

# 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 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020 • Green Co. Courthouse, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Courtroom • 1016 16<sup>th</sup> Ave, Monroe, WI**

1. 1:01 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		Bill Ladewig		X
					Ricky Rolfsmeyer		X
Lafayette	Nancy Fisker		X	Rock	Wayne Gustina		X
	Eric Stauffacher		Excused		Alan Sweeney	Vice Chair	X
	Donna Flannery	Vice Secretary	X		Russ Podzilni		X
	John Reichling	Alternate	-				

Commission achieved quorum.

**Other present for all or some of the meeting:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matthew Honer – Admin.</li> <li>Teri Beckman, Lisa Stern, Chris Kern – WisDOT.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ken Lucht – WSOR</li> </ul>
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3. Action Item.            **Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice** – *Noticed by Honer*
  - Motion to approve certification of public meeting – Ladewig/Rolfsmeyer. Passed Unanimously.*
4. Action Item.            **Approval of Agenda** – *Prepared by Honer*
  - Motion to approve the agenda – Fisker/Ladewig. Passed Unanimously.*
5. Action Item.            **Approval of draft May 2020 Minutes** – *Prepared by Honer*
  - Motion to approve draft May 2020 minutes – Fisker/Podzilni. Passed Unanimously.*
6. Updates.                **Public Comment** – *Time for public comment may be limited by the Chair*  
None.
7. Updates.                **Announcements by Commissioners** – *Discussion may be limited by the Chair*  
*Ladewig congratulated Honer on his recent marriage.*

**REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**8. PRTC Financial Report** – *Treasurer*

Kubly reported the receipts since the end of April totaling \$341.55 and a disbursement of \$1650 to SWWRPC for staff services, for a balance of \$113,784.72 at the end of June. Total funds, including checking account and CD, was \$138,784.72. Kubly report a single bill for quarter two of management, SWWRPC for \$1,650.

Fisker asked about the last meeting's motion to move funds in to CD accounts. Kubly stated that the treasurer turnover resulted with him taking over the interim treasurer role because his name is on account and he can move the funds in the near future. Kubly added he is also working to get the auditors their information for the 2019 Audit.

- *Motion to approve Treasurer's report and payment of bills. – Anderson/Olson. Approved Unanimously.*

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

WSOR recently completed routine weed spraying and rail testing on the Monroe Sub. WSOR is awaiting results of rail testing but not expecting anything of concern. Bridge testing is ongoing currently, in accordance with yearly bridge inspection requirements.

Lucht stated the Waukesha to Milton Continuous Welded Rail (CWR) project is ongoing and there is one more phase to the Waukesha Sub CWR project. When completed the entire Waukesha Sub will have CWR. WSOR is currently working with the Villages of Eagle and Palmyra (2 crossings) to close crossings. WSOR identifies crossings with the lowest density ahead of CWR projects to determine which crossings have the opportunity to be closed. This helps address safety concerns. Lucht stated contractors are on site for the Fox Lake Sub and Prairie Sub bridge projects. The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Merrimac bridge is scheduled to begin soon. These are projects that are funded 80% by WisDOT and 20% by WSOR.

WSOR anticipates FRPP awards for the final phase of the Waukesha Sub. (Eagle to Waukesha), Prairie Sub. CWR project, and nine new/rebuild bridge projects. Three of those bridges are on the Monroe Sub.

At the next meeting, WSOR plans to present a project involving the bridges in Janesville. Currently, WSOR is required to utilize a series of bridges owned by Union Pacific that are de-rated due to their condition. WSOR is looking at a rehab project for an existing WisDOT right-of-way. WSOR has spoken with WisDOT and the project is eligible for state funding. WSOR has a proposal to upgrade about five state-owned bridges on the rock river to avoid using the Union Pacific Bridges.

July 1<sup>st</sup> was WSOR's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and they are very excited about the future. Lucht thanked the Commission for their support and the partnership of the Commission and the Counties.

Anderson asked if any of the bridges in Janesville were fixed by WSOR or the Commission in the past. Lucht stated they have not been. Anderson confirmed the proposed Janesville Bridge project is a FRPP project. Ladewig asked how frac sand bankruptcies have affected WSOR. Lucht said that some customers have been creative about their operations and there have been efforts to explore repurposing the frac sand transload facility in Prairie du Chien. Lucht stated that WSOR traffic is down 10% because of the decline in frac sand. Fisker asked if the streets are closed when the crossing is closed. Lucht stated that they are talking about a complete closure of the road which would include the road and sidewalks. In Eagle, they are doing a partial closure and allowing a horse trail to cross the tracks.

Fisker asked about the bridges that are being rehabbed. Lucht stated when bridges are rehabbed, they are required to remain open to traffic but the contractors are provided a window of time to do work.

**10. WisDOT Report – Lisa Stern, WisDOT**

Stern stated WisDOT- Rails and Harbors is in favor of the proposal by WSOR regarding the Janesville Bridges. Currently a lot of things are on hold with the budget because of the economy and pandemic. Ed Singer retired in early July and Chris Kern was brought on to replace Ed. Chris introduced himself to the Commission and he looks forward to meeting the commission. Stern announced that Dave Simon announced he will be retiring on August 7<sup>th</sup>.

**11. Tri-County Trail Commission Report – Nancy Fisker**

Fisker reported the TCTC meet last night. The trail opened on May 1<sup>st</sup> with a lot of activity this season. The TCTC believes there is a lot of new users on the trail this season. There was an accident that required repairs to two posts and a guardrail that will charge the driver's insurance. Fisker reported ongoing maintenance activities and reported that the large rip rap project received WIDNR grant funding. Additionally, four bridges near Gratiot were recently rehabbed.

Honer asked if the TCTC has undertaken any work to address improperly installed stop signs on the trail. Honer stated that any type of private crossing is required to stop and give right-of-way to the trail users. This is a practice that WIDNR uses for state trails, and is a practice that is generally agreed as safer than expecting trail users to stop. Honer requested the TCTC to change the signs that currently exist on the trail so that the crossing user is required to stop.

**12. PRTC Administrator’s Report – Honer, PRTC Admin.**

Honer identified all adjacent trail landowners mailing addresses through county GIS applications. He advised that his work on this was approximately 10-12 hours to gather property owner information and create the mailings. Honer stated that the cost of postage will be approximately \$90. Honer will provide an MOU regarding the project at the upcoming meeting. Fisker asked how often the Commission will do this as it was discussed doing this every other year at the last commission meeting. Honer stated that he can do the work but would like to see the TCTC send the letters, as it is their responsibility to protect the trail from trespass. Kubly stated he believes it is worth doing every other year. Sweeney suggested the Commission undertake the project this year but discussion with the TCTC having them send the letters next time. Honer stated that the majority of the work has been completed and next time the cost would be only postage.

Communication over the past quarter has been mostly around property management issues including the trail in South Wayne and a lease just east of Broadhead for an installed industry track for a grain business. He sent an email to Eileen Brownlee and Julia Potter regarding an existing lease east of Brodhead to evaluate the next steps in updating the lease.

**13. Discussion and Possible Action on encroachments in South Wayne, WI – Honer, Admin.**

Honer stated that he has been receiving phone calls from two landowners north of the trail in South Wayne on a regular basis for the past 2 months. They have been in a long-standing dispute regarding the teardown of the historic depot, which sits 8 ft into the trail right-of-way. The neighbor to the west also blocked off the road coming from Highway D to his property, this is C Street and is a public road. Honer at first believed there were two issues that involved the commission at this location, the first was that the owner to the north of Oil Co-Op is currently operating storage units. Based on County GIS Data, those storage units were opening up directly onto the trail, meaning that trail property was essentially being utilized by a local business for nonrecreational uses. The other issue is that the Depot is becoming a public safety hazard, as it is now partially torn down.

He recently found copies of deeds showing WisDOT sold the extra right-of-way in this location, meaning that the Commission only owns a 50 ft right of way. Honer asked Commission Counsel to review the deeds, and Julia Potter confirmed they appear valid. Additionally, Honer reviewed the locale roads data from WisDOT. The local roads data indicates that N. Galena St does not cross the trail. It also indicates that C St, the street that originates from County Rd D is long enough to follow the driveway. This road is currently blocked by the landowner to the north, who believes the property is his.

The Village of South Wayne has asked Honer to speak to the Commission at their August meeting. Honer believes that the best course of action is to indicate to the Village that they have a responsibility to keep C Street open to the public and inform them of the deeds he located. It is their responsibility to deal with the landowner to the north. Honer doesn’t believe he needs to attend a meeting to do this and would prefer to talk to the Village on the phone and send a letter. Honer stated that Potter also advised that the Commission has no responsibility here and would be best served by avoiding the situation. Honer stated that he will share the deeds with the county GIS staff and ask them to update their information.

Flannery stated that since the commission meeting last month, an individual offered to purchase the property, clean it up, and create the storage units. This has fallen through. Flannery also stated she has asked the individual north of the trail to clear the road because it is a fire hazard. Donna stated that it was the village’s understanding that the storage units shouldn’t be opening to the south. Ladewig suggested the commission no longer be part of the discussion.

**14. Discussion and Action on draft 2021 PRTC Budget– Honer, Admin.**

Honer went through the expected expenditures and revenues outlined in the 2021 draft budget. Sweeney asked when and for what the Commission will be billed for the capital improvement fund. Lucht stated that WSOR will have a better idea in 2021.

- *Motion to approve draft 2021 Budget– Anderson/Rolfsmeyer. Passed Unanimously*

**15. Adjournment**

Kubly encouraged Commission members to attend the next meeting in person to view WSORs presentation.

- *Motion to adjourn at 2:21 pm – Olson/Fisker. Passed Unanimously.*