

**MINNESOTA HIGH SPEED RAIL COMMISSION MEETING
JULY 1, 2010
MEETING SUMMARY**

MEMBERS:

Dakota County RRA; Will Branning	
Ramsey County RRA; Janice Rettman	
Wabasha County RRA; Rich Hall	
Washington County RRA; Myra Peterson	
Winona County RRA; Jim Pomeroy	
City of Lake City; Andru Peters	
City of Red Wing; John Howe	
City of Winona; Jerry Miller	

*Ex-officio member

OTHERS:

Ramsey County RRA; Mike Rogers	OnBoard Midwest; Dennis Egan
Dakota County; Sam O'Connell	
Washington County; Andy Gitzlaff	
Goodhue County; Ken Bjornstad	
City of Winona; Judy Bodway	
City of St. Paul; Allen Lovejoy	
Prairie Island Indian Community; Marc Mogan	

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A quorum was not present so no action on the Agenda could be taken.

2. CHECKS AND CLAIMS

A quorum was not present so no action on the Checks and Claims could be taken.

3. MINUTES OF THE APRIL 1, 2010 MEETING

A quorum was not present so no action on the Minutes could be taken.

4. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANCE RFP

Mr. Rogers provided an update to the Commission on the Public Communications Assistance RFP. He directed the Commission to the memo included in the packet and noted that two proposals were received and that staff had interviewed both consultants. He said the staff recommendation was to select Tunheim Partners to complete the work identified in the RFP. Discussion ensued regarding the past work of Tunheim Partners for the Commission. Their work on the development of the Commission's logo was highlighted as were concerns with the accuracy of some of their detailed work. Staff was asked to work with Tunheim Partners to ensure that the accuracy of the detail work was improved through the duration of the new contract. It was a general consensus of those at the meeting that Tunheim Partners provided the best ability to quickly respond to events surrounding high speed rail that impacted the

Commission. The Commission was also impressed with Tunheim's experience handling crisis management, a speaker's bureau, public information, and their quick response to Commission needs.

Since a quorum was not present so no action was taken on awarding the contract to Tunheim Partners. The item will be placed on the next meeting's agenda.

5. RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR TIGER II FOR THE UNION DEPOT

Mr. Rogers presented the resolution included in the agenda packet and noted that the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority would be submitting an application for federal funding for the renovation of the Union Depot. The application would be similar to the TIGER application completed in 2009 that resulted in the award of \$35 million for the project. The resolution of support for this request would be included when the final application was submitted by the RCRRA in August. Commissioners felt that the resolution was a good idea and although they could not take action, they requested that staff provide a Word document of the resolution to the member bodies so that they could pass it. Mr. Rogers stated that this could be done and that any approved resolutions could be sent to him and he would forward them to those who were completing the TIGER II application.

Since a quorum was not present no action was taken on the resolution provided in the agenda packet.

6. MN/DOT RAIL UPDATE

A representative from Mn/DOT was unable to attend the meeting. Commissioners discussed the need to receive a more comprehensive update from Mn/DOT regarding the status of their work regarding high speed rail. The Commission discussed how high speed rail is key to the state, the ability to maintain and grow jobs, and the movement of people and goods. The Commission asked that the presentation provide a sequence of events to date for the Chicago Corridor and what meetings/studies Mn/DOT is doing regarding the Eau Claire and Rochester route options. The Commission also expressed its concern that other Corridors are moving ahead of the River Route because they are being the 'squeaky wheel'. The discussion concluded with staff being directed to contact Mn/DOT and request that they come to the August Commission to give a presentation on the current status of high speed rail planning.

7. UNION DEPOT UPDATE

Dan Mehls, Michael Bjornberg, and Greg Brown provided a PowerPoint Presentation on the status of the Union Depot. In the presentation they discussed the Project's schedule, goals, and proposed design. The presentation offered multiple visualizations of how the Depot would look and function once renovation is completed in 2012. Commissioners asked about connectivity to the river and were told that connectivity is important and that options are being explored to expand the opening at Sibley St. to allow construction of a wider sidewalk/trail to better connect the Depot to the River and its amenities. Commissioners also asked about the historic aspect of the building and how that would be maintained in the renovated building. Mr. Mehls noted that a full

analysis of the Depot was done to identify the historically significant elements. The Depot Team is now in the process of determining how to best highlight these areas so that users can better understand the history of the building and its surroundings. Commissioners asked if public art would be implemented into the project and what activities would happen at the Depot through the evening. Mr. Mehls indicated that public art would be part of the project and that it was an important element. Mr. Brown discussed the focus on making the Depot a 24hr facility with all the proposed transportation connections, but that activity would peak when most of the train and bus services were arriving and departing. He also noted that there is the potential to operate some satellite public safety facilities in the Depot that would complement the lighting, mix of activities, and other security features to help make patrons comfortable when they were at the Depot no matter what time they were using the facility.

8. 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. The bill is currently working its way through both the House and Senate, though action on a final bill is not expected prior to the end of 2010. The major issue with the bill is that there is not enough revenue to fund all the investment needs and there is no agreement amongst legislators on how to raise the revenue necessary to meet the investment needs. Mr. Gitzlaff also discussed the work currently being done to get Congress ready for the 2011 appropriations cycle and the need for the Commission's awareness of the process so that it could submit a request should funding be needed for the Corridor.

9. ADVOCACY MATERIAL UPDATE

Mr. Rogers provided information to the Commission on opportunities for how it could utilize roll-up and table top displays to provide information and advocate for high speed rail along the River Route. He directed the Commission to an example of a roll-up banner and noted that it was currently being used at the Union Depot. He added that this was one of four different banners on display in a Depot conference room, but the banners are also used as a back drop for speakers and at public events. Commission members commented on the professional appearance and the ease of use. Mr. Rogers stated that the cost per roll-up banner was \$250-\$300, but that they could be updated with new fabric for about \$100 should the Commission wish to display different information in the future. Mr. Rogers also said that if the Commission chose to utilize roll-up banners they should purchase two sets. The two sets could be staged along the Corridor so that the logistics of getting them to different events would be easier. Commissioners felt that this was a good idea, and also discussed the possibility of a rotating display of the banners throughout cities along the Corridor. Banners could be displayed at libraries, city halls, and other civic buildings depending on timing and space availability. Discussion ensued regarding the cost of the banners and how many would be needed. Commissioner Rettman cautioned that while the banners were a good idea, the Commission should also examine the use they would receive. She did not want to see the banners purchased and not used.

Mr. Gitzlaff provided information to the Commission on table top displays. He directed the Commission to the Red Rock Corridor display that was recently created. He noted that it has been used at multiple meeting and at civic events. He added that it was quick and easy to set up and that it was a way to provide an audience with more information on the project than a roll-up banner could provide. He said that the display cost approximately \$500. Commissioners discussed the benefits of a table top display and whether or not the Commission should pursue one. Commissioners agreed that it would be good to have a table top display. The Commission directed staff to come back at the next meeting with some design ideas for the roll-up banners and the table top display.

10. ADVOCACY PARTNER UPDATE

Mr. Egan provided an update on OnBoard Midwest's outreach efforts. He noted that they are about to release a new video that would focus on how high speed rail could benefit freight service. He also discussed a potential 'window cling' marketing tool that OnBoard Midwest is pursuing and that the focus for July and August would be on informational meetings. Additionally, he noted that OnBoard would be available to collaborate with the Commission on the joint meeting with the Empire Builder Coalition. He concluded his update by providing the Commission with a recently printed newsletter that OnBoard had produced to advocate for the Corridor.

Mr. Faella was unable to attend the meeting so Mr. Rogers provided a brief update on the Milwaukee to Madison Corridor.

11. OTHER

No additional items were discussed.

NEXT MEETING – AUGUST 5, 2010

Being there was no further discussion the meeting was adjourned.