

**WRRTC FULL COMMISSION 2015 MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT**

WISCONSIN RIVER RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION  
 FULL COMMISSION MEETING - FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2015 @ 10AM  
 DANE COUNTY HWY GARAGE, 2302 FISH HATCHERY RD, MADISON, WI

1. 10: 01 AM      **Call to Order** – *Alan Sweeney, Chair*

2. Roll Call.      **Establishment of Quorum** – *Mary Penn*

Crawford	Tom Cornford, (2nd Vice Chair XComm)	x	Rock	Ben Coopman, Alternate	
	Rocky Rocksford	x		Wayne Gustina	x
		Alan Sweeney, Chair		x	
		Terry Thomas		x	
Dane	Gene Gray, (Treasurer X-Comm)	x	Sauk	Marty Krueger, Alternate	x
	Jim Haefs-Fleming			Vacant	
	Chris James, Vice Secretary (XComm)	x		John Miller, Vice Treasurer (XComm)	x
		Dave Riek		x	
Grant	Gary Ranum	x	Walworth	Jerry Grant	excused
	Vern Lewison	x		Richard Kuhnke, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Treasurer (XComm)	excused
	Robert Scallon, 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chair (XComm)	x		Allan Polyock	x
Iowa	Charles Anderson, Secretary (XComm)	excused	Waukesha	Karl Nilson, 4 <sup>th</sup> Vice Chair (XComm)	x
	William G Ladewig	x		Dick Mace	x
	Jack Demby	x		Vacant	
Jefferson	John David	excused			
	Laura Payne - substituting for A. Tietz	excused			
	Augie Tietz (3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair XComm)	x			

Commission met quorum.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mary Penn, WRRTC Administrator</li> <li>• Ken Lucht, WSOR</li> <li>• Dave Simons, Kim Tollers, WDOT</li> <li>• Danielle Zimmerman, Off. Of Rep. Laudenbeck</li> <li>• Alan Anderson, Pink Lady RTC</li> <li>• Bill Henning, Town of Sharon</li> <li>• Rick Gethes, Town of Sharon</li> <li>• Brian Simmert, Sauk County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forrest Van Schwartz, Consultant</li> <li>• Jim Matzinger</li> <li>• Suzan Nast, WDOT Freight Traffic Planning</li> <li>• Mike McConville, IPH</li> <li>• Kevin Brunner, Walworth County</li> <li>• John Anderson, Off. Of Sen. Mark Miler</li> <li>• Sen. Mark Miller</li> <li>• Tom Brien, Rock County Supervisor</li> </ul>
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3. Action Item.      **Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice** – *Noticed by Penn*

- *Motion to approve posting of meeting – Thomas/Gustina, Passed Unanimously*

4. Action Item.      **Approval of Agenda** – *Prepared by Penn*

- *Motion to approve agenda with amendments – Nilson/Cornford, PA*

5. Action Item.      **Approval of January 2015 Meeting Minutes**– *Prepared by Penn*

- *Motion to approve amended January minutes with corrections – Mace/Nilson, Passed Unanimously*

6. Updates.      **Public Comment** – *Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair*

Alan Sweeney asked for introductions from members of the public attending. Each introduced themselves, including Sen. Mark Miller who said he wanted to get to know more about rail interests in the state so he can better inform his committees. Sweeney said he hoped Sen. Miller would attend more meetings in the future. Dave Simon introduced himself as did Suzan Nast who is WDOT's new freight traffic engineer planning.

There were no public comments.

**7. Updates. Correspondence & Communications – Discussion may be limited by the Chair**

Mary Penn distributed the articles from Forrest Van Schwartz. Penn then listed the correspondence she had received or sent in the past month. Bill Ladewig asked about checking the minutes regarding Waukesha.

**8. Updates. Announcements by Commissioners – No Discussion Permitted**

Karl Nilson announced that Van Schwartz was going to Africa for consulting and Nilson asked for a report when he returned. Terry Thomas introduced Tom Brien, Supervisor from Rock County who had been missed during introductions. Augie Tietz said the City of Watertown had received a TEA grant.

**REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS**

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**9. WRRTC Financial Report – Jim Matzinger, Dane County CPA / WRRTC Accountant**

- Treasurer's Report for January and Payment of Bills

Jim Matzinger gave the Treasurer Report to the Commission, saying that all expenses and checks listed were for 2014. He said at the next meeting he would bring the year end 2014 report: the only activity this month was the WSOR lease. He said that two bills had been added since the Treasurer Report had been sent to the Commissioners, including the final Johnson Block bill. Matzinger said he would show all these in the yearend report. Nilson reminded Penn to forward the audits to the member counties. Bill Ladewig asked about the Crawford Cty contribution. Matzinger explained how they had underpaid for three years but they had been repaying over time. Dick Mace asked if repayment had been a requirement. Matzinger said everyone paid voluntarily. Sweeney asked how Matzinger wrote off the debt in the Report. Matzinger said it showed up as additional income in the 2015 project column which would increase net cash available. Nilson said that Crawford County got credited as they paid off their contribution. Gene Grey asked about the Oregon/Fitchburg funds (about \$11K) left over from the Evansville project. Matzinger said he had just rolled the whole amount into the general fund.

- Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and payment of checks – Nilson/Cornford, Passed Unanimously

Gene Gray said they should see the audit before approving. Penn said she would bring the audit to the next meeting.

**10. Wisconsin & Southern Railroad's Report on Operations – Ken Lucht, WSOR**

- Update on Monthly Maintenance Activities
- Update on Capital Projects
- Update on Business Development
- Other Continuing Issues/ Topics
  - Peters Road Bridge Update

Ken Lucht reported that regular winter maintenance activity was ongoing. On Capital Projects, Lucht listed a number of grants that had been funded for projects across their system, noting both Watertown and Waukesha. He said the Fox Lake Continuous Welded Rail (CWR) Rail project was moving forward as he had reported last month.

Outside the WRRTC area, Lucht said about 11 miles of track are "coming back from the dead" between Plymouth and Kohler. He said the contract for complete construction had been awarded and it was expected to be completed by this fall.

Lucht said WSOR had received all permit approvals for the Prairie du Chien project which was already under construction. He said there were about 4 or 5 customers affected by a lack of capacity and while there had been some unintended delays, the project was anticipated to be completed by June 2015. He added that all the funding for this project was from WSOR.

He said that WSOR had submitted 4 projects for WDOT funding including bridge replacements. One application would pay for 39 complete replacements of bridges. He said they had applied for a project to replace 52,000 ties on the Prairie sub from Madison to Lone Rock. On the western end of the sub WSOR was still waiting to get a grant to install 36,000 ties. Lucht said this line received

public funding 20 years ago so it was now time to upgrade. He spoke of the sub's CWR retrofit project application for about 15 miles (a Phase 1 project). He said WSOR had sent an application for a tie project on the Reedsburg line, as well as ties on the line to Cottage Grove. Lucht said the CG spur had not had any capital in 20 years so WSOR had submitted a tie/crossing application for this line. Ultimately, if business kept up, WSOR hoped to lay CWR between Cottage Grove Street and Monroe Street and the Vita Spur in Madison over the next 3 or 4 years. He said WSOR would put together a CWR plan for the Madison area. Sweeney asked for clarification of what CWR is for those new at the meeting. Lucht explained jointed rail vs CWR and said that today, most of the rail on the WRRTC system was 90 lbs. (i.e. 90 lbs. per yard) and that WSOR had been working to upgrade the system to CWR. He talked about the size of the system in relation to CWR installation and WSOR's rail detector tests. Lucht said he would bring in examples of the various pound rails at the March meeting.

Nilson asked for clarification of railroad classes. Lucht said a class 1 railroad depends on the number of miles operated and revenue. Class 2 is a regional railroad. He said WSOR was very, very far away from being a class 1 RR. For track classification, class 1 was the lowest classification. Class 2 was a max speed of 25 mph; class 3 was 40mph. Class 4 and class 5 were for passenger rails. On the WRRTC system, the goal was to get it all to class 2 standard. Dave Simon said WDOT shared that goal. He said currently they were at 58% of making their goal. Allan Polyock asked what was the Fox Lake sub class. Lucht said it varied, ranging from class 1 to class 3. Nilson asked about the Watertown line and asked if ties were put in, would it be raised to class 1. Lucht said that would come up to class 2. Mace asked who the customer was in Kohler. Lucht said it was Bemis Manufacturing. Ladewig asked about the Tiger Grant. Lucht said their 4th application was for a funding match and noted it was "just in case". He related the past history of WSOR's efforts to get funding in Wisconsin, saying no capital grants had come to the State as of yet. He said every time WSOR had submitted an application it had scored very highly but for some reason, they had not been funded. Lucht said getting the application together took a lot of time and resources so WSOR was looking at other options, but said they were committed to the Prairie sub. He said if WSOR applied this year, it would pretty much be the same application as last year with WDOT and Iowa County as co-sponsors. He said there were other Tiger applications that WSOR was competing against in-state which was a disadvantage. He expressed his thanks for the Commissions and the States support.

Lucht said there was nothing to report on the Peters Road Bridge. Sweeney asked those attending the meeting from the Town of Sharon if they had an update. Their representative said they had not heard anything to date. Sweeney recommended they get the minutes of the last meeting.

Forrest commented the rail industry as a whole had not gotten very much money from the Tiger Grant program.

**11. Discussion and Possible Action on Support for FRPP Funding for 2015/2017 State Biennial Budget – Ken Lucht, WSOR**

Lucht said he wanted a strategy for the Commission's consideration. He said the Governor had cut the FRPP program to \$43M which had caught WSOR off guard. Lucht asked the Commission to go on record with their support but with all the applications submitted and the bridges without funding and all the backlogged projects, he thought the State would be in a much better position if they adopted a \$60M budget. That said, Lucht did not have anything for the Commission to act on today. Mace asked if the Commission went on record to support the budget or not. Sweeney said they had in the past.

**12. Discussion and Possible Action on Attachment 8 to WSOR/WRRTC Operating Agreement Regarding Annual Rent – Ken Lucht, WSOR**

Lucht outlined the rental agreement and said this was basically the same rent as last year and noted that next January they could renegotiate the amount. Lucht noted that WSOR was very aggressive in funding its projects and wanted to keep investing at these levels. Lucht said there was a drive at the State level to assess a car fee per load within the system (\$15 or \$10 per car) and he said that would be a huge burden to their organization.

Nilson noted a correction. Lucht said Eileen Brownlee had reviewed the attachment. Bill Ladewig asked about where the Commission lined up with rent in the State. Van Schwartz said they were "way above" the East Wisconsin Counties Rail Consortium.

- *Motion to approve Attachment 8 to WSOR/WRRTC Operating Agreement Regarding Annual Rent with corrections - Cornford/Tietz, Passed Unanimously*

**13. Discussion and Possible Action on proposed intercity passenger rail agreement between WRRTC and WSOR – Ken Lucht, WSOR**

Lucht said that this agreement had been in place for the past 15 years and in the past there had been some passenger rail service operated on WRRTC tracks and possibly may in the future. He reminded the Commission that they had renewed this last February and said WSOR was interested in extending this for the next 15 years. He noted Brownlee had looked it over and they had carried forward her recommendations. He reiterated that Brownlee had reviewed it and while there are some minor tweaks to be made before

they got to a final draft, but he asked the Commission approve, saying they could approve if they felt comfortable pending further review by Sweeney and Brownlee. He noted the Commission could wait until March 6<sup>th</sup> if need be. He repeated that the new language had been incorporated into the new operating agreement.

- *Motion to approve the proposed intercity passenger rail agreement between WRRTC and WSOR with - Mace/Gray*
- *Amendment to the Motion that any expenses or financial obligation or liability shall remain with the operator – Mace/Scallon, Passed Unanimously*

Van Schwartz said there had been some major changes in passenger rail: positive train control (PTC). He explained the reasons and placement of PTC, adding that it was incredibly expensive, in the billions. He said it was satellite based train control mainly to prevent collisions. He said this was all coming from the Senate. At this point, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) had not said how it viewed excursion services or periodic passenger trains. Right now they did not know the possible requirements of PTC. He said there probably should be some language in the agreement to protect the Commission, WDOT and WSOR in regard to PTC. Van Schwartz said there had been no official word on periodic passenger trains, adding that even if the FRA made a determination, it could still be changed. He said the deadline was the end of 2015 to implement PTC and that this would be impossible to implement in that timeline, as it was physically and technologically impossible, adding that no one really knew what was going to happen at the federal level. He suggested including some basic language to the agreement update of covering the cost of PTC. He said all locomotives had to have the technology and it was very expensive and so advanced that no one had figured out all the components. He repeated that he thought the Commission get some language in the agreement to protect the Commission in regard to PTC.

Nilson said a problem with this was that it was assumed that all railroads operated equally but that was not the case. Nilson talked about “special trains” and said this would be the kind of exemption wanted rather than PTC. Van Schwartz said he was a proponent of passenger rail but said there were no exemptions for PTC and there was no way to get out of it or around it. Wayne Gustina concurred. Sweeney asked Dave Simon and Kim Tollers for advice. Simon said this was “not on their radar yet” and said he had gotten a lot of detail and agreed it was very, very expensive but they were just finding out all the details themselves. Van Schwartz said it was not really necessary for smaller railroads, it was an expensive requirement. Mace asked if PTC would have to be on the various class 1 rails. Van Schwartz said if there were no passenger rail, they would not need it but noted some haz mat loads would need it: short lines would have to have it. Ladewig asked if there were language in the agreement saying that the feds would pay for their requirements. He recommended amending the language or asking Brownlee to put that language in. Sweeney asked if this was a doable amendment to add PTC to the motion. Lucht said WSOR would be happy to work with Brownlee to add that to the document and that it could be specifically referenced.

John Miller asked about the 15 year duration of the agreement. Lucht said it was chosen because if the investment were made, 15 years would give them enough time. Van Schwartz asked if there were language in the agreement regarding a fee per passenger. Lucht said Article 3.0 addressed a passenger fee. He said it was hard to put in an amount when they could not determine ridership.

Gary Ranum said if this was a legally binding document, he felt very uncomfortable action on a motion without having a chance to read it so unless there was something earthshattering that passing next month would cause, he wanted to wait until the next meeting.

- *Motion to table – Ranum/Miller; Cornford, Ladewig, Demby, opposed. Motion carried.*

Sweeney said the motion passed and the item would be on the agenda next month. Penn would distribute the agreement via e-mail.

Augie Tietz commented about the number of petroleum cars passing through his community. Van Schwartz spoke of the requirements needed for PTC to implement this technology and of the roughly 26,000 towers needed and said the FCC could only approve 2200 towers per year.

#### **14. WDOT Report–Kim Tollers, WDOT**

Dave Simon reported on the Freight Rail Preservation Program (FRPP) and the Freight Railroad Infrastructure Improvement Program (FRIIP), saying the Secretary had requested \$60M but what they had heard was that it would be \$43M. He said he had not had a chance to look into the Governor’s budget yet but that a summary would be given to him soon. He explained the source for the \$43M. He next announced that the segregated fund for FRPP had been passed. He said it was like a bank account but there was zero balance but they could ask for segregated funds. Ladewig asked if the bond was being paid by general obligation. Simon said it was general obligation and already identified for passenger rail. Ladewig asked for more clarification on whether freight rail would have to pay more. Simon reminded them of the application deadline and said WDOT had a team of people doing a benefit/cost analysis. He said the FRIIP finances had been preserved, adding that this program was not being fully utilized and a lot of times was used for accessories to connect to the railroad system. He noted that the scope was wider so WDOT would like to see the program used more use of this program. He said FRPP got more applications than dollars but FRIIP was not used as much.

Tietz asked about FRIIP, saying one of the hang-ups was that in submitting a request, there had to be a local governing body sign on to it which in some cases might be an impediment. Lucht spoke to this and said Tietz was referring to the Transportation Economic Assistance program. Simon listed the three programs: FRPP (grants), FRIIP (loans), TEA (50% grant).

Simon said in regard to the Milwaukee intermodal project (“the train shed”), the roof was gone and the project was underway. He said the new shed (“the concourse”) should be complete by the end of the year, a \$22M project.

Simon reported WDOT had hired a new engineer in their unit, a Derrek Collier who would start Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Simon said WDOT would be working with Mr. Collier to cross train. Simon said that there was no position for supervisor although he was trying to get it back (maybe by April/May). Ideally, the Section would get someone in the position and also get Frank Huntington back as an LTE.

Ranum said he had seen the Secretary of Transportation at a recent meeting and he had not mentioned freight rail. Ranum asked Simon if not mentioning freight was significant. Simon reassured the Commission that freight was very important and WDOT was working on a state-wide freight plan. He added that WDOT’s harbor section was also heavily into freight.

**15. Update and Discussion on Great Sauk Trail – Marty Krueger, Sauk County Board Chair**

Marty Krueger introduced himself, saying that he was standing in for George Johnson who had resigned from the Commission. Krueger said he would probably be coming to the future meetings as the person appointed to the Commission had work commitments Friday mornings. He then spoke about the history of the formation of the Pink Lady RTC with Alan Anderson’s efforts, and said that 25 years later the State purchased the Reedsburg line which had led to the hopes of creating the Great Sauk Trail (GST). He said they were hoping the WRRTC would approve the Great Sauk Trail, while the County hoped the trail would connect Prairie du Sauk and Sauk City, creating greater trail connectivity in the immediate future. He said this had been a large undertaking and they wanted to lay out the project to the full Commission so they would know what was in the works and ask questions.

Krueger then introduced Brian Simmert, the chief planner and architect of the trail. Simmert gave his PowerPoint to the Commission, saying that the effort was to connect various communities to the trail system, eventually culminating in connection to Devil’s Lake State Park. Simmert explained that the trail had been broken into 3 tiers, explaining the various tiers the plan outlined. He said that tier 1 ran on the current corridor that exists between Prairie du Sauk and Sauk City. He said the tier 1 timeline would be for construction to begin in 2016. He noted that a cooperative plan between the County and WDNR had to be approved, as well as an MOU and said the STB would have to give their approval to convert from rail to trail. Simmert talked about the funding sources and the limitations related to funding. He said one of the motivations to moving ahead was due to the funding sources going away.

He next spoke about tier 2 and said this would entail using the rail bridge which was currently not complete. He said they would like to bring the trail south of Cty Y to a parking area, adding that the land in the vicinity was owned by the WDNR. Simmert said the primary users would be bikers and pedestrians but said snowmobiler groups/clubs were stakeholders as well since existing trails in Dane County could connect to those in Sauk County if the bridge were rehabilitated. He spoke of the safety issues with the current set up for snowmobiler trails. He said all the timeframes for construction were dependent on funding.

For tier 3, Simmert said it would utilize the old railroad bed through Badger Plant. From this point, the trail could lead up to Devil’s Lake which would require the need to cross the existing railroad including utilizing an existing underpass or creating an at-grade crossing or possibly tunneling under the track to get access. At this point they were working with WDNR to create the plan.

Sweeney asked Chris James to contribute and James said Dane County was excited about the project, particularly about the snowmobilers. He said WDNR and WDOT would first need to work with WSOR. He said this project would help create connectivity and that it was an aggressive schedule. He added that in his experience, it was a long, but positive, process. Lucht said WSOR had known about this project for many years and WSOR had always been supportive of it and they were willing to look at co-use. He said that neither community thought there would ever be rail through again and WSOR had already agreed to Tier 1. He said not a lot of money had been invested in the line in the past 25 years but prior to the bridge being out of service, some state and local funds had been invested. However, Lucht said that if a customer came in, WSOR would want to have access from the south, particularly if there were an accident at Merrimac or if a customer came on the south end. He reminded the Commission that WSOR was not part of the line through Badger, saying WSOR could not stop or serve a customer. However, outside of Badger, WSOR had operating rights and Lucht suggested a sharing of the ROW. He said WSOR had committed to working with the County on shared use but expressed his concerns for the proposed at-grade crossing due to liability and safety issues. He said WSOR had encourage the County to look at an undercrossing on Getty Rd, saying that this road went under the track there. He said tunnels did exist at a number of places on the track. Lucht said in regard to tier 2, what was proposed was “all new to us” and reminded the Commission that it was still part of the active railroad system and while he acknowledged it was not used much, it was used for train turning due to a lack of passing tracks.

Lucht said a plan was being put together to trim and maintain the track and WSOR used this section to store cars as well. From Cty Y to the river WSOR planned on doing some maintenance work, though not capital work. He said WSOR always entertained requests like this and saw the need. However, he said motorized users did not stay on the trail and noted speeds were excessive and that this was a big concern. Lucht said WSOR had implemented shared-uses “where it makes sense”. He spoke of the liability burden WSOR carried and said communities did not have to carry such large liabilities. He said WSOR would look at and be willing to discuss shared-use so there might be some opportunities to look at alternatives. From the river down to Mazomanie Lucht said the rail is active and was part of their operating agreement. He said WSOR will continue to talk at the table.

Alan Anderson said that in the area rail is critically linked in Sauk County and said the worry was if the mainline Merrimac Bridge went out, the cheapest solution would be to rebuild the Sauk City Bridge. He said that since the Reedsburg purchase, there had been changes and that politically, the purchase had opened up the trail possibilities. Anderson gave Krueger credit for working so long on this.

Mace asked about the connection through the Badger Works. Simmert said the rail through Badger could not be rails to trails. Kim Tollers said there was a 99-year easement on this track and had given the WDNR a trail easement on it. Tollers said rail had not been removed yet pending the Reedsburg purchase. Van Schwartz asked if the easement included rail. Tollers said the easement was just for property, it was not specific to rail or trail. If it were to be used for rail, it could be “pass through” only, no stopping for customers. Ladewig asked about the bridge that would connect this trail. Simmert said at this point they were designating the Sauk City Bridge as a potential route and they would have to determine whether to upgrade the bridge for pedestrian and snowmobile use. Ladewig asked who would maintain it bridge. Simmert said the maintenance would be determined via an MOU. Sweeney asked Lucht to give more details as to the bridge and its impact on the corridor. Lucht said this was not an easy project and said it was difficult to figure out. He said the bridge itself was last used in 1997 when it shifted on its piers. The bridge was then put out of service. He said one span and one pier was missing on the west side and that it was not to today’s specs: a unit train could not be run over it. He said that 5 years ago WSOR had done some cost estimates and found that the bridge’s replacement would be a fraction of the cost to replace the Merrimac Bridge which also had some issues. Lucht talked about the Merrimac’s bridge and what would need to be potentially done on it, saying it would cost upwards of \$5M and even then, be good only for 10 to 15 years. From a financial standpoint it made sense to come in from the south but it did make political sense. He said perhaps the best approach would be to put all their “eggs in one basket”. Lucht said the Merrimac bridge replacement would cost anywhere from \$34M to \$75M. The Sauk City Bridge would cost \$10M to \$15M for complete replacement. He said this was a quandary and said WSOR was representing the businesses that employed so many people and dollars. He said they have to preserve the corridor and its structures for the future.

James said huge projects like this needed a lot of partners and funding and asked if there were opportunities for snowmobiles to be wrapped into the Tiger grant for a multi-modal application. Lucht said that all WSOR’s efforts still could not get funding, it was a “tough program”. Forrest said Penn would put the report he gave her on the website and spoke of the bridge at question. He said the problem with the missing pier. Putting the bridge back in would require the Army Corp of Engineers and an Environmental Impact Statement. He suggested every one look at the website for more information on bridges. Nilson said for bicycle and snowmobiles the bridge might not need the additional pier. Simmert said that was WDNR’s position. Allan Polyock said that he would do anything to save the rails but he was not too concerned about the trails. Krueger said that this was not about rails vs. trails. He said that his support of rail service was paramount. However in other parts of the County, there was not a lot of support for rail and therefore it was very difficult for him to make a case for being out recruiting for rail access. He said the County was trying to get both rail and trail and said it had been an acrimonious item at the County board for a long time. Krueger gave some history on the issue in the County, saying that some years ago they had put together a process that all the communities supported and it took the State’s purchase of the Reedsburg line to get them to this point. He said this was not about lessening rail service in Sauk County. Sweeney said it may be about securing it. Krueger said they knew there were obstacles and funding was an issue, but there were many floating parts and WRRTC was one of them. In order to get the grant applications in, they had to have draft plans with them. He said it would be disingenuous to send those draft plans without the Commission’s consent which was why they thought it appropriate to bring it to the Commission. Krueger said they needed to meet with WDOT, WDNR, and WSOR to get an understanding of what they needed to do in regard to getting the rail corridor converted to trail. He believed that that would require the consent of this Commission. The point today was to put this before the Commission so they would have an understanding “from the ground up”. Ladewig asked for clarification on which part of the project they would act on first. Krueger repeated that this was just about tier 1 for now. He said tier 3 was making the WDNR very uncomfortable and believed WDNR had some “large plans” for Devil’s Lake. Tier 1 would be from the Sauk City Bridge to the gates of Badger.

**16. WRRTC Administrator’s Report – Mary Penn, WRRTC Admin.**

Penn reported she had contacted Tom Schaefer of Richgels Shaefer to ask about the possibility of the insurance update being ready for the May Full Commission meeting and said she had been doing a search for a Pete Schierloh of SW Bridge Engineers, LLC for any documentation of a “crossing agreement between the CNW and MILW for Bridge A446 near Richmond, IL”.

**17. Discussion and Possible Action on development, process, and ramifications of ROW Temporary Access Permit – Mary Penn, WRRTC Admin., Kim Tollers, WDOT**

Penn reported she had received a request for a Temporary Access Permit from WRRTC for Commission owned line but no such permit existed. She said she spoke with Kim Tollers and together they had agreed that it made more sense for WDOT to issue such permits since WDOT did that sort of thing currently on state owned track and they had both the documentation and expertise to do so.

- *Motion to refer ROW temporary access permits on WRRTC owned right-of-way in Wisconsin to WDOT – Nilson/Krueger, Passed Unanimously*
- *Motion to amend that requests of this nature be referred to WDOT with a 6 month limit and that WDOT keep WSOR and WRRTC updated*

Bill Ladewig asked what was “temporary” and Tollers said it depended on the application. She said there was an end date on the permit. Ladewig said he was reluctant to agree to a 2 to 3 year period. Tollers said WDOT would not consider anything over 30, 60, or 90 days. Sweeney said they needed to give WDOT the latitude on this. Tollers said she would keep the Commission informed on requests like this, adding that in this case it was a very tiny right of way. Nilson noted that Eileen Brownlee should be in the loop as well.

There was no action on the second motion.

**18. Discussion and possible action on meeting cancellation policy – Mary Penn, WRRTC Admin.**

Penn said that because of the bad weather at the last meeting, she thought having a meeting cancellation policy would be a good idea. She listed 3 approaches to meeting cancellation (weather, lack of agenda items, lack of quorum) and said the weather one was the most likely as the other two possibilities were rarities. Ranum suggested that agendas include a notice that in the event of inclement weather to call Penn. Danielle Zimmerman recommended that this information should also go on the website along with contact phone numbers. Nilson said if you wanted to be notified, to send your information to Penn. Penn said she would make a cancel meeting–email list in the event. Sweeney said this issue would not need action and to treat it as an administrative task instead. There was no motion on item 18.

**19. Action Item. Adjournment**

- *Motion to adjourn at 12:23 PM – Gustina/Rocksford, Passed Unanimously*