

PECATONICA RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

20 S Court Street • PO Box 262 • Platteville, Wisconsin 53818

MEMBER COUNTIES: GREEN • IOWA • LAFAYETTE • ROCK

1:00 PM • Friday, July 26th, 2019 • Green Co. Courthouse, 2nd Floor Courtroom, 1016 16th Ave • Monroe, WI

1. 1:04 PM **Call to Order** – *Harvey Kubly, Chair*
2. Roll Call. **Establishment of Quorum** – *Matthew Honer, Administrator*

Commissioners present for all or part of the meeting:

	Commissioner	Position	Present		Commissioner	Position	Present
Green	Harvey W. Kubly	Chair	X	Iowa	Charles Anderson	Secretary	X
	Oscar Olson		X		VACANT		
	Paul Beach	Treasurer	X		Ricky Rolfsmeyer		X
Lafayette	Leon Wolfe	Vice Secretary	X	Rock	Wayne Gustina		X
	John Bartels		X		Alan Sweeney	Vice Chair	X
	Andy Schilling		absent		Terry Thomas		X
	Gerald Heimann	Alternate					

Commission achieved quorum.

Other present for all or some of the meeting:

Matthew Honer – Admin.	- Ken Lucht, WSOR. - Kim Tollers, WisDOT.
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3. Action Item. **Certification of Meeting's Public Notice** – *Noticed by Honer*
 - Motion to approve certification of public meeting – *Sweeney/Thomas. Passed Unanimously.*
4. Action Item. **Approval of Agenda** – *Prepared by Honer*
 - Motion to approve the agenda – *Wolfe/Bartles. Passed Unanimously.*
5. Action Item. **Approval of draft April 2019 Minutes** – *Prepared by Honer*
 - Motion to approve draft April 2019 minutes – *Anderson/Bartles. Passed Unanimously.*
6. Updates. **Public Comment** – *Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair*
No public comment.
7. Updates. **Announcements by Commissioners** – *Discussion may be limited by the Chair*

REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. **PRTC Financial Report** – *Paul Beach, PRTC Treasurer*

Beach reported on the financial report. Total receipts since April was \$3,341.74 and total disbursements were 1,454.95. Beach reported that \$500.00 from the PRTC was accidentally deposited in the South-Central Rail Transit Commission. Beach stated that this issue will be corrected and reported on at the next meeting. The total checking account balance was \$112,224.20 and the total checking and savings balance was \$137,224.20. Beach reported that he has received two receipts that will be reported at the next meeting. Beach reported that there were two bills, one for bonding of Beach and the second for Q2 expenditures from SWWRPC for staff services.

Anderson asked if SWWRPC billing was quarterly. Honer confirmed. Sweeney asked Paul to bring the corrections to the next meeting.

- *Motion to approve treasurer's report– Sweeney/Gustina. Approved Unanimously.*
- *Motion to pay the bills – Anderson/ Wolfe. Approved Unanimously.*

9. WSOR Operation's Report – Ken Lucht, WSOR

Lucht reported that WSOR is spraying weeds, herbicide is typically sprayed 20 ft from center on the right of way. Lucht reported that the rail detector will be on the Monroe Sub next week to identify internal defects. Lucht stated that WSOR expects some defects due to the age of the rail on the Monroe Sub. Lucht stated that a strong tie and ballast system make the subdivision still strong even though the rail is old. Lucht reported that bridge inspections are taking place on the southern division, including on the Monroe Sub. Lucht reported that WSOR is looking for crossings to be replaced as part of maintenance on the Monroe Subdivision.

Lucht reported that the Belden Siding was completed in Q1 of 2019. It is a 8,000 ft siding that is a passing track for WSOR. The siding was built to allow greater access into Chicago. Lucht stated that Metra agreed to allow an additional five trains each week if a siding was built within 10 miles of Fox Lake. Lucht stated it is a really good thing for WSOR, the Commission, and the State of Wisconsin.

Lucht stated that WSOR just upgraded sixteen locomotives with Positive Train Control. Positive Train Control is federally mandated and is a fail safe to prevent rail collisions. Lucht stated that it was a huge cost of about \$1M per engine. WSOR is looking at finding potential efficiencies that come with the Positive Train Control.

Lucht reported that Badger State Ethanol in Monroe has expanded, which has increased carloads on the Monroe Subdivision. Lucht stated that WSOR is working to continue to service customers. Lucht stated that WSOR is working on a system wide car-load report and is planning to share at the next meeting. Lucht stated that WSOR is seeing a growth in carloads on the Monroe Subdivision. Lucht stated that current customer base is strong. Lucht gave a brief report on the percentage of inbound, local, and export car loads on the Monroe Subdivision.

Anderson asked where the ethanol goes from Chicago. Lucht stated that it goes all over the nation on class 1 carriers. Bartles asked about how bridges on the system receive funding for repairs. Lucht stated that there a lot of bridges on the system and many of them have been repaired yet there are a number of bridges that have not been repaired or replaced. Lucht stated that the bridges and land are not owned by the operator. Bridges are fixed with partnerships with the Commission and WisDOT. WSOR will act as the contractor for the bridge projects. Once the bridges are repaired or replaced, WSOR will maintain those assets to the standard that they were repaired or replaced to. Lucht stated that if bridges are not repaired or replaced, WSOR reduces speed over the bridges and in the worst-case scenario they will need to stop service over the bridge. Wolfe asked about frac sand. Lucht stated that WSOR's primary market for frac sand was Texas, but now Texas has found closer sand which is more cost effective than the sand from the Midwest. This has really stopped the frac sand market in Wisconsin. Lucht stated that WSOR will see a carload drop of 10 – 12% due to the frac sand market loss. Lucht stated that some frac sand companies are looking at repurposing their facilities.

10. WisDOT Report – Kim Tollers, Teri Beckman, WisDOT

Tollers stated that WisDOT has nothing to report.

11. Tri-County Trail Commission Report – Wolfe

Wolfe reported that the trail is in good condition. Gravel has been placed and has been crowned. Wolfe believes the trail is in the best condition it has been in a few years. Wolfe reported that there needs to be work done between Calamine and Mineral Point to stabilize the stream bank. Wolfe reported that the trail is being heavily used. Anderson asked about the need for registration. Wolfe stated that TCTC collects registration fees for vehicles that use the trail that do not have state registration – this would include non-ATV recreational vehicles and out-of-state users.

12. PRTC Administrator's Report – Honer, PRTC Admin.

Honer reported that he received a phone call from the individual who submitted the TAP permit at the last meeting regarding the removal of the old depot in South Wayne. The individual is the neighbor of the owner of the structure. The individual stated that the owner has decided that he will no longer remove the building. Honer believes that the building is a safety hazard and had last heard that the building is in poor repair. Honer stated that the he also heard the owner of the property intends to build storage units on the trail.

Honer stated that he made a site visit to the Cheese Country Trail with Tom Jean, the Lafayette County Highway Commissioner. The purpose of the visit was to inspect several areas along the trail in northern Lafayette county where Brewery Creek and the Pecatonica River are causing significant erosion of the Cheese Country Trail. Honer stated that the Tri-County Trail Commission is looking to discuss the issue with the WIDNR and apply for funding. Honer has proposed to Jean that the Commission work with UW – Platteville's Senior design to address the issues. While on the trail, Honer and Jean discussed private crossings. Honer stated that there are crossings on the trail where the right-of-way is given to the private crossing, asking the trail users to stop. Honer asked the Trail Commission to correct this issue along the entire trail and that these crossings will need to have a permit.

Honer inspected the trail between South Wayne and Browntown on his way to the meeting and discussed corrections that will need to be made.

13. Discussion and Action on Fiber Optic Utility Permit - Honer, Admin.

Honer gave a background on the utility permit and explained that the permit is for a fiber optic project that will cross the trail twice, in Cadiz Township and the Village of Browntown. Wolfe stated that the TCTC approved the permit at their meeting last night.

- *Motion to approve Utility Permit in Cadiz Township and the Village of Browntown – Wolfe/Olson. Passed Unanimously*

14. Discussion and Action on 2020 Budget – Honer, Admin.

Honer presented the draft budget and explained that the budget needs to be approved at the July meeting so that it can be sent to the counties ahead of August 15th.

- *Motion to approve a three-year audit engagement letter with Johnson Block – Sweeney/Thomas. Passed Unanimously.*

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Letter to WisDOT regarding FRPP funding revisions – Kubly, Chair.

Kubly explained that revised instructions for the Freight Rail Preservation program were brought to his attention. Those instructions removed most of the Monroe Sub. and many infrastructures on the WRRTC system from funding. Kubly stated that this was very concerning because over time necessary capital improvements would have no funding source. Kubly stated that he and Sweeney meet with Dave Simon (Director of Rails and Harbors) regarding the change of the instructions. Kubly stated that Simon was sympathetic to the concerns of the WRRTC and PRTC and stated that Simon was unaware that the instructions had changed. Kubly stated that the instructions did not go through an agency review before they were sent out. Kubly stated that WRRTC has already sent a letter to Simon, and feels it is important for PRTC to also send a formal letter. Gustina asked if the employee who made the changes was informed of the issue. Kubly stated that he was informed. Tollers stated that she did not feel that cutting the funding for the RTCs was the intent of the instruction changes, rather the intent was to most efficiently utilize the funding for the projects that WisDOT is required to award and deliver completely. Gustina stated that he was concerned that the RTCs were not part of the discussion and believes that they should have been. Honer stated a response was received from Simon based on the WRRTC letter. Anderson asked about the number of bridges that need help on the subdivision. Lucht stated there were a handful of bridges on the Monroe Sub, but the bridge discussion was of greater impact to the WRRTC. The potential impact of the instruction change was for the old rail on the Monroe subdivision. Lucht stated that the instructions will be changed back in the future so that the old jointed rail can be replaced with continuous welded rail.

- *Motion to approve sending a letter of concern on behalf of the PRTC to WisDOT – Anderson/Thomas. Passed Unanimously.*

16. Adjournment

- *Motion to adjourn at 2:45 pm – Gustina/Olson. Passed Unanimously.*