

SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

2pm, Wednesday, 23 July 2008 ▪ DNR Office, 3911 Fish Hatchery Rd, Fitchburg, WI

1) Vice Chair Paul Ziehli called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm

He noted that the Chair, Bob Hoesly, had died and commented that the SCWRTC's Charter empowers the Commission to make appointments to fill vacancies.

- 2) **Roll Call:** Dane Co. – Jim Haefs-Flemming, Judy Olson, and Paul Ziehli; Green Co. – Harvey Kubly and Oscar Olson.
Others present for all or part of the meeting: Joni Graves (SWWRPC / SCWRPC Admin.); Eileen Brownlee (Kramer & Brownlee); Frank Huntington and Jim Tracey (WisDOT); Dana White-Quam (WI DNR).
- 3) **Acceptance of Graves' certification of public notice was made by consensus.**
- 4) **Motion approving the Agenda, prepared by Graves / Kubly / O.Olson / passed unanimously.**
- 5) **Motion approving draft Minutes from April 2008, prepared by Graves / Kubly / O.Olson / passed unanimously.**

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

6) Correspondence & Communications - NA

- 7) **Financials / Treasurer's Report** - Harvey Kubly distributed the report and said that, based on prior direction from the Commission, he had paid the Illinois taxes, which were due the 27th of June. He said that two of the Commission's CDs are earning more than 4% interest and will be good through the end of the year, although the Commission will probably not get that rate again.

- **Motion accepting the Treasurer's Report as presented / O.Olson / Kubly / passed unanimously.**

The **bills before the Commission** were from SWWRPC for staff services for Q1 and Q2 of the year, in the amount of \$3,230.44, and \$30 for annual payment of the Treasurer's Bond.

- **Motion authorizing payment of the Commission's bills, as presented / O.Olson / Kubly / passed unanimously.**

Kubly said he had received the **draft Audit of the Commission's 2007 finances** the day before and saw nothing amiss, but that he would review it; he recommended that it be accepted and approved at the next meeting after he and other Commissioners have an opportunity to review it further.

- **Motion accepting the draft Audit of the Commission's 2007 finances with action on approval forwarded to the October 2008 meeting / Kubly / O.Olson / passed unanimously.**

Kubly lead discussion of an appropriate **memorial for former Chair Robert Hoesly** and a card was distributed for signing. Suggestions included contributing to the memorial fund established by the family, something similar to the bench that the Green County Land Conservation Committee had authorized in his honor, a plaque for display at the County Courthouse or the Depot, or something along the Badger Trail or near the tunnel.

Judy Olson arrived at 2:15 p.m.

Kubly asked if Commissioners thought that it would be appropriate to do something in conjunction with the Pecatonica Rail transit Commission (PRTC). Huntington (WisDOT) asked whether the tunnel could be named for Hoesly, but White-Quam thought that would be unlikely. Several other suggestions were made and there was support for the idea of collaborating with the PRTC, with Kubly and O.Olson providing more information at the next meeting.

- **Motion authorizing the Commission to contribute \$100 towards a memorial for Bob Hoesly, in conjunction with the PRTC, if that Commission concurs / Kubly / O.Olson / J.Olson suggested that the cost could easily be more than \$100 and suggested that the Commission not be bound by that amount, noting that they would want something that would last for several years and that with some of the suggestions, such as a bench, there should be a plan for maintenance so it wouldn't become shabby; action was taken after further discussion / passed unanimously.**

- 8) **Illinois Tax Issues** –The Commission’s attorney, Eileen Brownlee, noted that the only certainties in life may be death and taxes but death only happens once and the issue of the Illinois taxes goes on and on and on. She said that it appears that there is still one anomalous parcel number and that there appeared to be no delinquencies but that she wanted to be sure of that. She said that she would have to invoice the Illinois DNR for reimbursement and that a system for invoicing them each year would need to be established. In response to questions, she said there is a firm commitment from them to pay, but she wouldn’t be satisfied until the Commission’s Treasurer has the check in hand, although she was more confident than in the past.

FOLLOW-UP: The IL Tax Parcel number in question is 13-08-15-503-001, which Graves will verify with the Stephenson County Treasurer’s Office.

- 9) **Crossing Application from Earl Sager, Freeport, IL** – Graves reported that there was no update or further action.
- 10) **Village of Belleville (Dane County) Property Maintenance / Drainage Issue** – Commissioner Paul Ziehli (who is also the Village President) said he had talked with Steve Johnson, DNR, and they have agreed that the Village’s crew will clean up the site this winter.
- 11) **Annual Election of Officers** – Ziehli said Kubly had expressed interest in being Chair and that he was interested too, noting that Kubly’s “such a good treasurer, would hate to lose him in that role.” Kubly said he has been on the Commission for 10 years and would be interested in being Chair, noting that the position of Treasurer isn’t that hard and that, if elected, he would assist in a transition.
- **Chair** – O.Olson nominated Kubly, there were no other nominations, and the vote was unanimous.
 - **Vice Chair** – O.Olson nominated Ziehli, there were no other nominations, and the vote was unanimous.
 - **Secretary** – O.Olson nominated J.Olson, there were no other nominations, and the vote was unanimous.
 - **Treasurer** –Ziehli nominated O.Olson, there were no other nominations, and the vote was unanimous.
- 12) **Staff Report** – Joni Graves, SCWRTC Administrator, noted that the reappointment for Ziehli is in process with the County and that Green County would be making an appointment to fill its vacancy. She distributed facsimiles of the pending NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) award honoring Wisconsin’s Freight Rail Collaboration, and partners: the SCWRTC, Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission (PRTC), Wisconsin River Rail transit Commission (WRRTC), WisDOT, the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR), and the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC). She thanked Kubly and Huntington (who had worked at the SWWRPC for twenty-plus years during the time that this initiative had been launched) for attending the SWWRPC’s annual dinner the previous evening. Kubly spoke to the proactive response of the counties and the communities to preserve the freight rail corridors and of the vision of Roberta Leidner (Dane County), Dick Scullion (Iowa County), Bob Hoesly (Rock County), and attorney Nick Kramer for their incredible vision.
- 13) **WisDOT Report** – Huntington *provided an update on active rail system and spoke to the pending biennial budget process. In response to questions about the flooding, Tracey said he didn’t know about the trail, but summarized the damage done on the active rail corridors.*
- 14) **DNR Report** – Dana White-Quam, DNR Regional Park Specialist, said there were some flooding problems on the trail, but nothing like what had occurred in Rock or Jefferson Counties. She said they are partnering with the City of Fitchburg on a Transportation Enhancements grant application. Ziehli asked questions about possible clean-up of an unsightly bridge in the Village of Belleville and, after some discussion about a similar bridge in Mount Horeb, White-Quam said it is very, very difficult to get money for such projects.
- 15) **The meeting adjourned by consensus at 2:59 pm.**