



Meeting Minutes

May 27, 2010

Cottage Grove City Hall Council Chambers

7516 80th Street South

Cottage Grove, MN

3:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Myra Peterson, Washington County
Joe Harris, Dakota County
Janice Rettman, Ramsey County
Barb Hollenbeck, City of Hastings
John Hunziker, City of St Paul Park
Jen Peterson, City of Cottage Grove
Corbin Hopkins, City of Newport
Cam Gordon, City of Minneapolis

Staff:

Josh Olson, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Andy Gitzlaff, Washington County Regional Railroad Authority
Ken Bjornstad, Goodhue County
Sam O'Connell, Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Bob Kastner, Red Wing
Marc Mogan, Prairie Island Indian Community
Ken Bjornstad, Goodhue County

Others Present:

Linda Jungwirth, Assistant to Ramsey Cty Commission Rettman
Joe Morneau, Dakota County
Mike Rogers, RCRRA
Greg Huber, Mortenson
Michael Bjornberg, HGA
Steve Malloy, URS

Commission Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

Agenda Item #1 Consent Items

- a. Minutes of the April 29, 2010 Meeting
- b. Checks and Claims

Commission Member Hunziker moved the approval of the Consent Items. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Hopkins and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #2 Legislative Update - WCRRA

a. State

Andy Gitzlaff reminded the Commission that Senator Sieben was at the last meeting discussing Senate version of the omnibus Transportation Policy Bill. This would allow the Department of Transportation to spend trunk highway funds in fiscal year 2011 for temporary bus service from Hastings to St Paul as part of the highway 61 bridge reconstruction project. This proposal was not in the House side so it went to a conference committee and did pass. Now it is awaiting the Governor's signature. The amount of the bill did get reduced from \$500,000 to \$250,000. Commission Chair Peterson inquired of Commission Member Hollenbeck where the City of Hastings is at with transit service discussions with the Met Council. She indicated that there has not yet been any discussion initiated with the Met Council, but with this potential money allocated it could be an incentive to proceed.

b. Federal

Mr. Gitzlaff informed the Commission Members that at the last meeting the Senate appropriation requests were announced. Franken put in a \$1,000,000 request and Klobashar's request was for \$500,000 for the demonstration bus service and Park-and-Ride facility improvements. He indicated that as of now there have not been any hearings scheduled, but is expected to be occurring sometime throughout the summer and into the fall. Commission Chair Peterson questioned if all the counties involved are on board with this request. Mr. Gitzlaff indicated he believed they were. Mr. Gitzlaff continued to inform the Commission about the Tiger II Grant Program that is now available. He referred to the pre-application deadline of July 16, 2010 and that this program is for projects of national significance; such as, highway bridges, passenger and freight rail transportation as well as port infrastructure investments. There is \$600,000,000 available and there are many projects that need to be done throughout the country, so it will be a very competitive application process. He indicated that there is also \$35,000,000 included in this grant specified for planning grants. This corridor, as well as other corridors around the metro, may consider this an opportunity to submit a regional application for funding. Mr. Gitzlaff will continue to monitor this as it develops. Commission Chair Peterson questioned if these funds could be used for the Hoffman Yard project. Commission Member Rettman indicated that Ramsey County is moving forward with the project with funds they have already set aside. Eventually, they will need additional funding. Commission Chair Peterson recommended that when a request for funding is made for the Union Depot, that the Red Rock Corridor Commission should provide support.

Agenda Item #3 Red Rock State and Federal Funds - WCRRA

Mr. Gitzlaff provided the Commission with an informational item. He explained that the Corridor Commission has historically funded its work through a variety of funding contributions and monies received from State and Federal grants. He referred to the memo included in the packets, that shows what balance of the funds are still available. He reminded the Commission that there are certain restrictions that come with the State and Federal money. All these parameters and restrictions have been considered in our work plan. One of the ways to implement our work plan and match these funds was to distribute the State bonding money to an eligible project such as The Union Depot, and in return have

the in kind match. Recently, The Union Depot moved into a design build phase, and skipped the pre-design work, which is a requirement for use of State bonds. Therefore, Ramsey County can't use the bonds on the Union Depot and those bonds from 2005-2006 are set to expire at the end of 2010. He indicated that our number-one priority is to find eligible projects to put those bonding dollars to use before they revert back to the State. The staff has put together a recommended plan of action. This will remain a discussion item tonight and we will come back at the next meeting for the necessary approvals.

During the last legislative session we were able to amend the language for those 2005-2006 bonds to make them eligible for other tasks such as land acquisition, final design and construction, as well as environmental, so this gives us more flexibility in use. Additionally, we inquired with the Met Council about using \$400,000 of the million dollars for the local match for the east metro rail capacity analysis study being done by Ramsey County Regional Rail. We have the approval from them that those funds could be put towards that project. That leaves \$600,000 remaining that we need to find a place for by the end of this year. These funds could be put towards the Park-and-ride facility in the City of Hastings. He indicated that the recommended course of action would be to put the \$600,000 to the Park-and-Ride in Hastings. Additionally, Ramsey County was going to match some studies for the \$1,000,000 bond, but since they did not get the money we need to portion out the funding for these studies based on the other funding partners.

The second study that is going on is the economic analysis study for the Union Depot with a local match of \$42,500. This study is primarily focused on the depot and primarily benefits Ramsey County. Due to this factor, it would be safe to say that Ramsey County can handle the funding on their own.

The third study is the stationary planning study that we are in the process of right now and through a co-op agreement with Ramsey County, they are already providing a match for that study. Mr. Gitzlaff referred the Commission Members to the chart on the third page of the memo. He indicated that one way to break out the level of commitment for the study is by the number of stations that are being studied in the station area planning study.

Mr. Gitzlaff summarized that at the next meeting we will be confirming that the project to put the bonding money towards is the Hastings Park-and-Ride and in order to provide the match for the remaining fund balance it would be paid for by Washington County and Dakota County as part of next year's funding contributions. This wouldn't be an item right now. It would just be the acknowledgement that this is the appropriate split. Additionally, we will be reviewing the remaining fund balance to consider if there is anything remaining that could be used to pay toward the contribution for the following year.

Commission Chair Peterson inquired why there will not be a request for funding for the Newport Park-and-Ride. Mr. Gitzlaff responded that with the change in bonding language, if bonding money had been used to purchase the site, The Met Council would have to be the owner of the property. That was currently not an acceptable situation and Washington County did recently acquire this property. Additionally, timing wise the station planning is going to determine what is needed and the study is lagging behind a bit to be able to use bonding money. The study needs to be completed first. It was agreed that there is a lot of interest in the community and City Council to get the Newport Park-and-Ride completed.

Commission Rettman asked for some clarity on who made the appropriations so they can get a true picture of what contributions are outstanding. Mr. Gitzlaff indicated that he will work with Ramsey County Staff and Dakota County Staff to get these and can email the document so that we will be able to convey it to our local unit of government. Mr. Gitzlaff noted that this is a complicated issue with the fund balance, and ideally would like to work toward being able to zero out those accounts for final budget of next year and start over.

Commission Member Hollenbeck noted her appreciation on the generous offer of Red Rock to potentially fund the Park-and-Ride in Hastings. She indicated that this step would spur a lot more interest from the public as to the prospect of commuter bus service as well as commuter rail.

Agenda Item #4 Union Depot Project Update–Mortenson Construction

The Mortenson Team: Greg Huber pre-construction manager with Mortenson Construction, Michael Bjornberg lead architect with HGA and Steve Malloy with URS. Mr. Huber presented a power point presentation on the Union Depot Project. He emphasized the main goals of the project are to preserve and restore a historic Minnesota landmark to its original use as a multi-modal transportation hub for the Twin Cities. They also have a goal to create economic viability for the Union Depot, Lowertown District, City of St Paul, Ramsey County as well as regional and the State of Minnesota. He indicated that they currently have many partners such as; Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority, BNS, CP, Amtrak, Greyhound, Jefferson, and Metro Transit. Other partners we are working on obtaining as a partner are; Met Council, Mn/Dot as well as others.

Mr. Huber presented the design build team overview. This includes the Regional Rail Authority overseeing the operation, with Mortenson Construction leading the design team of URS doing the transportation design and engineering as well as some consultants and HGA leading a large team of consultants responsible for the building components of the projects like the historic restoration of the waiting room, great hall as well as new components.

He continued to give an overview of the project schedule:

Procurement Period: beginning to start:	May 2010 – May 2011
Mobilization	October 2010
Interior Demolition & MEP Rough-in	October 2010 – May 2011
Front Plaza	October 2010 – July 2011
Structural Demolition & Site Work	January 2011 - May 2011
Enclosure Refurbishment	April 2011 – October 2011
Structural Concrete Deck	May 2011 – September 2011
Interior Renovations	June 2011 – August 2012
Pavement & Tracks	March 2012 – September 2012
Substantial Completion	September 2012

Mr. Huber referred to the budget and schedule. They are scheduled to complete the design development June 18, 2010, as well as tracking any alternatives. This will allow them to establish the GMP - guaranteed maximum price in the end of July, and present this to the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority in August.

Michael Bjornberg presented the historic preservation aspect of the project. He began by reviewing the team of historical experts they have assembled, including HGA (Hammel, Green, and Abrahamson), BBB (Beyer, Blinder, Belle Architects), URS, and CCRG (Commonwealth Cultural Research Group). Additionally, the historical architects Mr. Bjornberg and Frank Prial of BBB will lead the team. This project is unique in that not just the building is historic, but the train deck is also which increases the historical space to 30 acres of land. He indicated that the historic structures report has been completed that details the history of The Depot as well as the City of St Paul. Also complete is the condition assessment of the entire area, to assess the existing condition of the property. Mr. Bjornberg indicated that they are currently meeting with representatives of SHPO and HPC for a schematic design meeting every three weeks.

Steve Malloy with URS continued the presentation focusing on schematic design–security. He indicated that, as the design group has been completing the design, the threat and vulnerabilities group has been reviewing these designs and making recommendations with regard to appropriate security measures for the entire facility. Specifically this involves protecting the security office in the head house itself. Other site security elements include gated entries to the parking areas, vehicle access control, camera surveillance, lighting and emergency call buttons. Mr. Malloy indicated that they meet with local law enforcement officials consistently to consult with their development. They will allow for the development of future security systems, like baggage scan and higher security screening, as the building layout is a very open plan which can accommodate these changes.

Mr. Bjornberg continued to explain that they are pursuing a LEED certification. Through the building reuse and energy efficient design as well as conservation of water and materials, he feels that they should receive this certification.

Mr. Huber explained to the Commission that they are very aware of how important a public project this is. They are receiving a lot of input from neighborhood open houses, meetings with MPR, finance and commerce, as well as individual meetings with the Capital River Council. All of this input is shaping the design of the project. He also informed the Commission that community participation opportunities is an important aspect of this project. This includes providing meaningful participation opportunities for women and people of color; small, women and minority owned businesses. He indicated that through the DBE program they are working with the Met Council to set goals for workforce diversity. Through informational workshops and open houses prior to bidding, they are able to encourage and engage minorities to be involved in the project.

Mr. Huber continued to detail the principles that guide The Depot development. This includes to make it transit oriented, so it can stand on its own as a transit facility, much as it did in 1923. The focus is to make it local, beautiful and make it connected. It remains a central hub in the community and they need to understand the regional planning involved taking advantage of the surrounding area such as trails, future ball parks and the central business district.

The team then presented a photo presentation of The Depot project. Mr. Bjornberg indicated that the difference from when it was first built as a train station to now is that it was smoky, dirty and noisy. That whole part of the river was industrial and the City didn't want to even see the station. Now it has become a beautiful park land area. He gave an overview of the schematic design for the plaza. He referred to the high significance of the symmetry, proportion and balance of the design for the up-front plaza. This area has changed uses throughout history and will become a park again. For the Central Corridor East project and the majority of the up front plaza, the low and accepted bidder is HPC.

Access into The Depot will change due to the main access in the head-house not being available. There are many options for entry being explored. One being a carriage way that went underneath the front drive will be expanded and be available for drop off of special events at the head-house. Additionally, they will be removing a bay on Kellogg and Sibley Street and constructing a new access point. This Kellogg access will be the primary vehicular access for bus drop off, short-term parking and taxis. It will also have Amtrak baggage check, rental cars and access to deck and waiting room. The removal of the bay will also allow for a larger sidewalk and a pedestrian plaza.

Mr. Malloy provided the Commission with details on the schematic design of the railroad deck. This is a critical point that they have been reviewing and testing since 2007. Assessment of structural condition of the pilings, columns and deck is very important to the building process. A three acre portion of the southwest corner of the train deck will need the columns replaced entirely. Another five-acre portion of the old deck will sit directly on undisturbed fill. There is a significant portion of the project's budget that will need to be used for the renovation of the parking deck wood due to rotting and decay. This will provide us with the assurance that this facility will support train traffic and train loading for the next fifty years. Some of the areas can be retained.

Mr. Bjornberg presented the headhouse details. He indicated that they had a conservator go through most of the building and has found specific details that will be restored. Additionally, from the research completed, this building has the most historical significance of the entire project. The goal will be to return this space to a place that where events can happen. The waiting room is the second most significant space and will need some renovations also. They will remain very careful on the insertion of the new elements such as ticketing booths for Jefferson and Amtrak. He presented an animated display of the future changes. Mr. Huber indicated that the true vision is to have lowertown function as a hub of development, to help people to get to and from their place of work.

Commission Member Rettman recommended updating some of the presentation so that it focuses also on the high-speed aspect of The Depot, and that this doesn't just affect St Paul but the impact it will have on all of Minnesota as well as the entire region. Commission Chair Peterson also referenced that it is important to address the fact that any improvement made is an improvement for more than just St Paul or Ramsey County, but it has a regional impact as a regional destination. Mr. Huber indicated that they are working on an updated animated version that will reference the entire corridor and the high-speed rail aspect of The Union Depot.

Commission Chair Peterson also indicated her concerns that we make this a seamless connection from one mode to another. She referenced that mobility is going to be an issue for much of the aging population as well as the disabled. Mr. Huber explained that they are very aware of this issue and are planning for this within their design.

Commission Member Gordon questioned a plan for how bikes access the Union Depot. Mr. Malloy indicated that bike access is very important in the design. The regional trail comes up Warner Road to both Silbly and Kellogg to the entrance on the deck. They hope that cyclists may also use this as a commuter facility as they will be providing canopied bike lockers and bike racks. They are also planning on pushing forward the idea that from the upper deck you could move eastward along the train level and make a connection to the Bruce Vento Trail, to make a regional trail connection there.

Commission Member Jen Peterson questioned how much thought has been put into ensuring it is an environmentally friendly facility. Mr. Huber responds that their Leed Certification provides them with the principals that are guiding their planning and development to remain environmentally friendly. The main item is the reuse of the facility, along with new HVAC and opening the sky lights for more energy efficiency. It remains as a core value within our company and is an important aspect of the project. The facility has selected district energy as renewable resource of heating and cooling. Additionally, the majority of the materials used for the renovation are locally purchased. Commission Chair Peterson pointed out that we want the public dollars spent on a building that will be there for another 100 years that we will be proud to use as a regional destination and will enhance our communities.

Agenda Item #5 East Metro Rail Capacity Study Update – RCRRRA

Michael Rogers from the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority presented a power-point on the East Metro Rail Capacity Study. He reminded the Commission that this study began because of RRCC funding. Within the study capacity issues were identified and dealt with by a lump sum estimate of cost. But mainly, the need for further analysis was identified. The main purpose of this study is to analyze how to move multiple trains through the area. It does build on the Red Rock Corridor Alternatives Analysis.

He explained that the key points to the East Metro Rail Capacity Study are: ‘What capacity improvements are needed to implement commuter high-speed rail and passenger rail?’ ‘How will impacts to freight railroads be mitigated?’ And ‘How can capacity improvements be phased so that they are implemented only as needed?’

Mr. Rodgers indicated that there are many project partners working together. The study began in April 2010 and has an eighteen month schedule. From April–June 2010 the review of previous studies and review of rail operations. From June–September 2010 they will perform simulations on how things work with real world operations and potential problems into the future. During October- December 2010 they will rank and recommend improvements. In the time frame of December–October 2011 detailed modeling and detailed engineering work will be performed.

He also presented some maps referencing the main study area from Redwing to The Union Depot in St Paul. This is a large area to focus on with a primary study area of intense

improvements being around the Hoffman Yard area. Hoffman Yard represents 5 % of the nation's freight volume being processed through this area, so it is very critical that trains flow well through this area. He also indicated that Westminster Junction is important as trains flow from here to Eau Claire and eventually Chicago. The Union Depot and the Robert Street Lift Bridge are critical areas due to the trains tying up traffic for long periods of time. These are the significant issues on this corridor.

Mr. Rodgers provided a photographic view of what the station looked like years ago and how it looks today. This study is critical in deciding how to use the amenities that are out there today like the park, road, and railroad and make them work well together. In essence, how to fit a lot of passenger trains in a constrictive area.

He explained that the involvement of the railroads is important to implement a plan. The analysis team invited all three railroads to review all proposals for development and to sit on the review board. Canadian Pacific and Union Pacific both did accept these offers and are instrumental in coming to a conclusion on who is the best consultant for the project. The introductory meeting is on June 22, 2010 with the railroads, to come to an agreement of how to create a successful project. In October there will be the mid-term workshop and a final workshop in 2011. Additionally there will be two open houses with the public, one at the beginning of the project and one at the end.

He continued to highlight the eventual outcomes from the study. This included maintaining on time performance of all trains, maintain or improve freight train service and allow for freight and passenger rail growth in the years ahead. He indicated that the preliminary engineering completed on the agreed to capacity improvements, will set us up for funding sources with the railroads. The final outcome will be an outline for a memorandum of understanding between the freight railroads and public sector. This MOU is what is required if you are trying to get larger funding like tiger grants or the passenger rail investment act fund.

Mr. Rodgers referred to the next steps in the analysis is individual freight railroad meetings, baseline development and have the introductory workshops to get the public involvement.

Commission Member Rettman questioned if all three railroads are involved. Mr. Rodgers confirmed that for the West Metro projects BNSF is the lead and East Metro projects Canadian Pacific is the lead. They are working together.

Agenda Item #6 Station Planning Study Update – WCRRA

Mr. Gitzlaff indicated that this is an opportunity to promote the projects going on in the community. He provided the Commission Members with a list of the summer festivals upcoming in the area. These are the events upcoming that we may consider as opportunities for us to publicize the RRC. We have a consultant team that can put together info for the booths, but what is needed is staffing and volunteers to attend these events and operate the booths.

Commission Member Hunziker indicated that the St. Paul Parks Heritage Days is the 3rd weekend of August on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Commission Member Hopkins also noted that the Newport Pioneer Day is Saturday, August 7 from 1:00 – 8:00 p.m. Additionally, on Sunday July 11 is the Firemen's Bouya in Newport. Commission Member Hopkins will contact Mr. Gitzlaff to coordinate the details on this event.

Commission Chair Peterson offered an idea at these festivals, to have all of the Red Rock Corridor Members wear Red Rock hats and get T-shirts that say "Ask me about Red Rock"

Mr. Gitzlaff indicated that the projects going on include the first round of public meetings which were four visioning sessions as well as focus groups. We are still in the data gathering and analysis phase and moving towards having the consultants put some concept plans together for people to review. Within the next few months there will be another round of public meetings and visioning sessions followed by open houses.

Mr. Gitzlaff referred to the handout provided in regard to the Red Rock Corridor Website statistics. Specifically he highlighted that people visiting the Red Rock Corridor Website are staying on the website an average of two minutes and forty seconds. The average time people stay on any website is two minutes.

Agenda Item #7 Commission Advocacy and Conference Attendance - WCRRA

Commission Chair Peterson informed the Commission that Commission Member Jen Peterson has decided to attend the Transportation Alliance Conference in Washington on June 8-10. It is the Commission's responsibility to make a motion to approve her attendance. She has estimated her expenses at roughly \$1000 for air and hotel and has tentatively scheduled a spot at the conference. Commission Chair Peterson reminds the Members that there is currently no clear policy written as to where the funds for these conferences, training activities and advocacy, should be spent.

Commission Member Rettman expressed her concerns that we should have a policy in place prior to the approval of the attendance at a national conference. She stated it was a process and procedure issue that should be in place prior to the approval of conference attendance involving expenses. Commission Chair Peterson reminds the Members that we have sent members of the Commission to Portland in years past. It was part of the organization and activities when no written policy was in place. She agreed that we do need to develop a written policy in place, but we do have a Member available to attend a national conference now, and since we are looking for funding, it would benefit us to have a representative there. It would benefit us to have a representative there on this occasion. She indicated that there are also two Washington County Members to be in attendance.

Commission Member Gordon moved the approval of Commission Member Jen Peterson's attendance at the Transportation Alliance Conference in Washington on June 8-10, 2010, for up to \$1500 in expenses. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Hunziker. Commission Chair Peterson opens for discussion. Commission Member Harris offered that in years past the RRCC has sent Commission Members to Portland for a conference with the funds available in the budget. Recently, there had not been any interest by the Commission Members. The motion passed seven to one with Commission Member Rettman opposed.

Commission Member Gordon motioned to direct Staff to prepare a draft travel and attendance policy for the Red Rock Corridor Commission by July 30, 2010. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Hunziker and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #8 Other

a. National Train Day Recap – WCRRA

Mr. Gitzlaff informed the Commission Members that the National Train Day on May 8th had over 5000 people in attendance. Red Rock Corridor, Ramsey County, CTIB, Central Corridor, and Hennepin County all had booths at the event. He indicated that all in attendance were very enthused about the transit projects. Their biggest question was when it will be done! At the RRCC booth we handed out pamphlets, had a door prize for Red Rock hats and a coloring project for children. Additionally, our newsletter on the website received twenty-five sign-up requests within two days of the event. Overall it was a successful event.

There being no further business Commission Member Hopkins made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Member Hunziker and passed unanimously.

The Commission adjourned at 5:30 p.m.