

# PECATONICA RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

20 S Court Street • PO Box 262 • Platteville, Wisconsin 53818  
 MEMBER COUNTIES: GREEN • IOWA • LAFAYETTE • ROCK

1:00 PM • Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 • Green Co. Courthouse, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Courtroom • 1016 16<sup>th</sup> Ave, Monroe, WI

1. 1:05 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	Present (z)
	Oscar Olson		X		Bill Ladewig		X
					Ricky Rolfsmeyer		Present (z)
Lafayette	Nancy Fisker		Excused	Rock	Wayne Gustina		X
	Eric Stauffacher		Absent		Alan Sweeney	Vice Chair	X
	Donna Flannery	Vice Secretary	X		Russ Podzilni		X
	John Reichling	Alternate	Absent		*indicates zoom attendance.		

Commission achieved quorum.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matthew Honer – Admin.</li> <li>• Susan Nast, Teri Beckman – WisDOT.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ken Lucht – WSOR</li> <li>• Troy Maggied, SWWRPC</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 – Sweeney/Gustina. Passed Unanimously.*
4. Action Item.            **Approval of Agenda** – *Prepared by Honer*
  - *Motion to approve the agenda –Flannery/Anderson. Passed Unanimously.*
5. Action Item.            **Approval of draft October 2020 Minutes** – *Prepared by Honer*
  - *Motion to approve draft October 2020 minutes – Sweeney/Ladewig. 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*  
*Anderson announced that he recently has his 6<sup>th</sup> great grandchild.*

**REPORTS & COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**8. PRTC Financial Report** – *Kubly, Acting Treasurer*

Kubly explained that Michael Lowery resigned from the Commission and he will be acting treasurer until a new treasurer is chosen. Kubly reported the treasurers report for financials ending December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The total balance of checking and savings was \$174,754.17.

Sweeney asked what would be done with the CDs due in February. Kubly expected to roll them into another termed savings.

- *Motion to approve Treasurer's report. – Ladewig/Olson. Approved Unanimously.*

Kubly presented a bill from the SWWRPC for \$2,495.86. There was also a bill from Boardman Clark for \$2,777.50.

- *Motion to approve SWWRPC Bill. – Ladewig/Olson. Approved Unanimously.*
- *Motion to approve the Boardman Clark Bill – Sweeney/Ladewig. Approved Unanimously*

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

Lucht reported that WSOR received 2021 grant awards some will include work on the Monroe Subdivision. WSOR has been doing a lot of crossing work, especially in the Brodhead area. Bridge inspections and regular maintenance are being planned for the coming season. On February 1<sup>st</sup>, WSOR will submit applications for the Prairie Sub CWR from Avoca to Spring Green (Phase 4) and a bridge project. Hopefully those projects will be funded out of the 2021 – 2023 state budget. Lucht submitted 2019 carloads to the PRTC Administrator. There was a drop of about \$5k between 2018 – 2019 due to decline in Frac Sand. The frac sand that is moving on the system currently is minimal. Another 7700 carloads are expected to be lost between 2019 and 2020. Those Carloads were not out of Prairie du Chien, rather Green Lake County. Lucht stated carloads have gone down considerably between 2018 and 2020 and WSOR is currently working on controlling costs. This includes cutting back on travel and maintaining investments in safety. The pandemic hasn't greatly impacted the service plan to customers. WSOR continues to seek additional customers on and off the rail.

Olson asked what would happen if fracking is stopped. WSOR is not very concerned about fracking stopping. Lucht explained that a lot of frac sand was going to Texas until another source of sand was discovered in Texas. Lucht believes there may be future markets available for Wisconsin Sand.

Sweeney asked about a Janesville public crossing on County Road M currently before the Office of the Commission of Railroads (OCR). Lucht stated that WSOR is also looking for additional information from the OCR on this determination and expects it to be available in the coming days.

Ladewig asked how WATCO is doing during the pandemic. Watco is trying to grown the supply chain logistics and the port and terminal aspects of the business. WATCO did acquire a railroad in south Dakota at the end of last year. Lucht stated WATCO does have a strong business model with adequate cashflow and revenue to cover annual expenses and WSOR and WATCO have a great executive team.

**10. WisDOT Report – Teri Beckman, WisDOT**

Teri reported that WisDOT is in the process of filling the recently open real estate position.

**11. Tri-County Trail Commission Report – Trails Representative.**

Flannery gave an update on the trail. Overall conditions are good. The trail is currently closed to ATVs and Snowmobiles but maybe opened with the coming snow. TCTC is awaiting a \$22k grant from WIDNR to fund the riprap project along the trail, expected to start in the spring. The TCTC is also awaiting a grant award of \$23k for bridge repairs. The TCTC discussed at its last meeting that when a side trail is closed, all of the trails close. This creates some disagreement.

Ladewig asked if the crossings being presented at this meeting were presented at the last TCTC meeting. Flannery stated they were not. Honer asked if Tom Jean is still the contact for the TCTC, Flannery said he is until March. Honer asked if the snowmobile clubs contribute to the maintenance of the trail in the same manner as the ATV clubs and if there was any reimbursement from them. Flannery stated that the clubs conduct maintenance and request reimbursement from TCTC, who receives money from the WIDNR on an annual basis for ATV and Snowmobile trail maintenance.

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

Honer went to the December meeting of the Tri-County Trails Commission and presented to the Commission the Interim Trail Use Agreement between the TCTC and PRTC. He explained the responsibilities of both parties to manage the trail in different ways and encouraged TCTC and PRTC to have better communications in the future.

Honer received good feedback from the letters sent to the adjacent landowners. There are additional applications to be presented at future meetings. Honer thanked the Commission for dropping the application fee, as it makes the requests and conversations much easier. Having greater compliance with private crossings helps protect the Commission in the long run.

Lucht asked if the PRTC has a design standard. Honer stated that there is no design standard for the private crossings on the agenda because they are existing crossings.

**13. Discussion and Action on Private Crossing applicants on the Cheese Country Trail - Honer, Admin.**

- a. **Paul and Shirley Leu in Darlington**
- b. **Ralph and Jeanne Stietz in Gratiot**
- c. **Herbert and Patricia Baumgartner in Gratiot**
- d. **Bruce Suddeth in Mineral Point**
- e. **Wayne and Joanne Krebs in Gratiot**
- f. **Jeffery Harms in South Wayne**
- g. **Donald and Carin Miller in Gratiot**
- h. **Gary and Marsha Wilhelms in Browntown**
- i. **Guentener Bar C in Wayne Township, Lafayette County**

Honer explained there was one change on the Krebs crossing application moving the western crossing approximately 150' to the east. Lucht asked if the PRTC has a design standard. Honer stated there is no design standard for the private crossings on the agenda because they are existing crossings. Ladewig asked if the Trails keep records of the Crossings. Honer shares the crossing agreements with Trails and will ask them to keep track of the crossings do so.

Honer explained that the crossing agreements are based on templates approved in the past by the Commission's attorney. These were sent to the applicants but Honer has not received signed copies from the applicants back. Honer stated that he suggests the Commission approve the crossing agreements conditionally upon the signature of the applicants. If the applicants request changes to the agreements it will either need to come before the Commission again. If the applicants do not sign the agreements, Honer will request that the TCTC close the crossings.

- *Motion to approve the applications conditional on signatures from the applications - Sweeney/Podzilni. Approved Unanimously.*

**14. Discussion and Action on MOU between PRTC and SWWRPC for Bookkeeping - Honer, Admin.**

Honer spoke with Kubly following the treasurer's resignation and suggested it would be more efficient if he took over the bookkeeping for the Commission and it may help in finding a new Commissioner. Considering that SWWRPC has not performed bookkeeping duties in the past, Honer is unaware of the time it will take, but assumes it will not be an extensive amount of time. Honer believes if the arrangement works out, it can be incorporated into the 2022 staff services agreement.

Sweeney asked if Kubly and the future Treasurer are the signers on the account. Kubly confirmed and stated he thinks it is time to move bookkeeping responsibilities to the SWWRPC.

- *Motion to approve MOU between PRTC and SWWRPC for bookkeeping for 2021.- Ladewig/Flannery. Passed Unanimously*

**15. Presentation by WSOR: Background on proposed Janesville Bridge Project Discussion – Lucht, WSOR.**

Lucht presented a proposed project in the City of Janesville. The project would rehabilitate state owned trackage and bridges for WRRTC use at the industry standard of 286k lbs. per car at 25mph. This would remove the necessity of needing to light load cars as they currently are doing because of the need to use Union Pacific's track and bridges.

Anderson asked if the project can be completed without upgrading the infrastructure owned by UP, as the UP and State-owned (WRRTC owned infrastructure) corridor are adjacent and the bridges share abutments. Lucht explained that the abutments and piers of the bridges are expected to be in good condition but the UP and the WRRTC owned infrastructure (spans and trackage) are separate.

Ladewig asked if UP will want to use the upgraded infrastructure after completing the project. Lucht stated it is a possibility. Sweeney asked what issues UP might have with the project. Lucht explained the project will touch the UP mainline at the diamond

and at a turnout near memorial drive. Anytime a mainline is touched by a project on a Class 1 railroad it becomes a long process. Lucht explained that the track diamond connects multiple tracks.

Anderson asked if the 286k lb. standard is sufficient and if there are other places on the system that will still require light-loading. Lucht explained that the bridges are the weak link of the system and everyplace else on the system can be loaded to 286k lbs. but nearly all cars coming from the WRRTC system go over the bridges in order to get to Chicago. The bridges affect all grain.

Podzilni asked about a time frame. Lucht believes it will be another 18 months before a plan of action is finalized. Lucht stated that based on conversations with WisDOT there is interest in applying for federal grants as WisDOT has been successful with this in the recent past.

**16. Adjournment**

- *Motion to adjourn at 2.26 pm – Gustina/Podzilni. Passed Unanimously.*