

PECATONICA RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

1 University Plaza • 719 Pioneer Tower • Platteville, Wisconsin 53818
MEMBER COUNTIES: GREEN • IOWA • LAFAYETTE • ROCK

Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission

Immediately following adjournment of PRTC January 25, 2013 meeting

Green Co. Courthouse 2nd Floor Courtroom, 1016 16th Ave • Monroe, WI

1. Call to Order – *Harvey Kubly, Chair ; at 3:30 PM*

2. Establishment of Committee Members Present – *Mary Penn, PRTC Administrator*

There was discussion about the choice of commissioners; Sweeney said he remembered Charles Anderson being appointed for Iowa County; Penn thought it was Terry Thomas. It was concluded that Charles Anderson had been appointed and Penn would correct the Committee membership to reflect Anderson’s appointment in future.

Commissioner	County	
<i>Harvey Kubly</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Rob Wolter</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Philip Mrozinski</i>	<i>Iowa</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Alan Sweeney</i>	<i>Rock</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Wayne Gustina</i>	<i>Rock</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Terry Thomas</i>	<i>Rock</i>	

Other attending: Ken Lucht, WSOR; Frank Huntington, WDOT; Mary Penn, Administrator

3. Certification of Meeting’s Public Notice – Noticed by Penn

- *Motion to approve notice of public meeting – Sweeny/Wolter, Passed Unanimously*

4. Approval of Agenda – Prepared by Penn

- *Motion to Approve Agenda – Sweeney/ Mrozinski, Passed Unanimously*

5. Election of Committee Chair

- *Motion to nominate Harvey Kubly Committee Chair – Sweeney/Wolter, Passed Unanimously*

6. Election of Committee Vice-Chair

- *Motion to nominate Philip Mrozinski Committee Vice-Chair – Sweeney/Gustina, Passed Unanimously*

7. Discussion on the issue of funding parity between the PRTC and the WRRTC including brief history of issue as determined from past meeting minutes.

Mary Penn gave a brief explanation and history on the situation the Committee was formed to address, while distributing copies of the WRRTC and PRTC’s charters. Harvey Kubly said there is no formal system on how the counties give contributions. For instance, Green County hasn’t always given its contribution to the PRTC: it would be sent to where it would be used for pertinent projects. The other issue is the fact that there is a member county of the PRTC that does not pay a county contribution and he did not believe that is in the spirit with the Charter. He did not know if that excuses Lafayette from not paying anything. If it does, then Green County which has the least amount of rail shouldn’t contribute as much. He said that these are some of the significant issues that haven’t been discussed for a long time. Costs are only going to go up and budgets are tight so it might be good to “get ahead of the curve then be behind it”.

Alan Sweeney said that he thought the issues need to be covered separately – the parity of the PRTC issue should be separate from the issue of funding between WRRTC and PRTC, adding that they needed to stick to the agenda and hone in on the

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purpose of the meeting and try to cover the issues that can provide a consensus at this level before they're taken to the RTCs. Sweeney said that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss at what level is the PRTC pursuing an agreement: a detailed agreement or something simpler such as MOU. Kubly said at least an MOU would be a step in the right direction because from speaking with the Green County clerk, the County isn't going to send its contribution to the WRRTC any longer: it will come directly to the PRTC. He asked "Do we sit on that and only fund PRTC projects or pass out the money to WRRTC as in the past?" Sweeney said he saw the percentage of cash on hand in the PRTC system as compared to the WRRTC's as an issue that may come up. Another issue is project selection and WSOR could lend some authority to the discussion on construction projects. Sweeney suggested WSOR could supply some priority list (to the PRTC) and some dollar numbers to lend themselves to budget creation.

Frank Huntington said that he thought they should keep things simple and try to handle the situation by writing something shorter such as an MOU and not be as complicated as the work involved in the "66" Agreement. As to the sharing of funding, a lot of that should be up to the counties involved. In terms of Iowa and Rock counties, he suggested that if there is a job in one or the other that would be where the money goes. If it's in both counties then the money could be split. If it is in Green County, then it would go to the PRTC. If it is to PRTC's advantage to fund projects in the WRRTC, then they should do that. This might suggest creating some sort of funding formula to make it clearer. As to Lafayette County, that is a decision the PRTC would have to make.

Kubly asked if anyone other than Green County contributes to WRRTC and Huntington said it had happened once or twice but now that funding is higher, there are concurrent projects. To date, Green County is the only member paying money to a different RTC. If the Oregon line opens (see PRTC January 25th meeting WDOT report), that would put Green County in the same position as Rock and Iowa counties. Kubly asked where that line would be since it's only opening to Oregon. Huntington said that if it opens, the RTC and the county would assume responsibility for the whole line. Sweeney said Rock County is currently questioning money that has been paid for acquisition that is still sitting in the WRRTC budget (this in reference to the Reedsburg line).

Sweeney said he thinks an "uncomplicated MOU" is in order, keep it simple. Phillip Mrozinski said that going from nothing to something is good but they would have to make sure they look to the future and how all the counties are involved. He added that he leaned more towards a legal agreement as opposed to an MOU, as that would carry a little more weight if issues arise in the future. Wayne Gustina agreed with Mrozinski and that he didn't mind Green County paying funds to the PRTC and the PRTC deciding where to spend the money. Legal counsel could come in later discussions so everyone is covered on both sides. Huntington said that would be difficult as you cannot tell what might come up in the future. Huntington asked Kubly what he thought of the possibility of Green County joining the WRRTC. Kubly said that it seems like in the early days of the "66" agreement that idea came up and maybe that was an alternative to explore. Huntington acknowledged that Green County joining the WRRTC might create problems with Lafayette County and might also create issues with Green County paying for projects that don't bring dollars back to it. Sweeney said that is why they would need a priority list (or capital improvement list) so they know what is needed and where. Kubly asked what if Green County gives money to the PRTC and Rock and Iowa also give their money elsewhere.

He said he thinks that if the citizenry knew the situation, the Commission would be "hung out to dry" as on the surface, it does not look all that great. Sweeney asked what would citizens demand and Kubly replied "something spelled out in writing". Ron Wolter said he thought that Green County citizens would be upset that their dollars were going to the WRRTC. Gustina said you have to look at the greater good for all and the rail system connected the counties. Wolter asked if the PRTC corridor benefited Lafayette and Huntington said they did but that the PRTC had made their decision.

Kubly said the (active rail) line has a major economic impact on Lafayette County. Kubly said WSOR pays PRTC to use the line and the trail commission (TCTC) pays nothing. Ken Lucht commented that it is a regional transportation system and that was why it is a shared funding system. He said all the funding sharing is all documented in past meeting minutes though perhaps not in formal agreements. Lucht said that in the next 4 to 5 years there will be a number of projects coming up that will keep the PRTC busy. Sweeney asked if the WRRTC will be asked to contribute to the PRTC. Lucht said the WRRTC will have projects in their area and so will the PRTC and WSOR didn't foresee the Commissions sharing funding as they have in the past. Sweeney asked if Lucht saw a formula as a workable solution and Lucht concurred: he thought there was a solution everyone could agree upon.

Kubly said one thing to recognize in the PRTC, is that not one county is like another, as there is a no-rail (Lafayette), Green with rail and trail, and Rock and Iowa with rail in two RTCs. He asked if improvements are made on the PRTC line east of Brodhead should that funding come only from Green County. He added that the counties are not all on the same page and it needs a hard look to address it. Mrozinski suggested that a percentage based on what you have is what you pay. Sweeney said the number of miles is a dangerous measure to use but Kubly said that was perhaps something that should be addressed. Huntington said in terms of the mileage, that issue has been discussed extensively, adding that some past projects and acquisitions have been funded based on both miles and number of projects.

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Sweeney said that project percentage per location per RTC would be a more equitable solution that gives the regional outlook a bigger slice of the “decision making pie” but the PRTC also has to look at not turning its back on the Janesville east portion which is WRRTC, since they both support and enhance each other. Gustina said that if Green County (or Lafayette) looked at a formula, could an economic impact dollar figure be directed back to the county. Lucht said that there is a lot of product that comes out of Lafayette County that is consumed by Green County and the market wouldn’t be there if there wasn’t rail. If there were no rail, it was probable that materials would go to the river and that would require trucking. Lucht said that would be a cost analysis that WSOR could do to determine where is product coming from and where it’s going. Gustina said he would like to know if they are spending \$26,000 and getting back \$100,000. Gustina added that it is up to the Commission on where to spend the money. Sweeney asked if Gustina was suggesting a quasi-business plan as part of an MOU. Huntington said this Committee would be able to make a recommendation to the full Commission and Gustina said a business plan would show the dollars to the counties.

Kubly said that part of the problem is they have a charter that does not address a corridor without rail. But Huntington said that it can be worked with since it does state that the counties can contribute and can decide how. Sweeney suggested that corporation counsel create a template for a MOU with WRRTC and asked if Lucht could come up with some economic impact figures, both to the PRTC line and its contribution to WRRTC, and Lafayette County economic impact less the trail (since the trail study should soon be done). Kubly agreed that corporation counsel would be a great idea and he could approach Green County’s Attorney.

Mrozinski asked what would be Lafayette County’s incentive to show them what they’re getting if they’re getting something for nothing, why would they change. He added if there is change on the top level and the charter is clarified, go that direction, although it may be a moot point.

Huntington said the charter indicates that counties can contribute but it is flexible and gives them the ability to change from time to time. Wolter said that counties could decide not to contribute as well. Sweeney said there is a lot of political support for maintaining the line in Rock County and thanked Lucht and others for going to the counties and showing them how rail benefits the counties.

Huntington said it would not be an easy solution but it was a start. Kubly suggested they meet quarterly and if needed, once in between but for the next meeting, he would talk to Brian Bucholtz, Green County corporation counsel and see if he could give them some ideas to work with. Sweeney said he would do the same in Rock County. Lucht said he would have numbers to work with for the next meeting. Mrozinski suggested that everyone read the charters before the next meeting. Kubly concluded the meeting by recommending they meet again following the regular May PRTC meeting. Penn was asked to email copies of both the charters and the “66 Agreement” to committee members.

- *Motion to adjourn at 4:18 PM – Gustina/Wolter, Passed Unanimously*