

**MINNESOTA HIGH SPEED RAIL COMMISSION MEETING
DECEMBER 2, 2010
MEETING SUMMARY**

MEMBERS:

Goodhue County RRA; Ron Allen	City of Lake City; Andru Peters
Ramsey County RRA; Janice Rettman	LAPC; Tom Faella*
Wabasha County RRA; Rich Hall	Prairie Island Indian Community; Marc Mogan*
Winona County RRA; Jim Pomeroy	
City of Cottage Grove; Jen Peterson	
City of Winona; Jerry Miller	
City of Red Wing; John Howe	
City of St. Charles; William Spitzer	

*Ex-officio member

OTHERS:

Dakota County; Sam O'Connell	Hennepin County; Chuck Ballentine
Washington County; Andy Gitzlaff	Tunheim Partners; Darin Broton
Goodhue County; Ken Bjornstad	
Ramsey County RRA; Mike Rogers	
Mn/DOT; Dan Krom	
City of Red Wing; Jerry Dooley	
City of Winona; Judy Bodway	

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Rettman moved for approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Allen. The motion passed unanimously.

2. CHECKS AND CLAIMS

A motion to approve was requested. Mayor Howe moved for approval of the checks and claims. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Peterson. The motion passed unanimously.

3. MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 19TH, 2010 MEETING

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Rettman moved for approval of the August 19, 2010 minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomeroy. The motion passed unanimously.

4. MEMBER RECOGNITION

Mr. Rogers distributed a draft resolution that thanked departing members of the Commission for their service, advocacy, and leadership. The resolution reads as follows:

Resolution 2010-04

Resolution thanking Commission members for their service, advocacy, and leadership on the Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission

WHEREAS, the Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission (hereafter known as The “Commission”) is a political subdivision and local government unit of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is established by Joint Powers Agreement by and between Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, Washington County Regional Railroad Authority, Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority, Goodhue County Regional Railroad Authority, Wabasha County Regional Railroad Authority, Winona County Regional Railroad Authority, City of St. Paul, City of St. Paul Park, City of Cottage Grove, City of Hastings, City of Lake City, City of Red Wing, City of Wabasha, City of Goodview, City of Winona, City of St. Charles, City of Utica; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is working to establish high speed intercity passenger rail service between The Union Depot in St. Paul and Chicago along the current Amtrak Empire Builder route in Minnesota which parallels the Mississippi River (River Route); and

WHEREAS, Commission members Myra Peterson, David Windhorst, John Howe, Tate Ferguson, and John Meisch have been strong advocates for high speed rail along the River Route; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission would like to thank Commission members Myra Peterson, David Windhorst, John Howe, Tate Ferguson, and John Meisch for their years of service, advocacy, and leadership on the Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission.

A motion to approve was requested. Councilmember Peterson moved for approval of Resolution 2010-4. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomeroy. The resolution passed unanimously.

5. 2011 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Mr. Rogers presented the 2011 Work Plan and Budget. He highlighted the various sections of the work and the changes to the budget that had been made since the August meeting. He noted the revised budget included a recommendation to utilize more of the Commission’s fund balance than previously recommended. This change resulted in lower 2011 contributions from members.

Discussion then moved to the Communications Contract. Commissioner Rettman expressed concern with the amount budgeted and felt that it would be better to reduce the amount and move the remainder to contingency. Following additional discussion, Commissioner Rettman made a motion to approve the 2011 Work Plan and Budget with a reduction of the Public

Involvement expenditure category from \$55,000 to \$35,000 and to move the \$20,000 to Contingency. The motion was seconded by Mayor Howe. The motion passed unanimously.

6. MN/DOT PASSENGER RAIL UPDATE

Mr. Krom provided a presentation on the current efforts of the Department of Transportation regarding high speed rail. He noted the series of public information meetings that were held as part of the Twin Cities to Milwaukee route study that is going on. All meetings were well attended with over 150 people at many locations.

When asked about the Wisconsin response to the study, Mr. Krom stated that Wisconsin is fully involved in the Twin Cities to Milwaukee route analysis and saw many benefits from rail including mobility and economic development.

Mr. Krom noted that the study involved working with Minneapolis, St. Paul, River cities, Eau Claire, Rochester and other Wisconsin cities.

Mr. Krom went on to inform the Commission about the upcoming Governance Study that is being done. This study's goal is to identify the best way to govern passenger/high speed rail in Minnesota. The study is looking at all available options and will recommend the one that best fits Minnesota.

Commissioner Rettman asked if second train has been discussed. Mr. Krom said the discussions have started, but there still needs to be a funding source identified. He added that a second train does not eliminate the need for high speed rail.

Chair Miller asked if Mr. Krom knew if Governor Elect Walker has a position on the existing rail service in his state. Mr. Krom stated that Governor Elect Walker had not proposed ending any of the existing service, but was instead focusing on the new Madison to Milwaukee service.

Information on the Twin Cities to Milwaukee study and the governance study can be found on the Mn/DOT website at the following address.

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/passengerrail/index.html>

7. HIGH SPEED RAIL SUMMIT SUMMARY

Mr. Rogers provided an update on the Commission's October 27th High Speed Rail Summit at the Union Depot in St. Paul. He noted that there were more than 150 attendees with several speakers including the St. Paul Area Chamber, OnBoard Midwest, Canadian Pacific, and Mn/DOT. A presentation on the Union Depot and tours of the facility were held as well.

One of the highlights of the event was the welcome provided by Congresswoman McCollum, which included an announcement that the Union Depot would be receiving an additional \$40 million in federal funding. Mr. Rogers added that all presentations given at the Summit were available on the Commission's website.

Mr. Rogers provided the Commission with an update on the expenses associated with the Summit. Prior to the Summit, the Commission approved the use of up to \$8,000. The final cost

of the summit came to approximately \$4,300 with approximately \$1,000 of the expenses for the roll-up banners, which can be used at future events.

Commission members provided comments on the event. It was agreed that it went well and was a good way to built momentum for high speed rail along the River Route.

8. ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Broton provided a draft annual report to Commission members. He discussed the various sections of the report and also noted that the report did not include a couple of details typically found on an annual report. It did not include a date or title 'Annual Report' on the front cover. This was intentional as the document was developed so that it would have a longer shelf life than a typical annual report. Additionally, the report provided the Commission with the opportunity to include inserts that could be tailored to specific events without having to reprint the entire document.

Commissioners discussed the report and stated that the website should be included and that extra care should be given to making sure the information was accurate. Mr. Rogers asked the Commissioners continue to review the report and provide further comments to him by December 16th. He said that comments would be incorporated and a final draft would be distributed for approval at the next meeting.

9. APPROVAL TO AMENDMENT #1 TO THE PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANCE CONTRACT

Mr. Rogers provided an update on the existing Public Communications Assistance Contract. He noted that the current contract with Tunheim Partners expires on December 31st and would need to be extended if the Commission wished to continue Tunheim's services in 2011.

Mr. Rogers noted that the contract calls for Tunheim to assist the Commission in the following areas:

- Media relations
- Corridor coordination
- Website maintenance and hosting
- Corridor advocacy and events
- Material development and production

Mr. Rogers stated that Amendment #1 to the Tunhiem contract would extend the term from December 31, 2010 to December 31, 2011 and that due to the previously approved changes to the 2011 budget, the contract would be for a not to exceed amount of \$35,000 instead of \$55,000.

A motion to approve was Amendment #1 to the existing requested. Mayor Howe moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rettman. The motion passed unanimously.

10. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Gitzlaff provided an update to the Commission from the memo included in the agenda packet. He highlighted the ongoing discussion regarding the six-year reauthorization of the

federal transportation bill, energy legislation, and appropriations. He went on to discuss changes at the state level due to the change of majority control from the Democrats to the Republicans.

11. ADVOCACY PARTNER UPDATE

Mr. Faella provided an update on the Twin Cities to Milwaukee route study's open house in La Crosse. He said that over 175 people attended and that the study itself was well received. The open house received TV, radio, and newspaper coverage.

12. OTHER

No additional items were discussed.

NEXT MEETING – JANUARY 6, 2011

Being there was no further discussion the meeting was adjourned.