

**Minutes of the  
East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium  
Meeting of May 11, 2022**

**East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium Meeting** was called to order by Chairman Thomas Winker on May 11, 2022, at approximately 10:05 a.m., at the Dodge County Administration Building, Meeting Rooms H & I, located at 127 E. Oak Street, Juneau, Wisconsin.

**Certification of Public Notice:** Kimberly A. Nass certified that the notice of this meeting complies with all applicable requirements of Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law.

**Present:** Henry St. Maurice and Char Holtan, Columbia County; Dave Frohling and Jeffrey Caine, Dodge County; Karen Madigan and John Zorn, Fond du Lac County; Dennis Mulder and Charlie Wielgosh, Green Lake County; Thomas E. Winker and Marty Wolf, Ozaukee County; Roger TeStroete Sheboygan County; Jeff Schleif and Robert Hartwig, Washington County; and, Donald Nussbaum and Howard Miller, Winnebago County.

**Excused:** Milwaukee County; and Al Bosman, Sheboygan County.

**Others Present:** Todd Wojciuk, Wisconsin Department of Transportation; Tim Anfinson; Ken Lucht, WSOR; Kimberly A. Nass, Dodge County Corporation Counsel; and Kelly Lepple, Dodge County Corporation Counsel Office.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Introduction of Members and Staff:** Chairman Winker welcomed all of the new members appointed to the EWCR and requested that all members and staff introduce themselves.

Ken Lucht provided an overview of the history of the WSOR and the history of all of the different rail commissions throughout the State of Wisconsin.

**Approval of Draft Minutes of March 9, 2022:** Motion by Caine/TeStroete to approve the draft minutes of March 9, 2022. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**Financial Report:** Kelly Lepple reported for the period ending April 30, 2022. The balance in the checkbook as of February 28, 2022, was \$1,000.89. Deposits -- \$205,201.25, Expenditures -- \$5,072.54, and Transfers -- \$200,129.56. Total EWCR money on deposit in the Local Government Investment Pool as of March 31, 2022, is \$700,321.47. Motion by Schleif/Mulder to approve the Financial Report. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**Consider, discuss and take action on the level of funding by member counties for 2023:** There was consideration of and discussion about the level of funding for member counties for 2023. Ken Lucht stated that the Wisconsin River Rail Transit Commission and the Pecatonica Rail Transit Commission fund \$30,000 per county. Ken Lucht encouraged the EWCR to at least maintain at the current level of funding of \$25,000 or to increase it by an inflationary measure by 1% or 2%, which is what the other rail transit commissions do every couple of years. Ken Lucht stated that at the next meeting of the EWCR he would like to make a presentation on Railroading 101. Ken Lucht stated that in 2014 the WSOR and two other rail transit commissions hired the University of Wisconsin Extension to complete an Economic Impact Study of the entire publically owned system. Ken Lucht will provide a copy of the Economic Impact Study to each member as part of the meeting packet for the next meeting of the EWCR. WSOR is working with the University of

Wisconsin Extension to refresh the Economic Impact Study and bring it up to date.

Members requested that a printout be provided to the EWCRC members to present to their respective committees and boards explaining the increase of \$5,000. Kim Nass stated that the last increase of the funding level was in approximately 2013. Kim Nass stated that she will double check on the last year the level of funding was increased and run the numbers and provide a printout to all members of the EWCRC at its next meeting. Motion by Wolf/Mulder that the Board of Directors of the EWCRC recommend to each member county that each member county raise the annual member county contribution from \$25,000 to \$30,000 for its 2023 member county contribution to the EWCRC. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**Consider, discuss, and take action on WisDOT's sale of State Railroad Property at 421 Barstow Street, Horicon, Wisconsin.** There was consideration of and discussion about WisDOT's sale of state railroad property located at 421 Barstow Street, Horicon, Wisconsin. Kim Nass provided an overview of this matter and of prior meetings that occurred between all parties involved. Kim Nass provided a copy of a Quit Claim Deed which includes proposed deed restriction language. All parties involved are satisfied with the Quit Claim Deed restriction language. Motion by Caine/Mulder to accept the Quit Claim Deed with deed restrictions as presented for the sale of WisDOT right-of-way for Marsh Automotive, Barstow Street, and waive the right to purchase. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

**Consider, discuss and take action on Glendale Yard – Beeline scale, fence and right-of-way:** Todd Wojciuk reported that on May 5, 2022, he and Ken Lucht met with Mike Lindbloom, the property owner, to discuss relocating the fence so WSOR could have access to the scale. Ken Lucht stated that the proposal is if WSOR pays for the relocation of the fence that WSOR could take possession of the scale. WSOR is going to research the cost of relocating the fence, have the scale inspected, what it would cost to repair the scale, and what the useful life of the scale is. Ken Lucht stated that he will report back to the Consortium with more information at its next meeting in July of 2022, and provide a Google map overview of the property.

**Report of WisDOT Railroads and Harbors:** Todd Wojciuk reported the following: WisDOT hired Dan Tice to take over for Kim Tollers, who was the Program and Policy Analyst for WisDOT. WisDOT is down one At Grade Engineer and are extremely understaffed. There are approximately 30 projects that he has to acquire real estate on throughout the State of Wisconsin.

**Report of WSOR:** Ken Lucht reported the following: Ken Lucht will give a Railroading 101 presentation and provide a PowerPoint packet and the 2014 UW Extension Economic Impact Report to the Consortium at the next meeting of the EWCRC.

WSOR is in the process of weed spraying all of its corridors and right-of-ways. WSOR is also in the process of brush cutting. WSOR brush cuts half of the rail system in the spring and the other half in the fall. WSOR is in the process of hiring a company to perform rail detection to detect any defects in the rail. WSOR installed approximately 10,000 maintenance ties last year on the EWCRC system. This year WSOR will install approximately 11,000 maintenance ties.

WSOR was awarded a grant to install approximately seven miles of continuous welded rail on the Prairie du Chien Subdivision. WSOR received bids that came in over \$1 million over bid cost. The cost is usually \$18 per lineal foot but bids came in at \$32 per lineal foot. WSOR decided that it will rebid the rehabilitation project in the fall of 2022.

WSOR received a \$6.7 million INFRA Grant to replace the Merrimac Bridge. Two phases are complete and WSOR is entering into the third phase, which is still in the planning stage.

WSOR received a \$7 million RAISE grant to replace five bridges on the Janesville Subdivision. The Janesville bridges have been de-rated and do not meet today's standards of 286,000 pounds of gross weight. WSOR has to light load the cars to meet the 263,000 pounds of gross weight restriction. WSOR is working with Union Pacific Railroad to upgrade the bridges and track to today's standards.

Ken Lucht stated that he is working on setting up a rail inspection tour and a tour of Charter Steel.

Ken Lucht thanked the Dodge County EMS and FEMA for hosting a tabletop exercise that incorporated WSOR to portray a train derailment involving hazardous materials in the City of Waupun. This was an exercise to demonstrate how all parties would respond and how communications occur between all parties involved.

WSOR was presented a funding program by Congressman Tom Tiffany and Senator Tammy Baldwin through the Appropriations Committee to help with the rehabilitation of the Fox Valley Lake Superior River Rail System (FOXY), which is called congressional directed spending. The application deadline was April 1, 2022. WSOR put together a scope of work and a funding request through appropriations to rehabilitate three swing bridges over the Fox River. WSOR's sponsor is Brown County and WSOR has over a dozen letters of support from businesses that WSOR service as well as the regional planning commissions, WisDOT, and numerous other stakeholders. This is a \$17 million request, which is only 80% of the total project cost. WSOR is excited about this application because WSOR received some follow up feedback from Senator Baldwin's Office. WSOR is hopeful that it is awarded this funding so it can rehabilitate the three swing bridges so that its customers can ship over those bridges at today's standards.

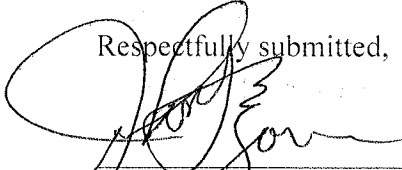
John Zorn and Karen Madigan expressed their concerns about possible closure of railroad crossings in Fond du Lac County. Ken Lucht reported that it is the responsibility of the Office of Commissioner of Railroads (OCR) for administering and investigating the adequacy of all warning devices. The OCR looks at the adequacy of warning devices at various crossings across the State. Ken Lucht further reported that there is a public process where stakeholders, including the county and cities can weigh in and attend a public hearing where they can present its case or position.

Ken Lucht will provide a map of the rail lines located in the EWCRS area. Ken Lucht will also provide a document showing how much traffic is on each section of line on a county-by-county basis.

**Date, time, and place of next meeting (July 13, 2022):** The next regular EWCRS meeting will be held on July 13, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Dodge County will host the meeting.

Motion by Zorn/Schleif to adjourn. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Jeff Carne, Secretary  
John Zorn

**Disclaimer:** These are draft minutes. These draft minutes may be approved, amended, or corrected at the next meeting of the East Wisconsin Counties Railroad Consortium.