

# PECATONICA RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

719 Pioneer Tower • 1 University Plaza • Platteville, Wisconsin 53818  
MEMBER COUNTIES: GREEN • IOWA • LAFAYETTE • ROCK

DRAFT MINUTES

## Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission

1:00pm • Friday, May 14 2010 • Green Co. Courthouse, Cnty Board Mtg Rm, 1016 16<sup>th</sup> Ave • Monroe, WI

1. Harvey Kubly, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.
2. Commissioners present for all or part of the meeting:

	Commissioner	Position	Present		Commissioner	Position	Present
Green	Harvey Kubly	Chair	X	Iowa	Charles Anderson	Secretary	X
	Oscar Olson	Treasurer	X		Jerry Dorscheid		X
	Ron Wolter				Philip Mrozinski		X
Lafayette	Leon Wolfe		X	Rock	Ben Coopman	Alternate	
	Patrick Shea	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chair	X (2:04)		Katie Kuznacic		
	Gerald Heimann	Alternate	X		Alan Sweeney	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair	X
	Ted Wiegel		X		Terry Thomas		X

**Others present for all or part of the meeting:** Frank Huntington, Roger Larson & Dave Leucinger (WisDOT), Ken Lucht & Bill Gardner (WSOR), Bob Salami (City of Darlington), Jerry Guth (Green County Board), Ron Marsh (City of Monroe), Amy Seeboth (PRTC Administrator).

3. **Certification of Public Notice** – Seeboth, PRTC Administrator
4. **Motion accepting the Agenda, prepared by Seeboth - Wiegel / Dorscheid** - passed unanimously.
5. **Motion approving the draft January Minutes** - Leon Wolfe corrected the spelling of John Bartels - Mrozinski / Dorscheid - passed unanimously.
6. **Public Comment** - Bill Gardner of WSOR presented the Commission with a plaque “Meeting Tomorrows Rail Needs” and reminded the commission of where they can come and where they are going.
7. **Correspondence & Communications** – Seeboth read from a letter the Commission was cc’d from the Wisconsin ATV Association.

### REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. **PRTC Financial Report** – Oscar Olson, PRTC Treasurer
  - **Motion approving Treasurer’s Report-** Anderson / Wolfe - passed unanimously
  - **Motion approving payment of bills-** Dorscheid / Heimann -passed unanimously
9. **Wisconsin & Southern Railroad’s Report on Operations** – Ken Lucht, WSOR
 

*Monthly maintenance activities* – Lucht reported that soon WSOR will have their brush cutter north of Elkhorn Lake. About a month ago they began a tie gang around the Madison area, installed ties on the Vita Spur and in Madison. They will soon be installing ties on the Reedsburg Sub and between Milton and Madison. WSOR will also be looking for rail defects. They intend to install about 14 miles of continuous welded rail between Madison and Milton.

*Update on 2009 & 2010 Capital Projects* – WSOR is waiting for a shipment of new ties and to install between Monroe and Janesville (second phase project). They will be replacing a little more than a third of the ties on this 35 mile subdivision. They are also working on rail project on the Madison sub. They have done a lot of work on this sub to prepare it, including constructed public crossings. They will be working on crossings and switches still in the coming days. They were approved for \$12million in WDOT grant funds to rebuild the corridor between Plymouth and Kohler Wisconsin. The rail is still in the ground, it is 72# rail and the project is a total reconstruction, they are aligning the local match with Plymouth and Sheboygan Falls right now. They will be removing all of the ties and ballast this year, everything will be updated.

In 2010 WSOR applied for funds in a number of areas – one is to install over 35,000 ties on the Plymouth – Sheboygan corridor. They also applied for 1 mile rail replacement in city of Waukesha to straighten out the track right by Grand Avenue. They will be installing continuous welded rail from Edgerton to Stoughton. WSOR also applied for a project in Green County to extend the line west of Monroe, and recently, they withdrew that application. Lucht said that the primary reason is business related, a number of other projects are higher on the priority list. They thought it was in their best interest to withdraw the project until a later time. Lucht continued to say that the rail needs in Monroe and Green County have not changed. Lucht said that WSOR has spoken with a number of folks including the Mayor of Monroe to let them know that they still have capacity issues in Monroe. WSOR fully believes this project will be a continuing need and they intend to revisit this particular issue.

*Presentation on Recently Emerged Critical Bridge Issues:* Lucht provided handouts to the commissioners on “Recently Emerged Critical Structure Conditions” that WSOR had recently identified. Lucht said this list requires immediate attention so that loads can continue on WSOR mainlines. Out of the nine structures on the list, 5 are in Illinois, 4 in Wisconsin. The handout lists price estimates for remedial repairs to keep using the structures (cost of repairing all nine bridges is estimated at \$1,752,416.61. WSOR is looking into grant funds with WDOT, and considering an Illinois loan program, but the IL program has caveats that WSOR is not sure that they can meet. He said he will have an update at the next meeting.

*Patrick Shea was introduced to the group- he is a new Commissioner representing the Towns of Belmont and Elkgrove*

**10. PRTC Administrator’s Report**– Amy Seeboth, SWWRPC Trans. Planning Program Manager / PRTC Admin., Updated the Commission that she would be attending the Tri-County Trail Commission meeting later this week on behalf of the Commission. She also passed around a list of Commission members with their contact information so that she could update this information.

**11. Request to allow quarterly billings of equal amounts from SWWRPC Staff Services Agreement, not to exceed the contract amount.**

- **Motion to allow quarterly billings of equal amounts from SWWRPC Staff Services Agreement, not to exceed the contract amount.** *Sweeney /T. Thomas– passed unanimously*

**12. WisDOT** – Frank Huntington, WisDOT, said that they are working with Ben Meighan of WSOR to find ways to fund repair of the bridges discussed above. WDOT has some funds left over from other projects, so they hope to be able to apply that to bridges. Huntington listed a few grant projects that are underway or coming up – Janesville to Madison, Madison to Milton Jct., Waukesha and Plymouth to Kohler. WDOT is additionally looking at acquisitions in southern part of the State. They hope to acquire a line in the Milwaukee area. Up in Northwest WI, they are acquiring 50 miles of rail line from Canadian National and Union Pacific. Finally, Huntington said that applications for WDOT Freight Rail grant and loan programs were due on Feb 1<sup>st</sup> and they are hoping to have funding decisions near the end of June.

**13. Presentation by Bill Gardner, Wisconsin & Southern Railroad**

Gardner started his presentation by asking for direction from the PRTC regarding rail extension west of Monroe. Gardner said that major bridge failures that could shut WSOR down and WSOR had to divert funds for the project going west out of Monroe to the bridges. He said that the bridges were one of the major reasons WSOR had to withdraw their application. Coming into Monroe is a major infrastructure problem for them. This extension would help WSOR bring their train through town, park it someplace, do their work and then take off again. Kubly said that the RTC signed the resolution in support of the rail expansion when it was asked of them. Huntington said that Gardner likely does not have the power to allow the land to return to farmers, there is nothing that has been done so far to legally jeopardize the existing rails-to-trails agreement.

**14. Presentation by WDOT Dave Leucinger on Rail in Southwest Wisconsin Economic Feasibility Study**

Leucinger provided the Commission with a few copies of the study and provided everyone with a single sheet summary. He explained that the study is a chance to look more in-depth into the opportunities of the Commission as was delineated by the Commission and local communities over the past several years. WDOT used a data program called IMPLAN for this study- this program looks at direct, indirect, and induced jobs of businesses served by these transportation corridors, these models don’t have a component for agriculture. Leucinger said he tried to capture the value of agricultural savings by using train for transportation. They surveyed industrial business of Southwest WI, focusing on businesses that use commodities or ship finished products that usually go by rail. Leucinger then asked Commissioners if the study accurately represents the regional economy. The Commission discussed this issue, and no one stated great concerns about the study’s validity.

- 15. Update on Comfort Station** - Seeboth reported that in a follow-up on the Comfort Station in Darlington, WI, she learned that the City thought the issue had been resolved between themselves and the Historical Society; it seems that the issue of the Station being located on RTC property, however, remains unresolved. Seeboth is to ask Eileen Brownlee, PRTC Legal Counsel, to follow up with the City on resolving this issue.
- 16. Approval of disbursement of fencing funds for winter 2009-2010 to Tri-County Trail Commission in a sum of \$5,000**
- **Motion – Mrozinski /Heimann – passed unanimously**
- 17. Approval of request to install utilities under PRTC land, City of Darlington** – Seeboth explained that the City of Darlington will be doing utility work under PRTC land this summer. They plan to work under the land in several locations. The City has completed a permit with PRTC for this construction, and they will comply with regulations of Trans. 29 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code in their engineering of this project.
- **Motion to grant the City of Darlington permission to install utilities as planned and in compliance with Trans 29, with a \$175 permitting fee to PRTC – Sweeney / Wolfe – Passed Unanimously**
- 18. Consideration of Rescinding Resolution to Terminate The Interim Trail Use/Rail Banking Agreement By And Between The Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission And The Tri-County Trail Commission As To That Portion Of The Transit Commission Property Located Between Milepost 44.5 And Milepost 49 adopted on July, 2009, and to rescind notice requiring the Tri-County Trail Commission to vacate aforesaid land.**
- The Commission did not feel comfortable making a decision on this agenda item without further conversation and advising from their legal counsel. They tabled the question until their July meeting and requested that legal counsel Eileen Brownlee be that that meeting.
- 19. PRTC 2010 Elections**
- Chairman – Harvey Kubly was nominated by Sweeney, seconded by Anderson – passed unanimously  
Vice Chairman – Al Sweeney was nominated by Thomas, seconded by Mrozinski – passed unanimously  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman – Terry Thomas was nominated by Sweeney, seconded by Wiegel – passed unanimously  
Secretary – Charles Anderson was nominated by Olson, seconded by Sweeney – passed unanimously  
Treasurer – Oscar Olson was nominated by Anderson, seconded by Mrozinski – passed unanimously
- 20. 3:44 Adjournment – Wiegel / Wolfe - passed unanimously**