

## SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

1 p.m. • Wednesday • January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006 • Belleville Village Hall • 24 West Main St • Belleville, WI 53508

- 1) **The Chair, Robert Hoesly, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.**
- 2) **Roll Call:**

Dane County		Green County	
vacant		Robert Hoesly, Chair	present
Judy Olson, Secretary	present	Harvey Kubly, Treasurer	present
Paul Ziehli, Vice Chair	present	Oscar Olson	

Graves reported that Dane County has a vacancy on the Commission is in the process of making an new appointment. **Others present:** Joni Graves (SWWRPC Transportation Planner and SCWRTC staff); Frank Huntington and Roger Larson (WisDOT); and Dana White Quam (WI DNR).

- 3) **Motion affirming the meeting's proof of public notice / J Olson / Kubly / Motion passed unanimously.**
- 4) **Motion approving the Agenda / J Olson / Kubly / Motion passed unanimously.**
- 5) **Motion approving the Minutes from the Commission's 26 October 2005 meeting, prepared by Graves / J Olson / Ziehli / Motion passed unanimously.**

### Reports & Commission Business

#### 6) **Financials / Treasurer's Report** - Harvey Kubly

- a. Kubly reported that, since the last meeting, he had paid \$30 to the Freitag-Atkinson Agency for the annual liability bond and had written a check in the amount of \$204,286 to reimburse Green County, as authorized by the Commission at its October 2005 meeting (the amount came from an earlier audit; the remainder, as identified by the 2004 and 2005 audits, will also be returned to Green County).

**Motion approving the Treasurer's Report, as presented / Kubly / Ziehli / Motion passed unanimously.**

- b. Kubly enumerated the bills received by the Commission prior to this meeting: \$192 from Kraemer Brownlee for legal services; \$1000 from Johnson Block for the 2004 audit; and \$4000 from SWWRPC for 2005 staff services – and reported that these were within the Commission's 2005 budget, adopted at its March 2005 meeting.

**Motion approving payment of the bills received by the Commission since the October 2005 meeting (\$192 Kraemer Brownlee legal services; \$1000 Johnson Block 2004 audit; and \$4000 SWWRPC 2005 staff services) / Kubly / J Olson / Motion passed unanimously.**

- c. **2004 Audit** - Kubly reported that he had reviewed the draft audit, which had been sent to the Commissioners, and was satisfied. He noted that the Audit showed ~\$214,000 owed to Green County at the end of 2004 and the County will be reimbursed the difference between this and the amount already returned (see above) and, at the end of 2005, there will be another small interest amount due to Green County. Ziehli asked if Dane County had gotten its interest when it was reimbursed; Kubly said this would have been 1989 or 1991 and they would have been paid the accrued interest at that point and Huntington agreed.

**Motion approving the 2004 Audit / Kubly / J Olson / Motion passed unanimously.**

- d. **Engagement for the 2005 Audit** - Kubly reported that the engagement letter for the 2005 audit had been signed and returned to Johnson Block, as authorized by the Commission at its October 2005 meeting, for a cost not-to-exceed \$1000.

#### 7) **SCWRTC Staff Report** – Joni Herren Graves, SWWRPC Transportation Planner

- a. **April 2006 Meeting** - Graves explained that she anticipated being at a conference the week of the scheduled April 2006 meeting and requested that the Commission consider options such as rescheduling or cancelling the meeting. Huntington and White Quam said Graves had requested their input and that no issues requiring a meeting in April were anticipated, but all agreed that a meeting could be scheduled if needed. The next scheduled meeting is July 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion cancelling the scheduled 26 April 2006 SCWRTC quarterly meeting / Ziehli / J Olson / Motion passed unanimously.**

#### b. **2006 SWWRPC Staff Services Contract.**

Graves explained that the SWWRPC draft 2006 staff services proposal had the same dollar amount for

staff services at \$4000, but requested that the Commission reimburse for travel and postage separately. She said that the Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission had adopted this and the Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission had endorsed it (without action, since the PRTC meeting had not had quorum).

**Motion approving the 2006 staff services contract with SWWRPC, for \$4000, with postage and mileage reimbursement to be invoices additionally / Ziehli / J Olson / Motion passed unanimously.**

c. **Jane Addams Trail / Illinois Tax Issues**

Graves explained that she and the Commission's attorney, Eileen Brownlee, were still working with the Jane Addams Trail's staff and with Stephenson County. She said that the contact people in Illinois were being very helpful and she was optimistic that the issue would be resolved satisfactorily.

d. **Inquiry re purchasing right-of-way along the Jane Addams Trail**

Graves made a preliminary report summarizing a December 2005 phone inquiry from Merle L. Rudisill, 3018 W Beaver Rd, Freeport, IL 61032, about purchasing a portion of right-of-way along the railroad corridor in Illinois (the Jane Addams Trail), provided maps of the area, and requested direction. In discussion, the Commission referenced its longstanding commitment to preserving the corridor without fragmentation and that, according to its trail agreements, sale of right-of-way would not be appropriate.

**Motion to deny the request and to reaffirm the Commission's longstanding position to deny requests to purchase property along the corridor on principle / Kubly / J Olson / Motion passed unanimously.**

**FOLLOW-UP:** Graves will convey the Commission's position to the requestor.

- 8) **WisDOT Updates** –Frank Huntington and Roger Larson provided an update on the state's grant and loan program for active rail and the additional work that will be possible as a result of the infusion of additional state funding. Two studies are underway (1. looking at bridge structures and 2. a pavement cost study, by the MRUTC, looking at the Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota savings in road maintenance as a result rail freight shipping vs. the impact if that volume of freight were shipped on the roads). They provided an update on the identified encroachments on the active rail corridors, and WisDOT will be going back out in the spring to follow up. Although there had been brief mention at the last meeting of a possible application to install overhead power lines along the corridor right-of-way, WisDOT has had no official contact on this. A February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Rail Transit Commissions and the Railroad Coordinating Committee will discuss proposed rehab projects for the upcoming project funding cycle. Hoesly said with the Madison power plant switching off coal, there would be less traffic for WSOR and this line was historically a coal line for the Illinois Central. Huntington said it would have an impact and that fortunately the railroad will have a couple years to try to build other traffic. Ziehli said snowmobilers have been quite vocal in opposition to the power lines.
- 9) **DNR / Badger Trail Update** – Dana White-Quam reported that there have been nearly 2000 downloads of the draft master plan, they have received 285 written comments, and the open house meetings were jam-packed. Motorized vs. non-motorized use was the biggest issue and the planning team has met with DNR administrative staff and have clarified some issues. Motorized use will be a three-year pilot project with specific criteria and a committee will be set up, with a variety of user groups, who will help establish the criteria. The plan will go to the Natural Resources Board in February and the updated master plan final draft should be on the website soon. On the trail, construction of the surfacing will likely start at the state line in June or July of 2006 and work north; she said that the tunnel project is almost complete. Regarding the transmission line issue, the DNR and WisDOT staff would be communicating, should a formal application be made, and some of the issues – including overhead vs. underground – were discussed. Ziehli said Belleville hopes to work with the DNR to provide extra parking and restrooms as part of their proposed new library, if that project is approved.

**Other discussion:** J Olson said she had received noise complaints about snowmobilers on the trail at midnight; White Quam said normally the posted hours go to 11 p.m., but enforcement is limited in the middle of the night. Identified enforcement options include the City, County, and the clubs themselves. It was noted that, in this instance, the problem was compounded by the fact that the DNR-owned right-of-way had been dramatically narrowed and new condo housing had been constructed only a few feet from the trail.

Ziehli asked if the draft Minutes could go out earlier, especially since the April meeting had been cancelled and the next scheduled meeting would be in July.

**FOLLOW-UP:** Graves will distribute draft Minutes and a notice cancelling the April 2006 meeting.

- 10) **Motion to adjourn at 2:19 p.m. / Kubly / J Olson / Motion passed unanimously.**