

**Minutes of the
East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium
Meeting of March 10, 2021**

East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium Meeting was called to order by Chairman Thomas Winker on March 10, 2021, at approximately 10:12 a.m., at the Ozaukee County Center, County Board Room, Room A-204 (second level), located at 121 W. Main Street, Port Washington, Wisconsin.

Certification of Public Notice: Kimberly A. Nass certified that the notice of this meeting complies with all applicable requirements of Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law. It was noted that the meeting was originally scheduled to take place in Room 6; however, due to a room conflict, signs have been posted to direct the public and members to the County Board Room.

Present: Bob Koch, Columbia County (by phone); Russell Kottke and Jeffrey Caine, Dodge County (by phone); Karen Madigan, Fond du Lac County; Thomas E. Winker and Marty Wolf, Ozaukee County; Jeff Schleif, Washington County; and David Abendroth, Green Lake County (by phone).

Excused: James E. Foley, Columbia County; John Zorn, Fond du Lac County; Dennis Mulder, Green Lake County; Milwaukee County; Brian Gallitz, Washington County; Donald Nussbaum, Winnebago County; and Roger TeStroete and Al Bosman, Sheboygan County.

Others Present: Ken Lucht, WSOR; Kimberly A. Nass, Dodge County Corporation Counsel; Mayor Pohlman, Plymouth; Jason Dzwinel, Ozaukee County Administrator; Kyle Grahm, AF Gelhar Co., Markesan.

Public Comment: Jason Dzwinel, Ozaukee County Administrator, welcomed the Consortium members and guests to Ozaukee County and provided a brief history of the County Board Room renovations.

Approval of Minutes of November 11, 2020: Motion by Schleif/Madigan to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2020. Motion carried.

Financial Report: Russell Kottke reported for the period ending January 31, 2021. The balance in the checkbook as of January 31, 2021, was \$1,002.25. Deposits – \$234,738.27, Expenditures – \$229,535.36, and Transfers – \$5,201.21. Total EWCR money on deposit in the Local Government Investment Pool as of January 31, 2021, is \$252,599.33. Motion by Caine/Schleif to approve the Financial Report. Motion carried.

Report of WisDOT Railroads and Harbors: No WisDOT representatives were present. Kim Nass reported that Lisa Stern sent an email indicating that Chris Kern has left WisDOT and recruitment is underway.

Presentation by WisDOT regarding the Milwaukee Port Project: No WisDOT representatives present. Chairman Winker requested that this item be placed on the next agenda.

Presentation by WSOR Regarding WRTC Trackage Rights and Bridges: Ken Lucht reviewed a PowerPoint dated December 4, 2020, regarding a project in the Janesville area involving the WRTC. Ken Lucht provided a history/background of the track, bridges/structures, parallel track and bridges, loading capacities, weight restrictions, and ownership issues associated with the project. Ken Lucht

explained the impact of the railcar weight restrictions on the businesses served by WSOR that run across the track and structures in the Janesville area. Weight restrictions affect WSOR customers that run across EWCRC segments because ultimately a majority of the railcars travel through the Janesville area to get to Chicago. Railcars have to be light loaded and speed on the track is significantly reduced. Kyle Grahn of AF Gelhar Co. of Markesan explained the impact of these weight restrictions on his company's product distribution. Grahn expressed his support for upgrades to the Janesville area track and structures. Ken Lucht explained that the U.S. DOT annually offers an Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program to fund transportation projects of a national and regional significance. The WSOR, WRTC, and WisDOT plan to partner to apply for an INFRA grant to support this project. Ken Lucht explained the project scope. EWCRC expressed its support for the project as it has regional significance impacting rail service throughout the WSOR service area and other rail service areas transporting goods and commodities through the Janesville area. EWCRC offered a letter of support to be submitted with the WisDOT INFRA grant application for the restoration of state-owned rail right-of-way.

Report of WSOR: Ken Lucht provided a system maintenance report. Overall, system is in good shape. Fisk to Oshkosh track in good condition, final bill will be submitted soon and project will be closed out; Horicon to Oshkosh is almost complete; Hartford to Slinger 4,000 ties to be installed and then move to the Milwaukee subdivision for maintenance; work on the following freight crossings: 107th Street Milwaukee, CTH SS Plymouth, Hartford Rural Street/Hilldale, Kettle Moraine Road Hartford, all with a 15-20 year useful life; track inspection tour will be held in 2022; weed spraying and brush cutting to commence; rail defect inspections continue for every mile of rail; City of Ripon industry spur will occur after City and WSOR work out an agreement; WSOR employing approximately 200 workers is 3 years injury free; WSOR experienced a reduction in the number of carloads (approximately 25% business loss) in 2020 and have supplemented business by offering other services and implementing cost controls; 2021 is expected to be a rebuilding year; EWCRC agenda for May should include 2020 year in review report and 2021 plans.

Tom Winker and Ken Lucht reported on the following issues:

- Discussion regarding proposed legislation to repeal trespass laws relating to railroad property. In the interest of public safety, members urged to not support repeal of trespass laws.
- Mayville Fire Department parking lot encroachment on track right-of-way.
- Wisconsin Central/Canadian National – Canadian National announced in December of 2020 that it plans to sell 600 miles of track.

Date, time, and place of next meeting (May 12, 2021): The next regular EWCRC meeting will be held on May 12, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. Dodge County will host the meeting.

Motion by Madigan/Schleif to adjourn. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeff Schleif, Secretary

Disclaimer: These are draft minutes. These draft minutes may be approved, amended, or corrected at the next meeting of the East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium.