

MINUTES

Chippewa-St. Croix Passenger Rail Commission
Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 8:30 A.M.
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Members Present: Ann Schell, Scott Rogers, Gretchen Yonko, Jim Dunning, Gary Stene, Jeremy Gragert, Taylor Greenwell

Members Absent: Tracy Carlson, Erik Evenson, Robbie Krejci, Tiffany Weiss

Ex-officio Members Present: Lisa Stern (DOT), Eric Anderson (Chip/EC MPO), Bambi Pattermann (Northwood Tech), Erik Guenard (UW-Stout), Julie Neuhaus (CVTC), Beth Schommer (UW-RF)

Ex-officio Members Absent: Ethan Osten, Jake Wrasse, Greg Mathis, Lindsey Douglas,

Others Present: Sue McDonald (Eau Claire County Clerk), Krista Vind, Mason Baxter (AIRPO), Terry Brown (WI Rail Coalition), Sam Burns (City of River Falls), Kevin Roggenbuck (Ramsey County), Sara Allen (Washington County), Nolan Ross, Rich Kedzior (WI DOT), Kathryn Schauf (Eau Claire County), Victor Stone (Union Pacific), Tom Evenson (Union Pacific), Sharon McIlquham (Eau Claire County).

Call to Order and confirmation of meeting notice

Chair Dunning called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and confirmed meeting notice.

Roll Call with municipality – Roll Call listed above.

Public Comment – No members of the public wished to comment.

Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 16, 2023

On a motion by Gary Stene, seconded by Ann Schell, the meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Report: Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission Meeting (September 18-20, 2023) – Scott Rogers

Scott gave an overview of the meeting. He was able to travel south on a train from Bloomington, IL to St. Louis with other members. He heard updates from Illinois and Minnesota projects that are in progress. There was discussion about restoration of a passenger rail service long distance network by the Federal Railroad Administration. 2024 MIPRC meeting will be held in Minneapolis/St. Paul.

WisDOT Update – Rich Kedzior & Lisa Stern WisDOT

Not a lot of new to report on. TCMC service naming, operating agreements and grant application status were discussed. Discussed status of our application. Ours is straight forward, no questions on it. Decisions to be made in Nov/Dec. Amtrak 4 coach cars, train service being a priority, Hiawatha line users discussion. Upcoming Railroad meeting in Stevens Point on Saturday October 28th.

Ramsey County Update – Kevin Roggenbuck, Ramsey County

Union Depot update: Extend tracks to accommodate 2nd train overnight. Grant announcement delayed until Nov/Dec. Amtrak negotiations update: At Union Depot. A new agreement is being discussed to accommodate 2nd train and use of Union Depot.

Next steps if the FRA application is successful – Mason Baxter, AIRPO & Scott Rogers, Eau Claire Chamber/Rail Commission

Discussion around insurance related to project. Look at return on investment. How to coordinate with WISDOT if TCMC grant is awarded.

Other updates related to Rail Commission (process, procedure, helpful information)

none

Future Agenda Items

Waiting to see about funding before much more can be done.

Get station planning development committee going by Mid-December

Future Meeting Date

Next meeting will be Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Sue McDonald, Eau Claire County Clerk

Administrator ATTEST:

Jeremy Gragert, Commission Secretary