

WRRTC APRIL 5, 2024 MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED 05/10/2024

**Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission
Commission Meeting – Friday, April 5, 2024 at 10:00 am**

1. 10:00 AM **Call to Order – Alan Sweeney, Chair**
2. Roll Call. **Establishment of Quorum – Misty Molzof, Admin**

Crawford	Carl Orr, 2 nd Vice Chair	X	Jefferson	Mary Roberts	X
	Mark Gilberts	X		John Kannard, Vice Secretary	X
	Tom Cornford	X		VACANT	Vacant
Dane	Kevin Potter	X	Rock	Jeff Smith, Alternate	Excused
	Jeff Huttenburg, Treasurer	X		VACANT	Vacant
	Jim Bolitho	X		Tom Brien	X
Grant	Gary Ranum	X	Sauk	Alan Sweeney, Chair	X
	Mike Lieurance	X		Brian Peper	X
	Robert Scallon, 1 st Vice Chair	X		Gaile Burchill, 2 nd Vice Treasurer	Excused
				Marty Krueger	X
Green	Harvey Kubly, 1 st Vice Treasurer	Excused	Walworth	Tim McCumber, Alternate	Excused
	Todd Larson	X		Al Stanek	Excused
	Kurt Schafer	X		Richard Kuhnke, 2 nd Vice Secretary	X
Iowa	Charles Anderson, Secretary	X	Waukesha	Allan Polyock	Excused
	Kate Reimann	X		Rick Beutler, 3 rd Vice Treasurer	X
	Kevin Peterson	X		Richard Morris	X
			Karl Nilson	Excused	

Commission met quorum.

Others present for all or some of the meeting:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misty Molzof, SWWRPC • Eileen Brownlee & Julia Potter, Attorneys • Lisa Stern & Ben Mohlke, WisDOT • Ken Lucht, WSOR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan Anderson, Pink Lady RTC • Don Vruwink, OCR • Chris James, Dane County • John, MSA
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3. Action Item. **Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice – Noticed by Molzof.**
 - Motion to approve meeting’s public notice – Brien/Anderson. Passed Unanimously.
4. Action Item. **Approval of Agenda – Prepared by Molzof.**
 - Motion to approve the agenda. Peper/Sweeney. – Passed Unanimously.
5. Action Item. **Approval of draft March 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes – Prepared by Molzof.**
 - Motion to approve the March 8, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Orr/Kuhnke. Passed Unanimously.
6. Updates. **Public Comment – Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair.**
None.
7. Updates. **Announcements by Commissioners**
Sweeney announced that the commission will hold officer elections in May and having a reception for Eileen following the May meeting.

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. **WRRTC Financial Report – Huttenburg, Treasurer**
 - Motion to approve the February, 2024 Treasurer’s Report, pay operational bills to Southwestern WI Regional Planning Commission in the amount of \$8,166.25, and approve payment of capital expenditures: Wisconsin & Southern Railroad in the amount of \$110,268.05 for the Merrimac Bridge. Anderson/Reiman. Passed Unanimously.

Huttenburg stated that in February, there were \$208,396.47 in disbursements, of which \$90,000 was a transfer of county funds to the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) account; receipts of \$60,000 from counties and interest of \$5,034.45. Bills for approval this month include the quarterly payment to SWWRPC for administrative fees, and a payment to WSOR for the Merrimac Bridge. Huttenburg and Molzof have been working on a new format for the financial statements, included in the materials sent out as well as a standard operating procedure to address the audit requirements and for future reference.

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9. Wisconsin & Southern Railroad's Report on Operations – Lucht, WSOR

Lucht stated that WSOR is working on the Reedsburg Sub tie project and the grant agreement has been signed; tie maintenance is underway; bridge replacements on Hwy DL, Hwy 13 Waunakee, and Co Hwy M in Madison is in process; WSOR has 19 active projects; however the signal maintainer contract has lapsed and there has been difficulty in reaching an agreement; there are currently 67 active dockets covering 126 crossings with the OCR and they have been keeping WSOR busy; nationally rail traffic is down caused by people traveling instead of purchasing products, 2023 grain production, container traffic is down, and federal policies are creating less need for coal; the old shop in Janesville was built in 1905 a time when steam engines were used; and Lucht will let engineering folks know about the University Avenue crossing from UW-Hospital on Highland Street per Anderson's request.

10. WisDOT Report – Mohlke / Stern - WisDOT.

Mohlke stated that the Devil's Lake FRAP will be signed next week and that project will be moving forward; Merrimac Bridge Pier 20 concrete will be poured and Pier 19 is also in process. Stern stated that WisDOT is working with the City of Baraboo Engineering and Planning and a meeting is set for later today; discussions regarding the Stoughton Road reconstruction are underway and WisDOT is looking at at-grade versus bridge options and funding sources.

11. Committee Updates / Recommendations - Trail Committee

- o *Motion to allow members of Trail Committee to work with legal counsel and MSA (if needed) to compile a bid package for trail removal that is compliant with state law and regulations and to bring back to full Commission for final approval before sending out. Krueger/Morris. Passed Unanimously.*

Chris James stated that Dane County is working with MSA on the 3-miles of rail to trail conversion construction documents and the removal of the existing ties, track, and infrastructure that is in place; originally, Dane County was going to bid it all and give commission any revenues left after the costs of the removal; however, it will take 6-8 months to bid it out and contractors who scrap rail cannot bid on the long time frame as they use the changing market rates when bidding. Krueger stated that the trail committee met and recommend that the Commission allow members of the Trail Committee put together a bid package with the assistance of the attorney and MSA if needed and if no bids are received to our satisfaction, we give it back to Dane County to include in their bid package. Huttenburg stated that this will allow for a more reasonable time period to receive bids from contractors who specialize in this work. Bolitho stated that he and Huttenburg could put the package together, send to Molzof to coordinate attorney review and bring back to the Commission for final approval before documents are sent out.

12. Attorney Updates / Report

Brownlee stated that she is working on organizing private crossings, and the Commission should be able to continue with business as usual with Attorney Julia Potter upon Eileens upcoming retirement.

13. Permits / Applications

- o *Motion to approve Temporary Authorization Permit (TAP), Village of Oregon, Dane County, WI South Parkway Crossing contingent upon WSOR review and approval. Orr/Cornford. Passed Unanimously.*

14. Undocumented Private Rail Crossings

- o *Motion to approve crossing permit application, private crossing license, and undocumented private crossing standard letter as presented. Potter/Orr. Passed Unanimously.*
- o *Motion to amend motion to reduce application time frame from 12 months to 6 months. Schaefer. Motion failed for lack of second.*

Huttenburg asked what will happen for those that do not comply, Julia Potter stated that there will be a follow-up letter sent, and Huttenburg asked for a copy of the proposed follow-up letter.

15. Financial Standard Operating Procedure and request to Change Audit Requirement:

- o *Motion to table standard operating procedure until such time as WisDot reviews and approved. Scallon/Brien. Passed Unanimously.*

16. Adjournment.

- o *Motion to Adjourn at 11:35 am. Scallon/Cornford. Passed Unanimously.*