

**WRRTC NOVEMBER 2017 MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED**

**Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission  
Commission Meeting - Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017 @ 10:30 am  
Dousman House, 230 N. Water St., Prairie du Chien, WI**

1. 10:36 AM      **Call to Order** – *Alan Sweeney, Chair*
2. Roll Call.      **Establishment of Quorum** – *Matthew Honer*

Crawford	Tom Cornford, <i>2nd Vice Chair</i>	X	Rock	Terry Thomas	<i>Absent</i>
	Rocky Rocksford	X		Wayne Gustina	X
	Derek Flansburgh	X		Alan Sweeney, <i>Chair</i>	X
Dane	Gene Gray, <i>Treasurer</i>	X	Sauk	Marty Krueger, <i>Alternate</i>	X
	Jim Flemming	<i>absent</i>		Chuck Spencer	X
	Chris James, <i>Vice Secretary</i>	<i>Excused</i>		Craig Braunschweig	<i>Excused</i>
Grant	Gary Ranum	X	Walworth	Dave Riek, <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Treasurer</i>	X
	Mike Lieurance	X		Eric Nitschke	X
	Robert Scallon, <i>1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair</i>	<i>Excused</i>		Richard Kuhnke, <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Treasurer</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Iowa	Charles Anderson, <i>Secretary</i>	X	Waukesha	Allan Polyock	X
	William G Ladewig	X		Dick Mace	<i>Excused</i>
	Jack Demby	X		Richard Morris	X
Jefferson	Mary Roberts	X		Karl Nilson, <i>4<sup>th</sup> Vice Chair</i>	X
	Gary Kutz	X			
	Augie Tietz, <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair</i>	X			

Commission met quorum.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matt Honer - WRRTC Administrator</li> <li>• Ken Lucht, Roger Schalma, Preston Nelson - WSOR</li> <li>• Jason Murphree – Watco</li> <li>• Heath Thomas – Gavilon Grain</li> <li>• Chris Klein – Universal Forest Products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teri Beckman, Rich Kedzior, Kim Tollers – WisDOT</li> <li>• Dave Hemmer – City of Prairie du Chien</li> <li>• Kyle Pattison, Carl Orr – Pattison Sand Company</li> <li>• KP Rocksvold – Crawford County</li> </ul>
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3. Action Item.      **Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice** – *Noticed by Honer.*
  - *Motion to approve meeting’s public notice – Ladewig/Gustina. Passed Unanimously.*
4. Action Item.      **Approval of Agenda** – *Prepared by Honer.*
  - *Motion to approve the agenda – Nilson/Anderson. Passed Unanimously.*
5. Action Item.      **Approval of draft October 2017 and October Special Meeting Minutes**– *Prepared by Honer.*
  - *Motion to approve October 2017 and October Special Meeting minutes – Cornford/Ladewig. Passed Unanimously.*
6. Updates.          **Public Comment** – *Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair*

7. Updates.      **Announcements by Commissioners**

Cornford welcomed the commission and partners to Crawford County and thanked Blair Dillman for hosting the commission at the Dousman House. Nilson announced that Train Fest is happening this weekend in Milwaukee.

**REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS**

8.      **WRRTC Financial Report** – *Gene Gray, Treasurer.*

Gray reported the Treasurers Report. There were two checks for Johnson Block for the Audit Billing and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter billing from SWWRPC. Ladewig asked when the commission should expect to receive legal billing. Gray reported that the commission should expect a bill from legal counsel in 2018.

- *Motion to approve the balance sheet, treasurer report, and payment of bills – Anderson/Ladewig. Passed Unanimously*

**9. Wisconsin & Southern Railroad’s Report on Operations – Ken Lucht, WSOR**

Ken introduced Preston Nelson and Jason Murphree from WSOR. Ken reported that since the last meeting, WSOR has received final comments from legal counsel regarding the RFB for the Sauk City Bridge Stabilization project. WSOR is waiting for final concurrence from Army Corps of Engineers and the project is still on track to release the RFP at the end of the month. Lucht announced that WSOR received a \$4.5 million freight rail grant award from the State of Wisconsin for the rehabilitation of the Wauzeka Bridge. WSOR awarded a contract for emergency repairs on the Merrimac Bridge. Lucht reported that the Johnson Street Yard construction is moving forward and expect to receive rail cars in a few weeks. Lucht reported that WSOR would like to do an informal ribbon cutting for the facility. Lucht stated that the 2018 calendars will be ready for the next meeting. Roger Schaalma reported that the project in Prairie du Chien, Waukesha Rail Project, and the Spring Green Bridge have finished or are wrapping up. Schaalma stated that in Jefferson County the ties will be completed to Watertown this year and next year they will work on crossings and expect the entire sub to be Class II by mid-summer next year. Ladewig asked about the finish date of the Spring Green Bridge. Schaalma responded that as of last week the Bridge is in and by the end of next week all physical construction will be completed. Lucht reported the itinerary for the tour of Prairie du Chien infrastructure and customer base. Ranum stated that he had received some information regarding an unsafe crossing in Blue River. Lucht stated that he is happy to follow up on this issue.

**10. WisDOT Report – Rich Kedzior, Kim Tollers, Teri Beckman, WisDOT.**

Kedzior reported the \$4.5 million award for the Wauzeka Bridge and introduced Teri Beckman, Regional Rail Coordinator from WisDOT.

**11. WRRTC Correspondence/Communications and Administrator’s Report – Honer, Admin.**

Honer reported that he had received a notice from WisDOT Public Affairs that Governor Walked announced the \$4.5 million freight rail grant award to WSOR to reconstruct the Wauzeka Bridge. Honer also reported that he had received a certificate of liability insurance from the Viking Snow Drifters Snowmobile Club of McFarland. He also received a solicitation to purchase an existing cell phone tower. The solicitation has brought several property issues in Illinois to the attention of Honer. Sweeney reported that these property issues will be discussed at the December meeting.

**12. Presentation and Discussion regarding Improvements on St. Feriole Island – Blair Dillman, of Prairie Sand and Gravel and local, county, and/or municipal officials.**

Dillman gave a brief history of the harbor and track industry on the Island. Ladewig asked if Dillman had spoken with and gotten approval from WisDOT and WSOR regarding the rail yard project. Lucht stated that WSOR has been in communication with Dillman. They have set up a plan to address issues on the island and the improved rail yard project. Lucht reported that they are currently waiting on WisDOT to complete a property survey of the island. Lucht reported that WSOR has met with Dillman and have agreed to work together on the project. Sweeney asked Dillman what his expectation of the Commission was. Dillman stated he is looking for the support of the commission for his project to move the rail line, which he explained is in the interest of the City of Prairie du Chien, Crawford County, and WSOR. Ladewig asked about the issue of the island being a floodplain, and believed the DNR would need to approve improvements in the floodplain.

Heath Thomas, from Gavilon Grain, presented their operation and the need for additional capacity. Sweeney asked about the capacity of storage. Thomas stated there is a lack of storage, that most of the grain is not stored on the island, rather goes directly into the barge. Anderson asked about how many cars fill a barge, Thomas responded that approximately 15 cars fill a barge

Chris Klein from Universal Forest Products presented the business operations in Prairie du Chien. He stated that currently they enjoy utilizing the rail and would like to be able to utilize it more. He stated that currently they only have certain spots on the island that they can ship out of and as a result they are forced to use 1400 over the road trucks this year. He stated that they would prefer to utilize rail instead of road trucks.

Dave Hemmer, mayor of Prairie du Chien, thanked the commission. He stated that the city is in favor of moving the river track to help clean up the river bank, and in favor of more storage facilities on the north side of the island and south of the island. He stated the city is in favor of anything that can be done to free up the track and make the island safer. Jason murphy asked if there is a city dock south of the island. Murphy asked if the city had a proposal to protect the public from trains once the track is moved, and prevent the public from crossing and trespassing on the track.

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Lucht stated that WSOR is looking for some sort of engineering and design proposal from Dillman. Once that is received it will go to the WSOR, WisDOT, and then WRRTC.

Murphy asked WisDOT about the progression of the surveyor. Tollers stated that it is moving forward but that WisDOT does not have an in house surveyor so there are issues of consulting. Tollers stated that she does not foresee it lasting more than six months. Kyle Pattison from Pattison Sand Company stated that the company produces sand for the frac sand industry. He stated that roughly half of Pattison sand went through the Island last year. The rail on the island is an important part of their business. The opportunity to utilize the railroads to accommodate the amount of sand they produce is a benefit to their business and are in favor of increasing the capacity of the island. Lucht reported that Pattison is the owner of the rail trans- load facility on Hwy 18 that the WRRTC approved several years ago.

The commission took a recess for lunch.

**13. Site Tour of Prairie du Chien Rail Infrastructure and Customer Base of WRRTC – Ken Lucht, WSOR and Blair Dillman, Prairie Sand and Gravel**

*Lucht gave a bus tour of recent rail improvements in Prairie du Chien, the Pattison Sand Company Trans-Load facility and the river tracks on the island that Blair Dillman is proposing to move. Dillman gave a tour of the tour side of the island and the harbor that he operates, showcasing the proposed rail yard.*

**14. Adjournment**

*Motion to Adjourn at 1:30 pm – Gustina/Ladewig. Passed Unanimously.*