

NORTHWOODS RAIL TRANSIT COMMISSION

MEETING SUMMARY

GLTPA - Rhinelander
May 10, 2019

1./2. Call to Order, Introductions and Public Comment

The joint meeting was called to order at approximately 10:00 am.

The following were present: Dale Kupczyk Ashland County, Stacey Johnson Oneida County Economic Development Corporation, Wendy Gehlhoff Florence County Economic Development Corporation, Al Koskela Houghton County Board, Tom Tikkanen Houghton County Board, Bill Liebert Oneida County Board, Tricia Grebin Marinette County Board, Mike Cassidy Marinette County, Joe Pinardi Iron County WI Board, Al Christenson Marathon County Board, Angie Close Langlade County Economic Development Corporation, Peter Van Steen Delta County-CUPPAD, John Varda WCG, Bill Korrer WI Counties Association, Tom Klimek Klimek Rail Consulting, Brian Buchanan CN, Jim Rosenberg WEDC, Pasi Lautala Michigan Tech, Senator Tom Tiffany WI Legislature, Andrea Gabel WEDC, Joe Bonovetz Gogebic County Board, Dan Rickel Tomahawk Rail, Kelly Klein Iron County WI Economic Development, Tyler Delvaux ELS Railroad, David Sederholm Citizen, Jim Hoppe PCA, Jay Verhulst Vilas County Board, Sandra Verhulst Citizen, Rick Bliese Lincoln Wood Products, Bob Quick Branchline RR, Ty Penca Citizen, Richard Smith ???, Libby Ogard Prime Focus LLC and Darryl Landeau NCWRPC.

Editor's Note: If you or someone you know attended the meeting in person or via teleconference but are not reflected here, please forward that information to dlandeau@ncwrpc.org. Thank you.

Mr. Sederholm addressed the group regarding his interest in reestablishing rail service in northern Wisconsin.

3. Approval of NRTC Meeting Notes from January 18, 2019

On a motion by Mr. Verhulst Vilas County, seconded by Mr. Pinardi Iron County, the meeting notes of the January 18, 2019 meeting were approved with all in favor.

4. Chair Person's Report

Ms. Johnson reported on the WI Paper Council Transportation Committee Meeting which she was invited to along with several industry representatives from the area. Secretary of the WI Department of Transportation also participated. A variety of issues were discussed including truck weight limits, work force issues, transportation funding,

tolling, and representation for the north. The Secretary said he would ask for quarterly updates on transportation issues in northern Wisconsin, so this could be an opportunity.

There was wide-ranging discussion on the issues presented.

5. Election of Officers

Mr. Koskela nominated Stacey Johnson (acting Chair) for Chairperson. There were no other nominations. Vote: unanimous. Ms. Johnson is elected Chair of the NRTC.

Ms. Gehlhoff nominated Dale Kupczyk (current) for Vice Chair. There were no other nominations. Vote: unanimous. Mr. Kupczyk is re-elected Vice Chair of the NRTC.

Mr. Cassidy nominated Alan Christensen for Secretary (current). Declined.

Ms. Close nominated Wendy Gehlhoff for Secretary. There were no other nominations. Vote: unanimous. Ms. Gehlhoff is elected Secretary of the NRTC.

Ms. Gehlhoff nominated Kelly Klein for Treasurer. There were no other nominations. Vote: unanimous. Mr. Klein is elected Treasurer of the NRTC.

6. Michigan Tech Freight Study Update

Professor Lautala presented on his project to develop a freight movement model which is wrapping up. The model appears to be a good representation of log movement, and may aid in predicting and optimizing rail movements.

There were various questions with discussion regarding the model presentation.

7. Rail and Transloading Presentation

Mr. Buchanan presented a "Rail 101" in order to balance our levels of understanding on rail operations. The intent is to set up an interactive and on-going discussion regarding cooperative programming of rail transloading services between NRTC and CN. Mr. Buchanan reviewed the national rail system, types of rail networks, and the history of rail service. Transloading comes into play where those that don't have their own track and siding, but still want to do rail. Typically a third party operates the facility that includes docking and transfer facilities along with warehousing.

So, thinking about businesses in your county that need to move the kinds of things that fit well with rail, maybe transloading is an option to discuss, whether or not tracks exist in that specific county or area. The first step is to identify some of these businesses (for example those moving bulk commodities but not currently using rail) in our counties, so we can look at places along the existing rail system where it might make sense to set up some kind of transloading operation; where those products could be brought in by truck from the surrounding area to be loaded onto trains. CN will look at options from their perspective.

There was wide-ranging questions with discussion regarding the transloading presentation. Discussion topics included availability of train movement data, grants and programs to fund facilities like a transloading center, and service issues.

8. Next Meeting Date: July 26, 2019.

9. Adjourn

On a motion by Mr. Koskela Houghton County, seconded by Mr. Tikkanen Houghton County, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:42 pm with all in favor.