission. He said he was not necessarily against the project but thought it should pass the County Board before Mr. Dull came before the Commission. He said fund raising for this project had begun but Scallon believed that the project would probably not start this year. Alan Sweeney asked Ken Lucht to comment during his report.

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Vern Lewison said it appeared from the May minutes that income was down due to the amount of grain being hauled. He said that he had talked to a person who worked at the grain elevator in Boscobel and reported they were having problems getting cars to move grain. He said the Commission was doing a good job but could improve.

Sweeney announced the November 12, 2014 Freight Rail Conference.

Chris James updated the Commission on the states bicycle funding and talked about a bike trail project which funding was in jeopardy if bids for it did not go out for bid by autumn. He said this particular trail protected users by taking them off the rail corridor and put them on the trail. The trail would be in some cases outside the ROW. He said they were under a time crunch and if anyone wanted to support the project, he asked they see him at the break. He added that Act 20 said funds awarded must be bid out within 4 years, saying the Dane County Executive was putting a letter together for the WDOT. Frank Huntington suggested getting an exemption but James said that would probably not be possible. James asked if the Commission would provide a letter of support for the project that could go to the Secretary. Huntington confirmed it was a WDOT project and in their hands and said the bridge that they were building would be totally off the railroad ROW and therefore improve safety on the trail. Sweeney said if James came up with a resolution, the Commission could address it next month.

Forrest Van Schwartz said that Mary Penn would forward everyone a pictorial on the Oregon Fitchburg line work via email early next week.

7. Updates. **Correspondence & Communications** – *Discussion may be limited by the Chair*

Penn listed the correspondence of the past month. Correspondence included:

- a. Copy of signed resolution from City of Prairie du Chien; “Resolution 2014-01 Opposing the Storage of Railroad Cars and Related Equipment on St. Feriole Island”
- b. Letter from WDOT re: release of the Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030
- c. Confirmation of Charles Anderson’s reappointment to the WRRTC
- d. Confirmation of Jim Haefs-Flemming’s reappointment to WRRTC
- e. Communication with Walworth County re: Richard Kuhnke’s reappointment
- f. Copy of WSOR letter informing adjacent land owners of Oregon/Fitchburg rehabilitation work commencing.
- g. Confirmation from Sauk of Dave Riek and George Johnson’s appointments and John Miller’s reappointment to Commission

8. Updates. **Announcements by Commissioners** – *No discussion permitted*

There were no announcements.

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

9. **WRRTC Financial Report** – *Jim Matzinger, Dane County CPA / WRRTC Accountant*

Gene Gray gave the Treasurer’s Report and said that county contributions were coming in so there were funds to cover all the checks. Bills to be paid included:

- Check #1260, \$2,144.64 - McHenry County taxes (to be reimbursed by WSOR)
- Check #1261, \$586.55 – Accounting Jan-April
- Check #1262, \$15,553.00 - Liability Insurance
- Check #1263, \$3,571.91 - SWWRPC Q1, 2014 Admin.

Sweeney said he wanted to keep action on check #1262 to item 13 the agenda.

- *Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report and checks #1260, #1261, and #1263 – Nilson/Cornford, Passed Unanimously*

10. **Wisconsin & Southern Railroad’s Report on Operations** – *Ken Lucht, WSOR*

Ken Lucht commented on the City of Prairie du Chien resolution, saying WSOR understood the city’s concerns. He said the City was asking WSOR to keep cars off the island as much as possible, mentioning a specific business that wanted no cars on the tracks particularly on weekends due to weddings. However, he pointed out this was WSOR’s access point and they were trying to meet the needs of the customers while addressing the City’s issues, which was a challenge. He said WSOR had developed a solution and next month Lucht said he would present it to the Commission. He said this solution would greatly reduce their need to switch cars, noting it would be very costly but not cost the public “one cent”, calling it “a private solution to a public problem”.

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Tom Cornford said the same person who brought up the issue with the City was also on the County Board and he suspected that a resolution would be brought to the County Board too. Lucht said he would follow up on that, and said that this was not a binding resolution and the City knew that WSOR had to move freight. He said WSOR would try to work with the City and County as necessary.

On the Woodman bridge bike proposal, Lucht said WSOR had communicated with staff and some commissioners on this. He suggested the trail organizers first meet with WDOT and WSOR before coming before the Commission. He said there would be engineering and safety challenges in what was being suggested, adding that the bridge in question, between Woodman and Wauzeka, was over 100 years old and was designated for complete replacement in the long term: it could not just be retrofitted to support a bike bridge on a railroad bridge 100 years old. He assumed that WSOR would be contacted in the future on this. Gary Ranum said he had contacted Mr. Dull and gave him Ken Lucht's and Frank Huntington's contact information and basically said that it would be unlikely there would be Commission support without input from WDOT and WSOR but Dull had not contacted anyone. Gene Gray asked if this suggested modification had happened in other parts of the country. Van Schwartz gave an example in Virginia with a double track in an historic district. Sweeney said it may be a win/win situation for a multi-use structure. James said they had looked at this as an alternative also and said there were some structures like this out west and there was potential for a partnership for rail and trail.

On Capital Projects, Lucht said the Milton siding will soon be bid out this summer and said he would keep the Commission updated on this capacity expanding project. He said he believed the Commission may need to give approval on this.

On the Fox Lake Sub continuous welded rail (CWR) work was underway on the 8 miles between Avalon and Janesville and this would be the last stretch of CWR on this part of the line. Curves would also be straightened out as part of the projects. Lucht said on their allocation, the Commission would probably get a bill in the next few months. He reminded the Commission on the amount of freight moved on the Fox Lake sub.

Lucht reported on other projects outside the Commission's territory that were progressing, adding that in the WRRTC, as well as the PRTC area, bridge repair and maintenance work were underway, most of which were state funded.

On the Oregon acquisition, Lucht said WSOR got a signed license agreement from both communities, allowing WSOR access to start brushing the line. He said WSOR was committed to the project and said there have been a number of calls on the paperwork to submit to the STB. He said Eileen Brownlee needed to inform the STB that WDOT and WRRTC were not to become the railroad. WSOR has to provide a freight easement deed and operating agreement to the STB. Lucht said there was some new information on the freight easement document that was being negotiated between WSOR and the communities which would then require some legal review. As a result, he was not sure they could meet their submission deadline. The only other issue was the budget: because the project was delayed, the bids came in over 56% over budget and WSOR was considering options. He said they could do the work internally or could go ahead and have WSOR absorb the additional cost and risk no state funding but said there was not a lot of enthusiasm for that. Another idea was to request additional funding from the State. He said there was currently a high tie demand and timing was also an issue due to their restricted timeline. Internally WSOR was discussing their options with one possibility being no service to Oregon this year. Another idea would be to rebid when there are more ties available. However Lucht said the customer would be out and WSOR did not think that would be fair considering how long they have waited for service and he hoped State funding would come through. Gray asked how many carloads would be generated by the customer in a year but Lucht could not say. He did say the State had done a cost/benefit analysis on the lie which justified the cost.

Lucht then distributed a handout of a comparison between 2013 and 2014 funding and led the Commission through it. He said WSOR was meeting their maintenance obligations throughout their system and he delineated the costs associated with that. He then talked about the amount of maintenance done in the past year on the subs in the WRRTC's area. On capital projects, he particularly discussed a tie replacement project, noting that not much was done last year as the Reedsburg acquisition was progressing. He explained if all their 2014 projects were approved they would be installing almost 100K ties. He noted CWR work, bridge work, both in and outside the WRRTC area, saying some projects were waiting for some agreements to be executed before work could commence. He said that this handout information had also been provided to WDOT and said they were going to bring the WDOT inspector out to the Prairie sub and show him its condition and what work was required. He said this was a very highly capitolly intensive work. Mo Hansen asked about the \$11 M maintenance budget and where those numbers were. Lucht said they did not list the costs of each. Gray said it was good to see 2 years together to provide a point of reference. Terry Thomas asked about a time table on the Avalon section and Lucht said it would be probably next spring. Kim Tollers asked about the speeds and Lucht said it would be 40 mph. Huntington said there would be more work necessary on this sub but only after the next budget cycle. Gary Ranum said that the past meeting minutes noted a lot of improvements and work on the Prairie sub and said that he did not see much work going on currently. Lucht said there were State applications in for tie replacement and WSOR was waiting for its award which would probably be next year. For federal and state funding WSOR was waiting for word on the TIGER funding which hopefully they would

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hear about in September. He said there was a lot of bridge work going on, saying there were 2 crews out now. He thought they were on the Avoca and Woodman bridge currently. Scallon asked about where CWR would go if the the TIGER funding came through. Lucht said it would be from Madison to Spring Green, beginning on Broom Street. Outside of Madison, track speeds would be 40 mph. West of Spring Green track speed would still be 25 mph. Sweeney told Lucht he appreciated the handout and said he thought the Commission would appreciate this report annually. Lucht said May would probably be the best time for this report in future;

Scallon asked Lucht about Blue River and Lucht said they had contacted WSOR.

Alan Anderson noted that the speed limits on tracks had really gone up in the past couple of years and suggested that a perspective in showing how much the track has improved might be useful.

11. WDOT Report– *Frank Huntington, Kim Tollers, WDOT*

Huntington reported that the Reedsburg acquisition was very close to completion and hopefully by next week it would be complete. He said once that was done, the information would need to be submitted to the STB. He said he hoped that by next month he could report it would be filed with the STB.

On projects in the WRRTC area, Huntington reported that the Sheboygan Falls/Plymouth line work is underway and hopefully in the next few weeks work bids would go out. In the northern part of the state, he said the Marinette project continued and hopefully would be done by the end of the construction season. He said WDOT is working on its next budget and at this point he could not say what the budget would be, adding that legislative support remained good for the rail program.

Sweeney asked about customers from Madison to Reedsburg and Lucht said there were about a dozen with more than a dozen from Prairie du Chien to Madison. Anderson commented that there were about 3000 jobs on the Reedsburg sub, so locally it was very economically important.

12. WRRTC Administrator's Report – *Mary Penn, WRRTC Admin.*

Penn listed the administrative tasks of the past month including preparing and distributing a Commissioner contact list. She asked the Commissioners to look it over and send her edits if necessary. She said she had updated the WRRTC website to include all of the articles submitted by Van Schwartz in 2014 and viewers could find them on the “News and Articles” tab. She said she was trying to identify a potentially illegal crossing in Rock County. Lastly, she said she had worked with Sauk County to submit the Sauk County 2014 Outside Organization Budget request. She thanked Commissioner John Miller on his agreeing to present this request to the Sauk County Economic Development Committee later this summer.

13. Consideration and possible action on paying for WRRTC 2015 liability insurance with Richgels-Schaefer Insurance – *Mary Penn, WRRTC Admins*

Penn explained that the Commission needed to approve the insurance before July 10th as the policy lapsed on that date and explained the ramifications if that happened. She added that she agreed with Gray that the whole Commission address this due to the amount of the bill and suggested next year the June meeting be a Full Commission meeting to do so. Karl Nilson reminded the Commission that they had taken action allowing Gray and Jim Matzinger to execute checks in situations like this.

- *Motion to approve check 1262, 2015 liability insurance with Richgels-Schaefer Insurance– Nilson/Gustina, Passed Unanimously*

Sweeney told the Commission that there were 2014 rail maps available that Penn had brought with her from the May PRTC meeting.

14. Action Item. Adjournment

- *Motion to adjourn at 11:01AM – Cornford/Thomas, Passed Unanimously*