

**MINNESOTA HIGH SPEED RAIL COMMISSION MEETING
DECEMBER 3, 2009
MEETING SUMMARY**

MEMBERS:

Ramsey County RRA; Janice Rettman	City of Utica; Tate Ferguson
Wabasha County RRA; Rich Hall	City of Winona; Jerry Miller
Washington County RRA; Myra Peterson	City of Wabasha; John Meisch
City of Cottage Grove; Jen Peterson	Prairie Island Indian Community*; Marc Mogan
City of Red Wing; John Howe	La Crosse Area Planning Committee*; Tom Faella;

*Ex-officio member

OTHERS:

Honorable Tim Kelly, MN State Representative, District 28A	City of Lake City; Andru Peters
Dennis McGrann; Lockridge Grindal Nauen	Jay Owens, City of Red Wing
Onboard Midwest; Dennis Egan	City of Winona; Judy Bodway
Madeline Koch, Tunheim Partners	Ramsey County RRA; Mike Rogers
Andrew Wanstale, Tunheim Partners	Ramsey County RRA; Josh Olson
Patty Uye, Tunheim Partners	Washington County RRA; Andy Gitzlaff
Darin Broten, Tunheim Partners	Bob Kastner, Redwing 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Peterson moved for approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mayor Howe. The motion passed unanimously. Following the motion's approval, it was determined that a quorum was not present. Due to the lack of a quorum, all action items were moved to the January meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2009 MEETING

Due to the lack of a quorum, the item was moved to the next meeting.

4. ONBOARD MIDWEST

Dennis Egan provided an update on OnBoard Midwest activities over the last month. He stated that the coalition continues to build its list of supporters with the recent addition of the Hudson-River Falls Area Rail Group. Additionally, coalition partners, including the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce have been reaching out to business and advocacy groups in Madison and Milwaukee to increase their support for high speed rail.

Mr. Egan added OnBoard Midwest was also working on additional videos. These videos highlighted the Corridor's freight railroads, potential commuter rail, and tourism industry. Once videos are completed they are posted on the OnBoard Midwest website and through YouTube.

5. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Mr. Broton directed Commission members to the revised Position Statement and Key Messages included in their agenda packets. He discussed that the Position Statement articulates a clear

and consistent message and that the primary message that the Commission should focus on is jobs, jobs, jobs. Given the current economy staff feels that this primary message within the larger position statement is the one that will resonate with the public, elected officials, and the business community. Mayor Howe stated the Position Statement's message on travel time savings needed to be stronger. He suggested removing the 5.5 hours. Following the Position Statement Discussion, the Commission discussed the Key Messages. Commissioner Peterson suggested replacing 'most shovel-ready' with 'only shovel ready' under the "Why the Mississippi River route?" question. Staff was directed make the changes and distribute the Position Statement and Key Messages to Commission members via email.

Mr. Broton passed out a copy of the proposed logo and tagline for the Commission. He added the logo and tagline would be used to identify the Commission and be used on fact sheets and letterhead. Mayor Meisch stated he thought the tagline was too broad and generic. Commissioner Peterson added the tagline needed to emphasize shovel-readiness and the connection to Chicago. She also felt that the logo lacked high impact and energy. Commissioner Rettman suggested 'Blazing Fast, Bold and Beautiful' as a tagline. Mayor Howe stated the tagline needed to stress the readiness and achievability of the River Route. Mayor Meisch stated he liked the inclusion of Commission members on the letterhead. Discussion continued regarding the logo and tag line. Following the discussion, Mr. Broton stated that they would revise the logo and letterhead and bring it to the next meeting. Due to the discussion and lack of a quorum, approval of the logo and letterhead were moved to the next meeting.

6. FINAL 2010 WORKPLAN AND BUDGET

Mr. Rogers directed the Commission to the Final 2010 Work Plan and Budget included in the agenda packet. Commissioner Peterson inquired about the 2010 budget and the reduced contributions shown for each member. She inquired as to how this impacted the Commission's funding balance and if adequate funds would be available should they be needed given that 2010 was the year that the next six year transportation bill is scheduled to be acted upon by Congress. She stated that she did not want to restrict the Commission should the reduced budget prove to be inadequate. Discussion ensued among Commission members on whether to keep contribution levels the same as 2009. Following the discussion Commission members were asked to discuss the proposed 2010 contributions with their respective Boards/Councils to gain their input prior to the next Commission meeting. Due to the discussion and lack of a quorum, approval of the Final 2010 Work Plan and Budget was moved to the next meeting.

7. STATE RAIL PLAN

Mn/DOT staff was unable to attend the meeting; however, Commission staff noted that the State Rail Plan was still on schedule with the release of the Draft State Rail Plan due at the end of December.

8. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. McGrann of Lockridge Grindal and Nauen provided an update on legislative activities at the federal level. He stated this was a good year for transportation and transit with the support coming from the White House and Congress. He added that Congressman Oberstar is pushing hard for a new six-year transportation bill. He added it is likely to be completed in 2010. Mr. McGrann added it remains to be seen how the bill will be funded.

9. WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN RAIL COALITION

Councilmember Peters provided a recap of the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition meeting. He stated that several folks from Minnesota presented including Dan Krom from Mn/DOT on the State Rail Plan and Ted Schoenecker from Washington County on I-94 Alternatives Analysis. He added that WisDOT was going to explore alternating trains through Eau Claire and La Crosse.

10. LA CROSSE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING (LAPC)

Mr. Faella introduced himself to the Commission. He stated on November 18th, the LAPC members voted to join the Commission as an ex-officio member. Mr. Faella gave the Commission an overview of the role of the LAPC in the La Crosse Metro Area. He stated the LAPC was also a member of the Empire Builder High Speed Coalition. He stated the Coalition's would like to work with the Commission to jointly advocate for the River Route and has extended an invitation to the Commission to have a joint meeting in February or March. Commission members discussed the invitation and agreed that a joint meeting in La Crosse would be a good idea.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Mogan encouraged Commission members to attend the meeting at Treasure Island Resort and Casino put on by OnBoard Midwest. He also added that the Prairie Island Indian Community had received assurances from Dave Christianson from Mn/DOT that their updated visitor and employment information would be included in the State Rail Plan.

Councilmember Peters stated the Joint Powers Agreement would be on the City's December 14th meeting.

NEXT MEETING – JANUARY 7, 2010

Being there was no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.