

**MINNESOTA HIGH-SPEED RAIL COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 4, 2011
MEETING SUMMARY**

MEMBERS:

Dakota County RRA; Will Branning	City of Winona; Jerry Miller
Ramsey County RRA; Janice Rettman	*Prairie Island Indian Community; Marc Mogan
Wabasha County RRA; Rich Hall	
Washington County RRA; Autumn Lehrke	
Winona County RRA; Jim Pomeroy	
City of Cottage Grove; Jen Peterson	
City of Lake City; Andru Peters	
City of St. Charles; Bill Spitzer	

*Ex-officio member

OTHERS:

Ramsey County RRA; Mike Rogers	St. Paul Chamber; Zach Schwartz
Washington County; Andy Gitzlaff	
City of Winona; Judy Bodway	
Mn/DOT; Dan Krom	
City of St. Paul; Allen Lovejoy	

The meeting was called to order at 11:10 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Lehrke moved for approval of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Peterson. The motion passed.

2. CHECKS AND CLAIMS

Mike Rogers directed the commission to the Checks and Claims included in the agenda packet. Discussion on the agenda item ensued. Commission members asked about the Tunheim invoices. There was concern about the cost vs. the deliverables. Mr. Rogers stated that while the cost was in line with what other consultants would charge the commission for public relations work. He said that since the commission had changed the focus of the Tunheim contract, the work product had been good and that Tunheim had been doing a good job of pitching stories on the commission to media outlets, community newsletters, and securing dates for community presentations. Chair Miller added that the commission does need communications expertise and that this expertise is not cheap. He stated that discussion on cost was good. Mr. Rogers added that the commission could revisit how it handled its public communications and direct staff to develop a request for proposals to solicit other consultants.

A motion to approve was requested. Mayor Spitzer moved for the approval of the Checks and Claims. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Peters. The motion passed.

3. MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2011 MEETING

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Rettman moved for approval of the June 2, 2011 minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pomeroy. The motion passed.

4. CORRIDOR INSURANCE

Mike Rogers directed the commission to the memo in the agenda packet. He stated that the commission has procured insurance in previous years through the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust (LMCIT) and that each year they ask the commission whether or not they would like to waive their tort liability limits. He discussed the staff recommendation to not waive the tort liability limits and the rationale for the recommendation. A question was raised on the anticipated cost for insurance and Mr. Rogers responded that the anticipated cost of \$1,500 was within the commission's budgeted amount for 2011.

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Pomeroy moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Mayor Spitzer. The motion passed.

5. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Andy Gitzlaff, Washington County directed the commission to the memo in the agenda packet. He noted that the debt limit debate was over and that a deal had been struck. He stated that the federal surface transportation bill would be an upcoming battle in Washington given the differences between the bill proposed by the House and the bill proposed by the Senate. An additional piece to this debate is that the current legislation for surface transportation expires on Sept. 30, 2011 and if it isn't reauthorized, or a new bill put in place, then the federal gas tax will go from 18.4 cents to 4.3 cents a gallon. This would have severe consequences for the nation's transportation system.

Chair Miller stated his concern with the loss of the gas tax, but also felt that keeping calm and working with our federal delegation was the best way to ensure needed funding for transportation.

Commissioner Rettman added that she had recently become aware of a federal grant program for tribal transit. While it would not fund high-speed rail, it may be possible that the funds could be used to develop the connecting system to the high-speed rail stations. Chair Miller said that if Prairie Island Indian Community were to apply, the Commission could take action to support the application. A motion to support a federal grant application was made by Commissioner Rettman and seconded by Commissioner Pomeroy. It was approved. *(Note: Prairie Island Indian Community will not be applying for funding at this time.)*

Mr. Gitzlaff also provided an update on the state legislative situation. He noted that the shut down ended in late July and that State workers were not back to work. He said that while a deal had been struck, all of the parties expressed their displeasure with it. In particular, the deal doesn't address the structural deficit issues at the state level and in two years the state will be back to where we are today if not additional changes are made. On the positive side, Mn/DOT's office of passenger rail was fully funded at \$500,000/yr. That is the same level they were at in the previous biennium.

6. OTHER

Dan Krom, Mn/DOT provided a brief update on passenger rail activities at Mn/DOT. He noted that of the \$26 million in bonds provided for passenger rail, \$16 million had been obligated and that the rest should be obligated shortly. Mr. Krom also noted that his office was looking to bring on an engineer to help with rail projects as they transition from planning to engineering.

This staff expertise will be especially important as Mn/DOT begins to take over projects like Northern Lights Express. Mn/DOT is also working with legislators and the Governor on the passenger rail funding and governance study. This study provides multiple ways to develop a dedicated funding source for passenger rail. He anticipated that the document would be released publicly in the fall. Mr. Krom then gave a brief update on the Twin Cities to Milwaukee study that is being lead by Mn/DOT. The study is now entering the environmental phase and funding has been obligated and a consultant has been selected to do the work. Mn/DOT is still in the process of finalizing the consultant's work scope. He said that with wrapping up of the previous route analysis work Mn/DOT was looking to hold open houses. Initial locations include La Crosse/La Crescent and Red Wing.

Mr. Krom next provided an update on the Zip Line. He said that bond money will be used to study a Greenfield alignment. The alignment would not be the Rochester Bypass that has been discussed in the past, but a new alignment from Rochester to the Twin Cities.

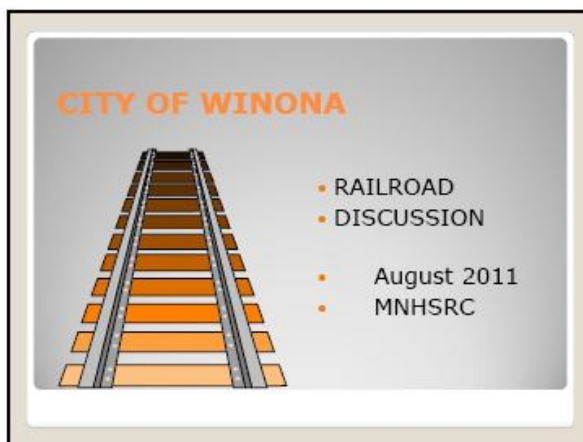
Zach Schwartz, St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, provided a brief update of the chamber's activities and how they still support high-speed rail, but are putting a larger focus on the Union Depot as a destination and a connecting point to all modes.

Mike Rogers added a brief update on the FY 2011 TIGER grant program. This program will provide \$527 million for transportation improvements. He stated that staff has been working with local partners to identify projects. So far two projects have been identified; the first is in Red Wing and second is in St. Paul/Cottage Grove. He said that more detail on those projects would be brought to future meetings.

NEXT MEETING – SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

Being there was no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Attached is a copy of the Winona Presentation that followed the commission meeting.

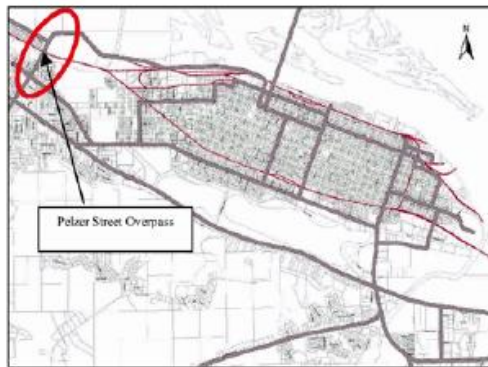


- 2000 Southern Minnesota Rail Corridor Safety Plan
- 2002 Winona Intermodel Study
- 2007 Winona Comprehensive Plan

TRANSPORTATION STUDIES

- 1975 - There were 37 at grade rail crossing in Winona.
- 1997 - There were 18 at grade crossings with various crossings protections in place.
- 2005 - Pelzer Street Rail Overpass
- 2011 - There are 17 at grade crossings with gates, signals and medians.
- 2012 - Two pedestrian underpasses will be constructed near WSU.

RAIL CROSSINGS



- 25 trains through Winona on the Canadian Pacific tracks in 2002.
- Projected to be 44 trains on the Canadian Pacific line by 2020, not including Midwest Regional Rail Initiative.
- Capacity with only one main line may limit numbers.

RAILROAD ISSUES Winona Intermodel Study

- East end Winona grade separation.
- Relocation of switching operations on Mankato/Wall Street, Franklin/Main Streets and Levee Park.
- Relocation of CPR main yard from middle of town (Amtrak Station area) to west end.
- Creation of a Passenger Station at Amtrak location.

FUTURE RAIL PROJECTS



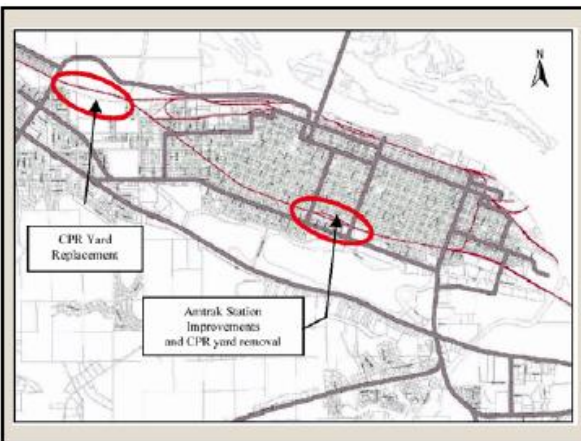
- Midwest Regional Rail Initiative identified Winona as rail to bus transfer location.
- Passenger transportation hub could include connections for rail, local and regional bus service, car rental and bicycles located in one facility.
- CPR maintains local offices and a rail yard adjacent to Amtrak.

AMTRAK STATION REDEVELOPMENT



- Benefits of Project
 - Remove CPR yard tracks and traffic by Amtrak allowing for station redevelopment.
 - Eliminates switching at Main and Franklin Streets.
 - Provides for transit friendly redevelopment near station.
 - Net gain of 6 acres for the transit friendly development.

AMTRAK STATION REDEVELOPMENT



- Negatives
 - Requires relocation of CPR offices and storage yard.
 - Cost of relocation activity \$6,100,000 plus not including the land acquisition costs for the current and new site.
 - Requires new railroad right of way east of Pelzer Street.
 - New yard may affect wetlands.

AMTRAK STATION REDEVELOPMENT

- Increases passenger transportation options and connections.
- Redevelopment options increase including passenger station, restaurants, and hotel.
- Connection to tourism activities increases.
- Enhanced connection to the WSU, SMU, and SEMN-Tech staff, students, and parents.

**AMTRAK STATION
COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

- **Miller Felpax Corporation is a leading manufacturer and distributor of rail parts** and has designed and manufactured locomotive, rail car, traction motor, bogie, truck, combo and gear case parts, used in over 100 countries, for over 60 years. Miller Felpax Corporation is the original inventor and manufacturer of traction motor lubricators and traction motor gear case seals, for both EMD and GE locomotives.

MILLER FELPAX TOUR

- Rudy Miller, local entrepreneur, started the company 30 years. Many local companies have begun from people hired by Rudy and Ben Miller.
- Miller Felpax Corporation is a leading manufacturer and distributor of rail parts and has designed and manufactured locomotive, rail car, traction motor, bogie, truck, combo and gear case parts, used in over 100 countries, for over 60 years. Miller Felpax Corporation is the original inventor and manufacturer of traction motor lubricators and traction motor gear case seals, for both EMD and GE locomotives.
- They are the industry leader in light emitting diode signals. The Everray crossing signal is an accepted industry leader, with the largest US installed base.
- Miller Felpax Corporation has been awarded over 240 patents for rail component innovations, cementing our reputation as a rail industry technology leader.

MILLER FELPAX TOUR