

**Minutes of the
East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium
Meeting of September 8, 2021**

East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium Meeting was called to order by Chairman Thomas Winker on September 8, 2021, at approximately 10:00 a.m., at the Fond du Lac County Highway Garage Facility, located at 1820 S. Hickory Road, Fond du Lac, 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.

Present: Bob Koch (by Zoom) and James E. Foley (by Zoom), Columbia County; Russell Kottke, Dodge County; Karen Madigan and John Zorn, Fond du Lac County; Dennis Mulder and David Abendroth (by Zoom), Green Lake County; Thomas E. Winker and Marty Wolf, Ozaukee County, and Donald Nussbaum (by Zoom), Winnebago County.

Excused: Jeffrey Caine, Dodge County; Milwaukee County; Roger TeStroete and Al Bosman, Sheboygan County; and, Brian Gallitz and Jeff Schleif, Washington County.

Others Present: Lisa Stern (by Zoom) and Todd Wojciuk (by Zoom), Wisconsin Department of Transportation; Dennis Stenz, Fond du Lac County Supervisor; Ken Lucht, WSOR; Kimberly A. Nass, Dodge County Corporation Counsel; and Kelly Lepple, Dodge County Corporation Counsel Office.

Public Comment: None.

Approval of Draft Minutes of July 14, 2021: Motion by Zorn/Mulder to approve the draft minutes of July 14, 2021. A roll call vote was taken. 9 ayes and 1 abstain. Motion carried.

Financial Report: Russell Kottke reported for the period ending August 31, 2021. The balance in the checkbook as of May 31, 2021, was \$231,205.62. Deposits – \$5,202.10, Expenditures – \$3,765.82, and Transfers – \$231,641.01. Total EWCR money on deposit in the Local Government Investment Pool as of July 31, 2021, is \$489,518.87. Motion by Madigan/Mulder to approve the Financial Report. Motion carried.

Consider, discuss, and take action on Application for Rehabilitation of Janesville Bridges and Funding Commitment: There was consideration of and discussion about applications for the rehabilitation of the Janesville bridges and funding commitment. WisDOT applied for an INFRA grant to help rehabilitate the Janesville bridges, but was not awarded the grant. In July of 2021, WisDOT applied for a RAISE Grant and will find out in the next couple of months if the grant will be awarded. WisDOT is in the process of applying for a Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant, which funds projects that improve safety, efficiency and reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail. Applications for the CRISI Grant are due by November 29, 2021. WisDOT will submit an application asking for approximately \$6.7 million in grant money to rehabilitate the Janesville bridges.

WSOR asked the EWCR to support WisDOT's application for the CRISI Grant, draft and send a letter of support to the Federal Railroad Administration, and make a funding commitment by contributing its 2021 member county contributions and also its 2022 member county contributions contingent upon WisDOT being awarded the CRISI Grant if the RAISE Grant is not awarded.

A Motion was made by Mulder/Wolf that if WisDOT is not awarded the RAISE grant, then the EWCR will support WisDOT's application for the CRISI Grant, draft and send a letter of support to the Federal Railroad

Administration, and make a commitment by contributing its 2021 member county contributions in the amount of \$225,000, and also its 2022 member county contributions, subject to the receipt of the member county contributions being made in 2022, and contingent upon WisDOT being awarded the CRISI Grant. Carried by unanimous vote.

Consider, discuss, and take action on WisDOT's sale of State Railroad Property at 421 Barstow Street, Horicon, Wisconsin. There was consideration of and discussion about WisDOT's sale of State Railroad Property at 421 Barstow Street, Horicon, Wisconsin. The current buyer, Marsh Automotive, would like to acquire 299 sq. ft. of property owned by WisDOT, that would move the property line to eliminate the building encroachment on railroad right-of-way. A Motion was by Mulder/Wolf to support WisDOT entering into an Offer to Use permit with the owner(s) in lieu of selling the property to the owners. Carried by unanimous vote.

Report of WisDOT Railroads and Harbors: Lisa Stern reported the following: WisDOT is currently in the process of submitting an application for the CRISI Grant. WisDOT is currently working on completing the next round of Freight Rail Preservation Program agreements with WSOR. The State of Wisconsin is hosting the annual AASHTO Council on Rail Transportation meeting to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on September 29-30, 2021. The WisDOT Railroad Conference will be held virtually on November 10, 2021, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Report of WSOR: Ken Lucht reported the following: On the Milwaukee Subdivision, between Hartford and Slinger, WSOR recently installed approximately 4,000 ties as part of its maintenance program. In 2021, WSOR will replace five crossings in the Northern Division. WSOR is in the process of weed spraying and brush cutting, conducting rail defect inspections, and conducting its annual bridge inspections. WSOR will start geometry testing this fall.


WSOR is currently completing the last phase of installing continuous welded rail on the Waukesha Subdivision, from Eagle to Waukesha. WSOR will start its next continuous welded rail project on the Prairie Subdivision in the spring of 2022.

WATCO and Canadian National have come to terms on acquiring approximately 650 miles of branch lines in northern Wisconsin as well as the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and approximately 250 miles of branch lines in Ontario, Canada. WSOR petitioned the Surface Transportation Board (STB) in April 2021, and is waiting for approval. The STB gave itself an extra 90 days to rule on this matter, and the 90 days expires at the end of September, 2021. WSOR is hoping to hear from the STB by the end of the month.

Date, time, and place of next meeting (January 12, 2022): The next regular EWCRC meeting will be held on January 12, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Dodge County will host the meeting.

Motion by Nussbaum/Zorn to adjourn. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeff Schleif, Secretary
Jeffrey Caine

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.