



Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2009
Washington County South Service Center
Cottage Grove
3:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Myra Peterson, Washington County
Joe Harris, Dakota County
Mark Stenglein, Hennepin County
Jim McDonough, Ramsey County
John Hunziker, City of St. Paul Park
Barb Hollenbeck, City of Hastings
Jim Keller, Denmark Township
Myron Bailey, City of Cottage Grove
Corbin Hopkins, City of Newport

Others Present:

Josh Olson, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Andy Gitzlaff, Washington County Regional Railroad Authority
Sam O'Connell, Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority
Allen Lovejoy, City of St Paul
Robert Vockrodt, MnDOT Metro District

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Bob Kastner, Red Wing
Marc Mogan, Prairie Island Indian Community
Ken Bjornstad, Goodhue County

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 3:41 pm.

Agenda Item #1 Consent Items

Commission Member McDonough moved the approval of the Consent Items. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Member Bailey and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #2 Legislative Update

a. State

Andy Gitzlaff informed the Commission that a Transportation Finance Committee meeting took place at the capital and that representatives from Mn-DOT were at the meeting to discuss the State Rail Plan

b. Federal

Andy Gitzlaff directed the Commission members to the Lockridge Grindal Nauen memorandum providing a federal update, which included an overview of the 2010 Appropriations requests and noted that an additional \$1.2 billion had been included in the bill for projects of national significance.

Mr. Gitzlaff further stated that the House and the Senate continue to be at odds over the new six year transportation bill and that it looks more likely that an extension of the current bill would most likely pass. A \$7 billion transfer was also made to keep Highway Trust Fund through the end of the year.

Agenda Item #3 Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission Update

Josh Olson from Ramsey County gave an update on the activities of the High Speed Rail Commission meeting. He stated that the next Commission meeting will be held on October 1st in Red Wing at the Goodhue County Justice Center. The Commission will be selecting a consultant to complete a strategic communication plan at the meeting. Mr. Olson also made the announcement that the Prairie Island Indian Community has accepted status as an Ex-Officio member to the Commission and that they are eagerly awaiting other Ex-Officio members to join.

Agenda Item #4 State Rail Plan Comments

Mr. Gitzlaff stated that the Red Rock Corridor Commission staff completed a review of Draft Technical Memos 1-5 of the State Rail Plan and has prepared a draft comment letter to Mn-Dot from the Red Rock Corridor Commission Chair. The letter was distributed to the Commissioner's and Mr. Gitzlaff read through the highlights of the letter. Comments on the draft letter were received from Commissioners. The Commission recommended making the following changes to the letter: 1. Removal of second paragraph in the first bullet that references the inter-city connection to Minneapolis. 2. Reference the addition of two mainline tracks under the Wakota Bridge under the second bullet. 3. Change the third bullet to read 4 for 1 benefits instead of 3 for 1 benefits to acknowledge the benefits to existing Amtrak service. 4. Include a reference in the letter to the recent increase in Amtrak ridership.

A motion was made by Commission Member Hopkins approve the sending of the letter with the changes stated above. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Member Hunziker and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #5 SE Station RFP Update

a. Authorize WCRRA to enter into a consultant contract

Mr. Gitzlaff informed the Commission that on June 30, 2009, Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) on behalf of the Red Rock Corridor Commission (RRCC) released the request for proposal (RFP) for consultant services for the completion of Station Area and Site Master Planning and Environmental Analysis (SAP) study for the Southeast Stations of the Red Rock Corridor. These stations include Lower Afton Road (St. Paul), Newport, Cottage Grove, and Hastings. A total of 5 proposals were received from consultant teams:

Mr. Gitzlaff explained that a proposal evaluation committee (PEC) consisting of County and City staff representatives was formed to review the proposals. After conducting a thorough review of the proposals the PEC decided to short-list the Kimley-Horn, Hay-Dobbs and IBI Group for interviews. On Wednesday, August 24th the PEC held interviews with these 3 finalists.

Mr. Gitzlaff stated that the proposal evaluation committee (PEC) members and careful deliberation decided to pursue primary contract negotiations with the Hay-Dobbs team and noted that although all 3 finalists are capable of doing the work for this project the Hay Dobbs team provides the best project approach to meet the various needs of the corridor.

Commission Member Hunziker made a motion to authorize Washington County Regional Railroad Authority to enter into a contract with Hay-Dobbs for consultant services to complete the SAP study. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Hopkins and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #6 Strategic Planning Workshop Follow-up

Mr. Gitzlaff provided a summary of the results from the strategic planning workshop that was held at the August 27th Commission meeting and directed Commission members to the memo in their packet that highlights the results of the discussion and lists the key next steps for the Commission.

Commission Chair Peterson asked for additional elaboration on what types of social media the Commission could pursue. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that social media tools such as blogs on websites or external services such as twitter and facebook are becoming more popular methods for generating public involvement. Mr. Gitzlaff further stated that the upcoming station area master planning project will be evaluating the use of these tools as part of the overall strategic communication plan for this project.

Commission Member Hopkins further added that the Commission should explore locating a park-and-ride in Newport that could also serve transit trips to the airport. Commission Chair Peterson added that as congestion continues to grow at the 494 and Highway 61 interchange we will need to look at opportunities to connect not only to the airport but to also serve the I-494 corridor with transit service.

Commission Member Hollenbeck then stated that the City of Hastings passed a resolution of support for the Red Rock Corridor Commission efforts to establish commuter bus service to Hastings and stated that the City is willing to talk to the Met Council about joining the transit taxing district.

Commission Member McDonough added that it is very critical for the Commission to position Red Rock to be the next commuter rail line by incorporated the projected bump in ridership from Northstar into the model as a soon as possible. Sam O'Connell added that in the interim we can start looking at other commuter rail corridors around the

country and make some assumptions now of what that increase in project ridership could be.

Agenda Item #7 Other

Being there no further business Commission Member Hopkins moved a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Member Bailey and passed unanimously.

The Commission adjourned at 4:42 p.m.