

# Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission

X- Commission Mtg – Friday, 3 April 2009 @ 10am • Dane Co. Hwy, 2302 Fish Hatchery Rd, Madison, WI

1. Larry Volz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. Commissioners present for all or part of the meeting:

Crawford	Tom	Cornford	X	Rock	Ben	Coopman (alternate)	
	Kersten	Rocksvold	X		Katie	Kuznacic	
	Vacant				Alan	Sweeney	X
			Terry		Thomas		
Dane	Gene	Gray	X	Sauk	Joel	Gaalswijk	
	Jim	Haefs-Flemming	X		Rob	Sinklair (alternate)	
	Forrest	Van Schwartz	X		Halsey	Sprecher	
			Larry		Volz	X	
Grant	DuWayne	Carlin		Walworth	Jerry	Grant	
	Margaret	Ruf	X		Richard	Kuhnke	
	Robert	Scallon	X		Allan	Polyock	
Iowa	Charles	Anderson	X	Waukesha	Karl	Nilson	
	Gerald	Dorscheid	X		Richard	Manke	
	Joe	Thomas			Fritz	Ruf	

**Others present for all or part of the meeting:**

Amy Seeboth (SWWRPC / WRRTC Administrator); Ken Lucht (WSOR); Jim Matzinger (Dane County Hwy CPA / WRRTC Accountant); Dick Goddard (Pink Lady RTC)

3. Seeboth’s certification of Public Notice was accepted by consensus.
4. Motion approving the Agenda, prepared by Seeboth: *Gray / Dorscheid / Passed Unanimously*
5. Motion approving the draft March Minutes prepared by Seeboth: *Cornford / Scallon / Passed Unanimously*
6. Public Comment: *None*
7. Correspondence & Communications: *None*

## REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

- 1) **Wisconsin & Southern Railroad’s Report on Operations** – Ken Lucht, WSOR, reported that maintenance underway includes normal brush cutting and weed control, employee safety training, as well as rail quality detection with a rail detector test car testing the Waukesha Sub., and parts of the Prairie du Chien and Madison Subs. Many defects were found along the Waukesha rail and repairs are being planned. Lucht passed around a report of defects found. WSOR is also working on repairing two bridges in Blue River and they should be finished in a week or two.

Current Capital Improvement Projects include changing 90 to 115 lb continuous welded rail along the Madison Sub., and plans to install 40,000 ties between Janesville and Monroe, but WSOR will not know if they can move forward with this project until the State budget is passed. A contract has been signed with Ayres Associates to conduct a comprehensive study of what it will take to fix the Merrimac Bridge- the study should be completed in August-September.

Other news: Milwaukee County just voted to join the Easter County Rail Road Consortium, the Consortium is now has nine counties. WSOR was named the Regional Rail Road of the year, due to their long-term visioning, efforts to improve safety, and efforts to market railroads. Up against 500 regional RR’s and Short Lines. Lucht said that WSOR is very honored to receive this prestigious award, and thanked the WRRTC for their work as it has helped WSOR receive the award. Lucht was congratulated by RTC members. This announcement was in the State Journal- MKE

journal sentinel had a big article on them about this about a month ago. Lucht invited Commissioners to email him their local newspaper email contacts, he has over 150 on his list, but might be missing some.

8. **Federal Efforts to “Re-Regulate” ALL Railroads** – Lucht, WSOR, updated the Commission on H.R. 233 & S. 146 – proposed regulations that would impose a greater liability on the RR and would remove the Staggers Act. The removal of the Staggers Act would result in a loss of anti-trust exemptions for the RR. Lucht reported that, “A balanced regulatory environment providing freight railroads with the incentive to invest in their physical plant, is key to keeping commerce moving and our citizens working... overlapping regulatory policies will provide burdensome regulations upon the freight railroads such as WSOR and will adversely impact the flow of commerce in Wisconsin and employment levels [in the area]. H.R. 233/ S. 146 will threaten the long-term viability of our public rail system in Wisconsin and could derail our absolute need for economical and environmentally sound freight transportation into the future.” Lucht provided Commissioners with a letter that the Commission could edit and send to their representatives. **A motion was made that WRRTC send the letter to their representatives detailing their opposition to H.R. 233/ S. 146, Van Schwartz motioned that they be addressed the “Honorable” Congressperson/Senator: Van Schwartz / Dorscheide / Passed Unanimously**
9. **WRRTC Financial Report** – Jim Matzinger, Dane County CPA / WRRTC Accountant, distributed copies of the Treasurer’s Report and provided an overview. Matzinger also reported on 2009 Budget and the following suggestion was approved- increase the County Assessment by 2% (instead of \$25,000, it will be \$25,500 / county).
- **Motion needed to approve treasurers report as presented.**
  - **Motion accepting payment of bills: Gray / Sweeny / Passed Unanimously**
  - **Motion accepting contracting with Dane County again to retain Matzinger as WRRTC Accountant for 2009, for \$4500: Van Schwartz / Dorscheide / Passed Unanimously**

**FOLLOW-UP: Motion needed to approve treasurer’s report. Review and possibly approve Audit at Full Commission Meeting in May**

10. **WRRTC Administrator’s Report** – Amy Seeboth, SWWRPC Trans. Planner has no news or updates. She circulated copies of the January usage report for the Commission’s website [www.wrrtc.org](http://www.wrrtc.org).
11. **WisDOT Update** – *No Report*
12. **Update on removal or demolition of structures on Commission property in Arena, WI** – Lucht reported that a few items need to be added to the contract for demolition, assure that any utilities running to building need to be turned off before demolition, all materials need to be removed before demotion and site be leveled off, and the demolition will need a flagger for one day- Lucht said WSOR will donate the flagger for 5 hours or a full day. WSOR needs one day notice for this. . Dorscheid will talk with contractor and Village about whether the Commission, Contractor, or Village will pay for flagging after the 5 hour donation by WSOR. Dorscheid should call Lucht right after talking with the contractor. Flaggers costs \$75/hour a day = approx. \$600. Lucht noted that if the Contractor is outside of 25 feet from centerline of the track, he doesn’t need a flagger.

**FOLLOW-UP: Dorscheid will call Contractor and Village, follow up with Lucht on Flagging Cost. Seeboth will contact Brownlee to update the contract accordingly.**

13. **Motion adjourning the meeting at approximately 11:00 a.m.:** *Cornford / Scallon / Passed Unanimously.*