

WRRTC OCTOBER 2019 MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED

**Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission
Commission Meeting - Friday, October 4th, 2019 at 10:00 am
Dane County Highway Garage, Madison, WI**

1. 10:00 AM **Call to Order** – *Alan Sweeney, Vice-Chair*
2. Roll Call. **Establishment of Quorum** – *Matthew Honer*

Crawford	Carl Orr	X	Jefferson	Mary Roberts	X
	Rocky Rocksvold, <i>2nd Vice Chair</i>	X		John Kannard	X
	Derek Flansburgh	<i>Excused</i>		Augie Tietz, <i>3rd Vice Chair</i>	<i>Excused</i>
	Tom Cornford, Alternate	X	Rock	Terry Thomas	X
Dane	Gene Gray, <i>Treasurer</i>	X		Wayne Gustina	<i>Excused</i>
	Jim Flemming	<i>Absent</i>		Alan Sweeney, <i>Chair</i>	X
	Chris James, <i>1st Vice Secretary</i>	<i>Excused</i>	Sauk	Chuck Spencer	<i>Excused</i>
Grant	Gary Ranum	X		Dave Riek, <i>2nd Vice Treasurer</i>	X
	Mike Lieurance	X		Marty Krueger	X
	Robert Scallon, <i>1st Vice Chair</i>	X		Tim McCumber, Alternate	X
Green	Harvey Kubly, <i>1st Vice Treasurer</i>	X	Walworth	David Bretl	X
	Oscar Olson	X		Richard Kuhnke, <i>2nd Vice Secretary</i>	X
	Paul Beach	X		Allan Polyock	X
Iowa	Charles Anderson, <i>Secretary</i>	X	Waukesha	Dick Mace	X
	Kate Reimann	X		Richard Morris	X
	Mark Storti	X		Karl Nilson, <i>3rd Vice Treasurer</i>	X

Commission met quorum.

Others present for all or some of the meeting:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matt Honer - <i>WRRTC Administrator</i> • Ken Lucht – <i>WSOR</i> • Jeff Huttenburg – <i>Mid-Continent Railway.</i> • John Langhans – <i>MSA Engineering</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich Kedzior, Ed Singer, Lisa Stern, Terri Beckman – <i>WisDOT</i> • Jim Matzinger – <i>Accountant</i> • Alan Anderson – <i>Pink Lady RTC.</i>
---	--

3. Action Item. **Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice** – *Noticed by Honer.*
 - o *Motion to approve meeting’s public notice – Cornford/Thomas. Passed Unanimously.*
4. Action Item. **Approval of Agenda** – *Prepared by Honer.*
The amended agenda was amended to move Item #12 to underneath the item #8.
 - o *Motion to approve the amended agenda – Krueger/Anderson. Passed Unanimously.*
5. Action Item. **Approval of draft September 2019 Meeting Minutes** – *Prepared by Honer.*
Mace stated that there were minor edits that he shared with Honer. Honer stated that the final motion of the minutes is amended to state that the prior motion was laid on the table. Ranum asked what the final motion means. The final motion of last months meeting allows the issue to come back to the Commission after a meeting has been scheduled between the Village of Spring Grove, WSOR, and the Commission.
 - o *Motion to approve the September 2019 meeting minutes with minor edits. Mace/McCumber. Passed Unanimously.*
6. Updates. **Public Comment** – *Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair.*
None.
7. Updates. **Announcements by Commissioners**
Krueger handed out announcements for an event on the Great Sauk Trail on Saturday October 19th in Sauk City and Prairie du Sac. The purpose of the event is to help encourage the connection of the trail from Sauk Prairie to Reedsburg.

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. **WRRTC Financial Report** – *Jim Matzinger, Accountant.*
 - Treasurer’s Report.

Matzinger reported on the balance sheet. He stated the Commission has \$311K in cash and \$275K in project funds. The Project funds are earning approximately 2.71% in interest at the moment. Matzinger highlighted that he transferred \$23K into the project fund, this is reflected on A/R Interfund.

Matzinger reported on the income statement. He stated that the interest earned is only through August, so he expects an increase in the amount. Accounting and Legal expenses reflected through August.

- Payment of Bills.

Matzinger reported on a single check going out to pay for Accounting.

- *Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, income statement, and payment of bills – Scallon/Anderson. Passed Unanimously.*

9. Report on Trail and Bridge Feasibility Study in Sauk and Dane Counties – Marty Krueger, Sauk County.

Krueger introduced John Langhans Engineer from MSA, who is working on the bridge feasibility study to connect the trails in Sauk and Dane County over the Wisconsin River in the Rail right-of-way at Sauk City. Krueger reported that both Dane and Sauk Counties have contributed to the feasibility study. Krueger stated that the connection of the Trail is not only of regional significance but also of state significance.

Langhans stated that the scope of the feasibility study included that the bridge needs to be designed for potential future rail use. A hydraulic and hydrologic study are also part of the scope of the project. The goal is to make sure that the Counties have all of the answers they need to move forward. Langhans stated that the proposed design is for a recreational bridge that can be converted into rail use if the need were to arise. Future railroad use of the bridge would require the installation of 2 additional piers and modification of the two pier caps. Langhans stated that the bridge when built will aesthetically appear similar to a railroad bridge. Langhans walked through the design and modifications necessary to convert the bridge into railroad use. Langhans explained that the proposed design provides for a reduced initial trail bridge costs, improved aesthetics, improved hydraulics, and allows trail use within the rail right-of-way.

Mace asked where the 100-year floodplain is located on engineering drawings. Langhans stated that currently the spans are 2 ft higher than the floodplain. Langhans stated that the hydraulic and hydrologic study is still ongoing and that those studies will identify the final proposed height of the bridge. Sweeney asked about the existing remnant piece of the bridge. Langhans stated that it will not be utilized as part of the recreational bridge. Sweeney asked what the impact to the WRRTC will be. Krueger stated that it was suggested by WisDOT that the project be presented to the Commission. Krueger stated that there will be two open houses to present the feasibility study to the public. Langhans stated that they wanted to be sure that the Commission was in agreement of the proposed design before the open houses. Lisa Stern stated that if the right-of-way reverts back to rail use the Commission would own the improvements on the right-of-way. Alan Anderson asked if the design of the proposed piers is better in terms of preventing scouring. Langhans stated that the feasibility study is expected to be approximately 30% construction documents and that final construction would most definitely take into account a scour analysis. Krueger emphasized that it is a feasibility study and it is necessary to undertake the study to get an idea of the feasibility in both cost and reality of completing a bridge. Krueger stated that the purpose of putting this issue on the agenda was to make sure there was not opposition from the Commission to the bridge. Polyock asked about WSOR's comments on the potential bridge. Lucht stated that the biggest concern is that the rail-to-trail designation is not compromised by the recreation bridge. Lucht stated that WSOR has concerns about the depth of the piers, potential ice loading, and the deconstruction/reconstruction required by the design. Lucht stated that WSOR will provide comments to the Commission in the future and will be looking for greater detailed plans being submitted. Nilson asked the probability of the rail returning to this corridor. Krueger stated that he believes it is a slim chance. Nilson asked who would be paying for the proposed bridge. Krueger stated that the counties are not sure yet but exploring funding options. Mace asked if Sauk and Dane county evaluated where the trail would go if rail returned. Krueger stated that if rail were to return it would be within the right-of-way and a shared trail and rail use could be explored but the County is aware that the trail is in Interim Trail use and could be lost completely if rail were to return. Lucht stated that Dane County is well aware of the requirements of rail-to-trail use. Reiman asked how much of the Sauk Spur would be affected by the Dane County side of the trail. Lucht stated that Dane County would like to see the trail go from the river to Racek Rd. Anderson mentioned that there are concerns regarding canoe safety when crossing on the Wisconsin River, which is heavily utilized by canoers.

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

Lucht reported that there was some flooding in September and he handed out photographs of the unexpected damages to the Prairie Subdivision. On Sept 12th there was three major washouts on the Prairie Sub near Wauzeka, west of Boscobel. The line was out for approximately six days for repairs. Lucht stated that WSOR, with some support from Contractors, made the repairs and there was no major interruption in service delivery. Lucht stated that WSOR is working with the Town of Palmyra to close a public crossing on Lowland Dr. Lucht stated that there is a voluntary crossing closure program through WisDOT that will pay \$8500, and WSOR will often match that payment.

Lucht stated that WATCO has started a new short line railroad in Wisconsin on September 1st, the Wisconsin Rapids Railroad. The purpose of the railroad is to move cars from the interchange with CN to the customer. Nilson asked how many miles are on the Wisconsin Rapids Railroad, Lucht responded it is 2 miles. Nilson asked what rail it connects with. Lucht responded Canadian National. Lucht stated that it is a customer owned track.

Lucht stated that the rail detector test car was on the Commission's property. The results will be presented to the Commission at the November meeting.

Lucht stated that WSOR is working on the 2020 promotional calendar and stated that there is a photo contest ongoing for that calendar. There are cash prizes for photos that make it into the calendar.

Thomas asked about the rail safety week ride along and if any citations were issued. Lucht stated that 22 contacts were made in the first hour and half to inform people who were trespassing on the rail.

Sweeney asked if there will be any impact to the Union Pacific bridges in Janesville with the new Landmark dry fertilizer plant being developed in Janesville. Lucht stated that he does not foresee any impact to the bridges or potential improvements to the bridges at this point.

11. WisDOT Report – Rich Kedzior, Lisa Stern, Ed Singer - WisDOT.

Stern stated the Village of Eagle hearing took place and WisDOT is waiting to hear on the ruling.

Kedzior reminded the Commission of the Freight Rail Conference on November 12th. The keynote speaker will be the Vice President of Canadian National for the Southern Division (United States).

Mace stated that he attended the meeting in the Village of Eagle and visited the crossing. Mace stated that he visited the crossing and it is very undesirable and unsafe. Stern stated that the road will remain open for multi-use trail purpose including for horse riders but there will be a safer crossing at the location.

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

Honer stated that he expects the 2018 Audit to be presented in November. Honer reported that he continues to talk with Frontier Communications regarding the unpermitted utility crossing in the Village of Oregon. Honer stated that the Village of Spring Grove is working to find a time to come to Madison to have a discussion regarding Hatchery Road. The Village stated that they will not be available to have a meeting until November of this year.

Honer will be making a site visit to the Great Sauk Trail to verify that all Commission-owned materials have been removed from the right of way. Honer worked with Alkar-RapidPAK to finalize their crossing agreement, confirmed with the City of Fox Lake on their utility permit and started a utility permit discussion with Madison Gas and Electric on the Oregon Subdivision. Honer stated that he expects a private crossing agreement outside of Milton to be on the November Agenda.

13. Presentation of Car-load Data – Lucht, WSOR.

Lucht stated that according to the operating agreement, WSOR is required to present the car-load data to the Commission on an annual basis. Lucht stated that it is a very complex report to create. Lucht presented the 2018 car-load data for WSOR’s northern and southern (WRRTC) divisions. Lucht stated that the 2018 data still shows a large amount of frac sand moving on the system, but that will change in 2019 as the frac sand market has diminished.

Lucht stated that car loads were up from 2017 but Frac Sand made up the most of that increase. Lucht stated that the data shows the system is very dependent on local car load traffic which makes up 32% of carloads, 29% are exports, and 26% are imports. Lucht stated that major threats to the system are frac sand and grain markets.

Polyock stated that he expects grain that didn’t get planted this year due to the weather will be an impact. Kuhnke asked about WSOR owning refrigerated cars, Lucht stated that the producers/customers own the cars. Orr asked about expanding product lines for frac sand businesses and Lucht responded that he is aware that the industry is moving in that direction. Kedzior asked when WSOR will be bringing LP gas to Arena, Lucht stated that he expects it to happen in November.

14. Adjournment

- *Motion to Adjourn at 11:45 am – Nilson/Cornford. Passed Unanimously.*