



## Great River Rail Commission Meeting

Thursday, May 2, 2019  
9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Jury Assembly Room, Goodhue County Justice Center  
454 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Red Wing, MN 55066

### AGENDA

Item		Action
1.	Call to Order and Introductions	
2.	Approval of Agenda	Approval
3.	Page Minutes of March 7, 2019 Meeting *	Approval
4.	Page Checks and Claims *	Approval
5.	Page Renaming and Rebranding: Selection of a Tag Line *	Approval
6.	Page Updating Advocacy Materials *	Information
7.	Page Public Advocacy and Outreach: March – April 2019 Report *	Information
8.	MnDOT Passenger Rail Report: Dan Krom and Frank Loetterle, MnDOT	Information
	a. TCMC Intercity Passenger Rail Study	
	<u>(Following the presentation, there will be an opportunity for public comment)</u>	
	b. State Legislative Update	
9.	Page Commission Legislative Update: Kevin Roggenbuck	Information
10.	Commissioner Reports	Information
11.	Other	Information
	a. Next scheduled meeting: September 5, 2019	

\*Information Enclosed

Questions? Contact Kevin Roggenbuck of the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority at 651-266-2790 or by email at kevin.roggenbuck@co.ramsey.mn.us



**GREAT RIVER RAIL COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Goodhue County Justice Center, Red Wing, MN**  
**Thursday, March 7, 2019**  
**Meeting Summary**

**MEMBERS:**

Dakota County, Mike Slavik	Goodhue County, Brad Anderson
Ramsey County, Trista MatasCastillo	Wabasha County, Cheryl Key
Winona County, Marie Kovecs	City of Cottage Grove, Wayne Butt
City of Hastings, Mark Vaughan	City of Red Wing, Laurel Stinson
City of St. Charles, Wayne Getz	City of St. Paul Park, Mayor Sandi Dingle
City of Winona, Paul Schollmeier	

**OTHERS:**

Ramsey County, Kevin Roggenbuck	Ramsey County, Sandie Jacobson
Dakota County, Matt Parent	MnDOT, Dan Krom
Jeff Dehler Public Relations, Jeff Dehler	All Aboard MN, Edward Johnson
All Aboard MN, John Goodman	All Aboard MN, Jack Barbier
All Aboard MN, Brian Nelson	All Aboard MN & West Central WI Rail Coalition, Mark Quam
All Aboard MN, Leone Mauszycki	Egan Public Affairs, Dennis Egan

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Mark Vaughan called the meeting to order at 9:35 am. Introductions were made. Councilmember Laurel Stinson was attending for Mayor Sean Dowse and Commissioner Brad Anderson was attending for Commissioner Paul Drotos.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion to approve the agenda was requested. Commissioner Slavik moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Key. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

3. **MINUTES OF JANUARY 3, 2019 MEETING**

A motion to approve the minutes from Chair Vaughan was requested. Councilmember Getz moved for approval of the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Slavik. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. **CHECKS AND CLAIMS**

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Slavik asked if the cost of rebranding was tracked separately or part of the overall work program. Mr. Roggenbuck said he would find out and report back to the Commission. Commissioner Key moved for approval of the checks and claims, seconded by Commissioner Slavik. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.



5. **RENAMING AND REBRANDING: RESOLUTION AFFIRMING SELECTION OF NAME AND LOGO**

Mr. Roggenbuck said he consulted with the Ramsey County Attorney's office to find out if the Commission could change its name without having each member organization re-adopt the Joint Powers Agreement. The County Attorney's Office recommended passing a resolution (attached) now to make the name change more official and transparent, but also said we do need to re-adopt the Joint Powers Agreement to legally change our name and do business as the Great River Rail Commission.

Councilmember Butt recommended we work with Cottage Grove to see if Washington County will rejoin the Commission. Chair Vaughan recommended we wait until this fall to re-adopt the Joint Powers Agreement to allow us time to work on getting a Washington County Commissioner engaged with this Commission.

Councilmember Anderson asked if there are other areas of the Joint Powers Agreement that may need to be changed in addition to the name. Mr. Roggenbuck responded that he doesn't believe there is. Chair Vaughan asked if there will be any expense to re-adopt. Mr. Roggenbuck stated there won't be additional expense other than printing new materials with our new name.

A motion to approve was requested. Councilmember Schollmeier moved for approval, seconded by Mayor Dingle. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. **RENAMING AND REBRANDING: SELECTION OF TAGLINE, MISSION STATEMENT AND VISION**

Mr. Jeff Dehler recapped the discussion from the January 2019 meeting regarding adding a tagline to the new name. He reminded everyone of the options that were offered by the Commission at their workshop in late November and the Commission meeting in January.

The Commission discussed the importance of a tagline and generally agreed that it helps explain who we are and what we do. Members discussed whether a tagline should appeal to people of color and perhaps include the word "diversity" or whether it should mention benefits to freight movement. Members offered taglines in addition to the ones provided in the meeting packet and discussed the importance of being catchy but meaningful.

Chair Vaughan asked Mr. Dehler if it would help if we go back to our constituents and discuss new ideas. Mr. Dehler responded that the materials being used are from everything (the data) they collected from the Committee and the rebranding workshop and that there is no rush to select a tagline. Mr. Dehler stated the more stories we hear to help us tell the story, the more effectively it helps us with this.

Chair Vaughan recapped that we agree tag lines work and we will put this on the May agenda. If you have additional ideas or information, please send it to Mr. Roggenbuck or Ms. Jacobson.

Mr. Dehler stated that page 19 of the meeting packet includes a new mission statement and vision reflecting the Commission's shift away from high speed passenger rail toward more frequent and faster passenger rail. Mr. Dehler said the mission and vision statements are more outward facing, so the public knows what our purpose is. Chair Vaughan and the Commission expressed approval of the mission and vision statements.



7. **RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR FUNDING THE TCMC SECOND TRAIN PHASE 2**

Mr. Roggenbuck recapped the feasibility study completed by Amtrak in 2015 and the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train Phase 1 Study. Additional funds are needed to complete Phase 2; the environmental analysis, prepare final design of the needed improvements and a service development plan. Once this work is done, the project can be ready to request federal funds for construction and acquisition of rolling stock.

The Commission's lobbyist, Dennis Egan, has secured authors for two bills to complete Phase 2. Funding for Phase 2 is also included in a larger passenger rail bill in both the House and Senate, and in the Governor's capital bonding request. Resolutions of support are being collected to be part of a package provided to legislators demonstrating widespread support for the Second Train. This is a resolution for us to pass so we can share this with legislators.

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner MatasCastillo moved for approval of the Resolution of Support, seconded by Councilmember Anderson. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

8. **PUBLIC ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

Mr. Dehler reported that a campaign was begun on social media stating that change is coming. He stated the Commission members will receive materials in the next couple of weeks that they can use with their councils and boards to provide more information. Included will be a copy of the 2018 annual report along with the fact sheet that will be updated.

Chair Vaughan said a document is going to help, but we get so much information so keeping it brief and not giving too much information is important. This will help all Commission members to educate our colleagues. Chair Vaughan stated we can do a better job to let our constituents know what we're doing.

9. **MnDOT PASSENGER RAIL REPORT**

Mr. Krom reported that currently, MnDOT has found authors for six passenger rail bills. The Governor's budget includes funding for MnDOT passenger rail planning activities at the same amount as 2009. Mr. Krom said his office has been able to save some budget funds that can be used to complete Phase 2 and have some funds for a state match toward a federal funding application. We can't begin negotiating with the railroads until we have the funds and we need a financial partner (Wisconsin).

Northern Light Express is ready to go; all they need is money. We now have partners in Wisconsin and Amtrak is willing to put in funding for an application if the states contribute.

Councilmember Schollmeier asked if we're no longer concerned about the river crossing at La Crosse. Mr. Krom responded the railroad has no interest in upgrading that portion of the route. MnDOT has asked Amtrak to not sell the old Midway Station in Saint Paul so it can be used to clean and refuel the TCMC Second Train. Chair Vaughan asked about Illinois' participation. Mr. Krom replied that Illinois does not have a financial stake in the track and signal improvements between Milwaukee to Chicago but could have a stake in the cost to provide the service to Chicago. Chair Vaughan then asked if there are any groups like the Great River Rail Commission between La Crosse and Chicago. Mr. Krom stated that there are advocacy groups in Wisconsin, but none with elected officials like the Commission. Amtrak representatives are meeting with elected officials all along the corridor and we want them to talk with legislators.



Chair Vaughan opened the meeting for public comment.

Mr. Jack Barbier asked if they put out a bid on connecting Union Depot with Target Field. Mr. Krom responded that is a huge expense and they have not.

Mr. John Goodman (All Aboard MN) asked Mr. Krom to explain the advantages of using state general fund money. Mr. Krom said we can't use state bond funds for equipment that will leave the state. A state general fund appropriation wouldn't have those restrictions.

#### 10. **COMMISSION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Roggenbuck reported that Commissioner MatasCastillo and Mr. Roggenbuck both testified at a House Capital Investment Division hearing about the Second Train and our message was well received. Mr. Roggenbuck briefly recapped the passenger rail rally at the capitol on March 6. Chair Vaughan asked Mr. Egan to provide a quick update on what he's going to do for this Commission. Chair Vaughan also told Mr. Egan to reach out to these Commission members if he needs us to testify.

Mr. Egan reported that in the last couple weeks we have been authoring bills with senators (four Republicans and one Democrat on the bonding committee). In addition to city and county resolutions we are asking the downtown Chambers of Commerce to pass resolutions. We tell legislators that many businesses support the Second Train. Four bills for transportation moving along simultaneously. We are trying to meet the March 15<sup>th</sup> first deadline. We are trying to keep this in front of legislators as they get bombarded with bills. Letters sent to newspapers would be helpful. If you're willing to do an op-ed we can help you with that. This would be another piece of this as we move into April.

Chair Vaughan asked Brian Nelson, President of All Aboard MN, to report on the passenger rail rally at the capitol. Mr. Nelson said it went very well; it was attended by about 75 people and several legislators attended and spoke to the group. Mr. Roggenbuck spoke about the Second Train. We stressed the topics of economic competitiveness and mobility for college students. The messages did resonate with the group. We have a paper that is published on our website – Why Trains Benefit – feel free to use this report.

#### 11. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner MatasCastillo met with our delegation in Washington DC. Many of them said the only bill they expect to pass during this session is the transportation bill. Rep. McCollum asked for stories about the second train. Our federal delegation is excited about the Second Train. They also heard from Wisconsin members as well.

Councilmember Schollmeier attended All Aboard MN's event yesterday – good work. He echoes what Mr. Egan said about the hesitancy by the Senate side. Legislators are interested to hear about the economic impact and advantages to businesses with having the Second Train.

Councilmember Butt stated Cottage Grove won't have a passenger station but we're dependent on freight and cargo coming through. Think of Cottage Grove for maintenance as well, as we do have spurs.

Commissioner Marie Kovecsi stated there is support for this in the Winona community.



**12. OTHER**

- a. Next scheduled meeting: May 2, 2019  
Chair Vaughan asked if this meeting location still works for everybody. Everybody agreed this is a good meeting location.
- b. Updating advocacy materials for Train Day 2019  
Mr. Roggenbuck stated Train Day will be June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> this year. We have a bookmark, brochures, fact sheet and a banner – which needs to be updated. Now that we've changed our name we need to get these materials ready for Train Day.
- c. Leone Mauszycki reported that she had a cordial meeting with Sen. Miller. He wants more information on the funding and where it would come from. She referenced the North Star brochure and said we need to have something like this for the Second Train. She also showed a small card that has information about NLX and wants something like this for the second train.

Mr. Egan stated we're working with MnDOT on specific impacts that we're putting together for Sen. Miller about where this \$4 million will go, how much money we have already committed to this process; we want to include this as they start looking at matching dollars.

Mr. Jack Barbier talked about the economic impact. The State of Michigan did an economic impact on three separate lines. Over \$50 million of economic impact to those areas that wouldn't be there if they didn't have the trains.

Mr. Edward Johnson stated maybe a lot of these legislators have never been on a train. Maybe we take them on a short trip from the Twin Cities to Big Lake.

Chair Vaughan entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Key moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner MatasCastillo. The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 am.





**TO:** Great River Rail Commission Members  
**FROM:** Staff  
**DATE:** April 25, 2019  
**RE:** Checks and Claims  
**ACTION:** Approval

Attached is invoice #190459 from Jeff Dehler Public Relations for services related to advocacy and outreach for the Great River Rail Commission. The invoice covers the time from February 21 through April 20, 2019. The invoice includes some out of pocket expenses. Staff reviewed the invoice and found them to be accurate.

Also attached are two invoices from Dennis Egan for legislative lobbying and advocacy activities on behalf of the Great River Rail Commission. The invoices cover the months of February through April 2019. Staff is in contact with Mr. Egan up to five times per week via email, telephone or in person and recommends that the Commission approve payment.

Jeff Dehler Invoice #190459	<b>\$ 11,216.35</b>
Dennis Egan Invoice #100	<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>
Dennis Egan Invoice #200	<b>\$ 2,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 17,216.35</b>

The Commission entered a two-year contract (RRA000083) with Jeff Dehler Public Relations beginning on September 12, 2018. The total amount of the original contract is \$75,000 and was later amended to \$81,000 to include an additional work scope item, Identity and Branding. Including the amount in invoice #190459 above, the remaining contract balance is \$54,736.35.





Educate. Communicate. Motivate.

April 23, 2019

Kevin Roggenbuck  
 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority  
 Union Depot, Suite 200  
 214 4th Street East St.  
 Paul, MN 55101

Dear Kevin:

Enclosed is an invoice from DehlerPR for work performed on behalf of the Minnesota High-Speed Rail Commission from February 21 through April 20, 2019. Invoice 190459 is for a total of \$11,216.35 and includes a number of out of pocket expenses and subcontracted work including:

- \$275 and \$467.50 to Jill Brown for Communications Services
- \$199 for Constant Contact email annual subscription
- \$165 to Teresa Lund for flyer handout design and edits
- \$4,000 to MOD for design services, logo designs, revisions and file set up – rename/rebrand
- \$15.81 and \$9.04 to Facebook for a boosted post ad
- \$650 to MP+G for a redesigned Constant Contact template

**Media Relations – Dehler- 2.5; Noyed-6.25**

- Update media list
- Review news and Media checks
- Update news stories on website
- Gather photos for homepage feature from Amtrak
- Template review and guest column
- Op-ed follow up

**Corridor Advocacy – Dehler– 10; Noyed – 4.75**

- Train days planning and materials
- Legislative meeting
- Op-ed review
- Commission legislative communications
- Compile constituent list and send action emails
- Review comments for supporter spotlight quotes
- Update org contact info and draft thank you letter for resolutions



Public Information - Dehler 5.25 –Noyed – 22

Dehler

- Materials updates
- Email alert
- Website updates
- Letter to editor communication

Noyed

- Emails drafting and sending
- Draft, edit and schedule FB posts
- Launch and monitor Facebook ad campaigns
- Edit talking points
- Finalize annual report
- Create summer events listing
- Edits to website, communications with webmaster
- Draft homepage feature calendar

Strategic Counsel – Dehler – 11.5; Noyed – 5.5

- Planning: emails, phone calls/meetings between consultants, webmaster, MnDOT representatives and K. Roggenbuck
- Project management: Report, File and database management
- Reporting and commission communications
- Commission Communications
- Budget research
- Attend commission meeting
- Update workplans
- Audience growth research

Please note, Jeff Dehler Public Relations legal address is in Minnesota. Please remit payment to:

Jeff Dehler Public Relations  
10569 Camille Ct  
Indianapolis, IN 46236

Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions about this invoice. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Jeff Dehler, APR

DehlerPR | Minneapolis | Indianapolis | Nashville | Jeff@DehlerPR.com | 763-443-1093  
DehlerPR.com



Jeff Dehler Public Relations LLC  
 10569 Camille Ct  
 Indianapolis, IN 46236-8293  
 US  
 763-443-1093  
 jeff@dehlerpr.com

## Invoice



BILL TO
Great River Rail Kevin Roggenbuck Ramsey Co. Regional Rail Union Depot, Suite 200 214 4th Street East St. Paul, MN 55101

SHIP TO
Great River Rail Kevin Roggenbuck Ramsey Co. Regional Rail Union Depot, Suite 200 214 4th Street East St. Paul, MN 55101

INVOICE #	DATE	TOTAL DUE	DUE DATE	TERMS	ENCLOSED
190459	04/20/2019	\$11,216.35	05/20/2019	Net 30	

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
02/21/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - train day respondents docs, activity report and stats	1:45	50.00	87.50
02/21/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Media - media check and recent stories posts	0:15	50.00	12.50
02/22/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Corridor Advocacy - Legislative meeting	0:45	120.00	90.00
02/24/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Strategic Counsel - Commission packet	2:15	120.00	270.00
02/25/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - prepare and send rebrand email, draft and edit, setup and send constant contact email, draft march and April FB posts, launch boosted post campaign	3:00	50.00	150.00
02/25/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - review tagline notes, write possible tagline ,update budget tracker	0:45	50.00	37.50
02/25/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Media - research and update media list, review NLX news, finalize and upload new media list	2:30	50.00	125.00
02/25/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Invoice from Jill Brown for Communications Services	1	275.00	275.00
02/25/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Constant Contact Bill for email service	1	199.00	199.00
02/26/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - materials update, email alert	4:15	120.00	510.00
02/26/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Corridor Advocacy - compile constituent lists and send action emails, legislative district research	0:45	50.00	37.50
02/27/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - schedule March and April posts, reformat docs on new	3:30	50.00	175.00



DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
02/28/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	letterhead, draft and format invite blast, finalize and send, create meeting invite eblast reminder Report	2:00	120.00	240.00
03/02/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Invoice for Feb Communications Work done by Jill Brown	1	467.50	467.50
03/03/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Strategic Counsel - annual report/commission packet	2:45	120.00	330.00
03/06/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - Update event and eblast with packet link, schedule Eblast, Annual report print and online version, annual report edits, instructions to webmaster, legislative FB posts, hearing FB posts, get involved FB posts	3:30	50.00	175.00
03/07/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Strategic Counsel - Commission Meeting	4:30	120.00	540.00
03/09/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - Draft and schedule day on the hill posts, check, organize, respond to GRR email, comment checks and response	1:00	50.00	50.00
03/09/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Media - media check/posts, media post, news story to webmaster	0:45	50.00	37.50
03/12/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Corridor Advocacy - Review comments for supporter spotlight quotes, create new doc	0:30	50.00	25.00
03/13/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Corridor Advocacy - op red review, edits	1:00	120.00	120.00
03/14/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - Update work plan, budget analysis	0:45	50.00	37.50
03/14/2019	NMU Subcontracted	TCMC 4 page flyer handout design and edits	1	165.00	165.00
03/16/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - edit talking points, annual report, get involved, schedule annual report	1:15	50.00	62.50
03/18/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Corridor Advocacy - Commission legislative communication	2:15	120.00	270.00
03/18/2019	NMU Subcontracted	MOD invoice for design services, meetings, designs, revisions and file set up	1	4,000.00	4,000.00
03/19/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Boosted post invoice	1	15.81	15.81
03/20/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - draft and schedule east metro rail yard posts	0:30	50.00	25.00
03/20/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - website updates, letter to editor communciation	1:00	120.00	120.00
03/21/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Corridor Advocacy - edit op-ed, legislative planning	2:00	120.00	240.00
03/22/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Media- review article, brainstorm and draft FB posts	0:30	50.00	25.00
03/26/2019	NMU Subcontracted	MP+G Constant Contact Template	1	650.00	650.00

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
03/27/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Design invoice Corridor Advocacy - update org contact info and draft letter	1:00	50.00	50.00
04/01/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - research and draft may and June event posts, draft may and June FB posts	1:45	50.00	87.50
04/01/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Facebook Boosted post	1	9.04	9.04
04/02/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - research and create GRR 2019 summer events listing	1:30	50.00	75.00
04/02/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Media - template review and guest column to authors	1:15	120.00	150.00
04/04/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - media check/next steps, planning, outlines	1:15	50.00	62.50
04/06/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - Schedule May and June posts, research and draft July and August event posts, set up ad campaign with FB credit, communications planning, outline next two months	2:45	50.00	137.50
04/09/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Corridor Advocacy - Train days planning, brochure, buttons, banners, postcard	4:00	120.00	480.00
04/15/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - facebook video removal, media stories on FB and to webmaster, draft homepage feature editorial calendar, spotlight feature content, image management, draft eblast content, comment check and replies, finalize and format summer event list	3:45	50.00	187.50
04/15/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Media - gather Amtrak photos for homepage feature, guest column monitor and FB posts, instruction to webmaster, media check	1:15	50.00	62.50
04/15/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - check and organize GRR and HSR email accounts, review proposal for audience growth tactics, google analytics and facebook ad research, emails to webmaster	1:00	50.00	50.00
04/16/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Media - op-ed follow up end Winona Mayor op-ed	1:15	120.00	150.00
04/18/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$100	Public Info - website, thank you letter review	1:00	100.00	100.00
04/19/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public info - finalize homepage calendar, send to webmaster	0:30	50.00	25.00
04/19/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Corridor Advocacy - complete thank you letters for resolutions	0:30	50.00	25.00

BALANCE DUE

**\$11,216.35**

Receipt for Kyle Noyed  
Account ID: 40615868



Payment Date  
Feb 28, 2019, 4:29 AM

Payment Method  
Visa\*1721  
Reference Number: VJMU4K8SL2

Transaction ID  
2011414672308853-4182087

Product Type  
Facebook

Paid

**\$15.81 USD**

Remaining ad costs at the end of the month.

Campaigns

Post: "Welcome to our new Facebook page! The Minnesota..."		<b>\$14.85</b>
From Feb 19, 2019, 9:30 AM to Feb 27, 2019, 12:00 AM		
-----		
Post: "Welcome to our new Facebook page! The Minnesota..."	1,709 Impressions	<b>\$14.85</b>
-----		
Post: "The Minnesota High-Speed Rail Commission is..."		<b>\$0.96</b>
From Feb 19, 2019, 9:30 AM to Feb 27, 2019, 12:00 AM		
-----		
Post: "The Minnesota High-Speed Rail Commission is..."	145 Impressions	<b>\$0.96</b>

Facebook, Inc.  
1801 Willow Road  
Menlo Park, CA 94025-1452  
United States



Receipt for Kyle Noyed  
Account ID: 40815888



Payment Date  
Mar 31, 2019, 11:27 AM

Payment Method  
VISA\*1721  
Reference Number: 5H0LHK88L2

Transaction ID  
2055631174523549-4275355

Product Type  
Facebook

Paid

**\$9.04 USD**

Remaining ad costs at the end of the month.

Campaigns

Post: "The Minnesota High-Speed Rail Commission is..."	<b>\$9.04</b>
From Feb 27, 2019, 12:00 AM to Mar 7, 2019, 9:00 PM	
Post: "The Minnesota High-Speed Rail Commission is..."	1,777 Impressions
	<b>\$9.04</b>

Facebook, Inc.  
1601 Willow Road  
Menlo Park, CA 94025-1482  
United States





MP&G Marketing Solutions, LLC.

**INVOICE — Great River Rail Constant Contact Account**

March 26, 2019

This INVOICE includes account revisions and new template creation.

<u>Project</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Total</u>
Constant Contact	<b>New Template Design</b> New header created, eblast and newsletter formats, layout for mobile optimization, account updates, signup pages updated, including updated links and social media icon	<b>\$650</b>
<b>INVOICE</b>		<b>\$650</b>

Payment due upon receipt Please provide ST3 tax-exempt# for billing  
\*Tax Exempt ST# REQUIRED

NOTE: A 2 percent late fee will be charged per month for unpaid invoices over 30 days.

Please make checks payable to Mary Pat McNeil

We appreciate your business!

Mary Pat

***"Bringing Your Brand to Life!"***

5054 Bartlett Boulevard, Mound, Minnesota 55364-1745 | 612.483.2302

mpgmarketingsolutions@gmail.com | facebook.com/MPGMarketingSolutions





**Mod & Company, LLC**  
 1915 Hwy 36 West  
 Suite #1  
 Roseville, MN 55113  
 accounting@modandco.com

# Invoice

Date	Invoice #
3/18/2019	3232

**Bill To**

Jeff Dehler  
 Dehler PR  
 Minneapolis

P.O. No.	Terms	Due Date	Project		
Great River Project	Due on receipt	3/18/2019			
Description			Qty	Rate	Amount
Subcontract design services for Dehler PR. Meetings, designs, revisions, files set up and to client. Sales Tax				4,000.00	4,000.00
				6.875%	0.00
			<b>Total</b>		<b>\$4,000.00</b>
			<b>Payments/Credits</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>
			<b>Balance Due</b>		<b>\$4,000.00</b>



**Teresa Lund**  
9634 Black Bear Circle  
Brainerd, Minnesota 56401  
(218) 232-3774

**Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service Project**

Client: Jeff Dehler  
Projects: 4-Page Flyer Handout  
Hourly Design Rate: \$55 per hour

**Flyer Handout**

Design Hours: 3

Time included redesign of flyer, including adding pages as well as multiple rounds of edits.

Design Hours: 3 hours x \$55.00

**Total Cost for Projects: \$165.00**



4/23/2019

Gmail - Constant Contact Payment Receipt for Jeff Dehler



Jeff Dehler &lt;jeffdehlerpr@gmail.com&gt;

---

**Constant Contact Payment Receipt for Jeff Dehler**


---

Constant Contact Billing <notification@constantcontact.com>  
 Reply-To: notification@constantcontact.com  
 To: jeffdehlerpr@gmail.com

Mon, Feb 25, 2019 at 3:58 PM

Thank you for your recent payment. Your payment receipt is found below.



**Payment Receipt**  
 for February 25, 2019

Minnesota High-Speed Rail Commission  
 Attn.: Jeff Dehler  
 Union Depot, Suite 200  
 St. Paul, MN 55101  
 US  
 763-443-1093

Today's Date: February 25, 2019  
 Payment Date: February 25, 2019  
 Payment Method: Visa (last 4 digits: 7379)  
 User Name: mnhsrc

Thank you for your payment!

Description	Amount Paid
Payment - Credit Card - 7379	\$199.00

Amounts shown may reflect sales tax which is applicable in certain areas.

Note you can continue to view payment receipts online. Log into your Constant Contact account, click the [My Account](#) link in the upper right hand corner of the Home page, and choose the [View Payment Receipts](#) option.

You may also use the [Opt In/Out of Payment Receipt E-Mails](#) link on the [My Account](#) page to opt out of receiving payment receipt emails in the future.

We appreciate your business.  
 Best Regards,  
 Constant Contact Billing  
 1601 Trapelo Road, Suite 329 - Waltham, MA 02451

Questions? Please give us a call!  
 US / Canada Toll Free: (855) 229-5506  
 UK Toll Free: 0808-234-0942  
 Outside US / Canada: 0808-234-0945

Need to cancel your account? Just give us a call!  
 US / Canada Toll Free: 855-229-5506  
 UK Toll Free: 0808-234-0945  
 Outside US / Canada: +1 781-472-8120

Please do not reply to this email, as the reply address does not go to a monitored mailbox. If you have additional questions, please visit our [Help Center](http://www.constantcontact.com/help) at <http://www.constantcontact.com/help>.

**A \$30 credit for you—and a friend**

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ik=738f87bce6&view-pt&search=all&permmsgid=msg-f%3A1626475905419408446&siml=msg-f%3A16264759054...> 1/2





# Invoice

Date	Invoice #
2/22/2019	GRR 11

<b>Bill To</b>
MHSR, attn: Jeff Dehler

Serviced	Description	Qty	U/M	Rate	Amount
12/17/2018	Meeting with Jeff re logos and next steps.	1	hr	110.00	110.00
12/19/2018	Review logo updates.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50
12/20/2018	Emails, Suggestions on testimonial.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50
1/8/2019	Review logo edits.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50
1/16/2019	Locate files for Jeff.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50
1/25/2019	Review All Aboard poster and respond. Review legislative materials. Emails with Jeff.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50
1/30/2019	Review roll out for new logo and comment.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50

<b>Phone #</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Total</b>	\$275.00
612-889-2611	jillcbrown@msn.com		



# Invoice

Date	Invoice #
3/2/2019	GRR.12

<b>Bill To</b>
GRR, attn: Jeff Dehler

Serviced	Description	Qty	U/M	Rate	Amount
2/5/2019	Edit two news releases. Emails.	0.75	hr	110.00	82.50
2/7/2019	Edit burton text.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50
2/15/2019	Phone conference with client and staff. Follow up.	1	hr	110.00	110.00
2/17/2019	Recap conference call edits.	0.5	hr	110.00	55.00
2/21/2019	Outline op ed. Emails.	1	hr	110.00	110.00
2/22/2019	Account admin for January.	0.5	hr	110.00	55.00
2/25/2019	Review, comment on taglines.	0.25	hr	110.00	27.50

<b>Phone #</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Total</b>	\$467.50
612-889-2611	jillcbrown@msn.com		



**INVOICE**

Egan Public Affairs  
**Dennis P. Egan**  
1651 Old Highway 19  
Red Wing Minnesota 55066

February - March: Invoice 100

Kevin Roggenbeck  
Ramsey Co/Great River Rail Staff  
214 4<sup>th</sup> Street East  
Union Depot  
St Paul, MN 55101

**Monthly Retainer February - March 2019**

\$4000.00

Lobbying Effort  
Statewide Outreach  
Statewide legislative, City and County elected Officials Outreach

Project Name: Great River Rail Commission Second Train

**TOTAL \$4000.00**



**INVOICE**

Egan Public Affairs  
**Dennis P. Egan**  
1651 Old Highway 19  
Red Wing Minnesota 55066

April: Invoice 200

Kevin Roggenbeck  
Ramsey Co/Great River Rail Staff  
214 4<sup>th</sup> Street East  
Union Depot  
St Paul, MN 55101

**Monthly Retainer April 2019** **\$2000.00**

Lobbying Effort  
Statewide Outreach  
Statewide legislative, City and County elected Officials Outreach

Project Name: Great River Rail Commission Second Train

**TOTAL \$2000.00**





**TO:** Great River Rail Commission Members  
**FROM:** Staff  
**DATE:** April 25, 2019  
**RE:** Renaming and Rebranding: Selection of a Tagline  
**ACTION:** Approval

The rebranding process is nearly complete. At the last meeting the Commission's mission and vision statements were approved. The Commission discussed a possible tagline and including diversity or the additional benefits to freight movement, but with no resolution.

Perhaps part of the difficulty in choosing a tagline is not knowing exactly how we will use it. Taglines are often used in television commercials or radio ads, either spoken or appearing at the end of the commercial, or on packaging. Our use of a tagline would be limited to certain printed materials like a brochure or fact sheet.

Slogans are similar to taglines. They are often longer than taglines but used in a similar way. A slogan is a catchphrase to identify a product or company.

Our tagline could also be used with the logo we developed for the TCMC Second Train. Perhaps a tagline is needed for the TCMC logo and not for the Great River Rail Commission, or both.

Staff compiled additional tagline ideas from among Ramsey County staff members. The original tagline options compiled by DehlerPR from the process with the Commission and the Rebranding committee are below. We believe the Commission has at least these three options to choose from:

1. Choose to forgo any tagline at this time.
2. Choose one of the options below.
3. Form an ad hoc committee to have a conference call discussion and make a recommendation to the full Commission.

### **Tagline options**

During the discussion of changing our name to Great River Rail, Commission members expressed an interest in having a tag line; a short descriptive text displayed along with our



logo that further describes us. Below are several options for discussion, some were brought up at the November workshop during the development of our new name.

Staff favorites or taglines discussed during renaming:

- Connecting people, products, places
- Economic growth through rail
- More trains. More trips. More opportunity.

Additional options:

- Business, tourism, accessibility
- Growing rail in Minnesota
- Rail moves Minnesota
- Connecting people, products, communities
- Moving Minnesota through rail
- Expanding transportation opportunities for Minnesota
- Connecting Minnesota with opportunity
- Movement beyond the River Route
- Frequent Train Travel for a connected community

Options from Ramsey County staff:

- Transportation Energizing Development!
- New places, new faces. Great connections!
- We move you!
- Moving us Forward!
- Relax and enjoy the ride!
- Great people, places and potential!
- Great service, fantastic connections!
- We deliver you!
- Great River Rail - Great Connections is our tale! Great River Rail - Great Connections without fail!
- Come for the ride, enjoy the view, we take great pride in your adventure.





**TO:** Great River Rail Commission Members  
**FROM:** Staff  
**DATE:** April 25, 2019  
**RE:** Updating Advocacy Materials  
**ACTION:** Information

The Great River Rail Commission changed its name and advocacy mission during the 2019 legislative session. The Commission prepared a new TCMC Second Train fact sheet and rebranded our website and Facebook page with our new logo. The Commission solicited for resolutions of support under our new name and testified before a House bonding committee as the Great River Rail Commission.

The 2019 Train Days event is scheduled for the weekend of June 1-2. While the Commission has rebranded its most important advocacy materials, other items need to be updated.

At Train Days, we typically provide visitors with little souvenirs with our name and logo that inform them about the Commission and the TCMC Second Train. This spring, we will need to have new buttons made and develop a new handout; something small, attractive and informative like a two-fold brochure or pocket card.

Over the last two Train Days, we have asked visitors to sign a "postcard" expressing their support for the TCMC Second Train. We have provided these postcards to state legislators as proof that people support more frequent and faster passenger rail service in the River Route. We also ask them to provide an email address, increasing our pool of contacts to advocate for the Second Train on our behalf.

The Commission had four stand-up banners made in 2010 when it was advocating for high speed service to Chicago. The information on these banners are now completely obsolete; however, the banners themselves are an excellent way to display key information about the Commission and the Second Train. Staff is looking into having two banners reprinted with current information about the Commission and the Second Train.

The Commission has always budgeted for the preparation of advocacy materials outside of the Communications consultant contract. Staff believes there is enough funding in the 2019 work plan and budget to replace and update these materials, but staff is doing so in the most cost-effective way possible.





TCMC Second Train button concepts



TCMC Second Train supporter postcard concept

# Dear Governor Walz and Minnesota Legislators, please support the **Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago** (TCMC) Second Train.

**Dear Governor Walz and Minnesota Legislators**

As a resident of Minnesota, I recognize that expanding passenger rail service takes the combined effort of local elected officials, business and community leaders, and residents.

**Today, I'm asking you for your support of the TCMC Second Train.**

Governor Walz, thank you for including the second train in your budget. Your leadership will be extremely important as the project takes its next steps.

Minnesota Legislators, this opportunity for job growth and economic expansion also depends on you. A coalition of community leaders, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, and many residents and business people support increasing passenger rail in the corridor. Please join us.

Sincerely,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

By including my email address, I understand I will receive periodic updates on the TCMC Second Train from the Great River Rail Commission. I can unsubscribe anytime.

**Tell us how you feel about the Second Train and expanded passenger rail.**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

TCMC Second Train stand-up banner concepts



GreatRiverRail.org

## GREAT DESTINATIONS TWIN CITIES-MILWAUKEE-CHICAGO






GreatRiverRail.org

## GREAT BENEFITS TWIN CITIES-MILWAUKEE-CHICAGO

### GREAT BENEFITS:

- Planned daily round-trip passenger train
- Serves 13 stations (3 in Minnesota)
- Creates jobs and generates economic growth
- Aafe, reliable, relaxing, productive, affordable alternative to driving or flying
- Access to tourism, colleges, events, and more!



I think a second train from the Twin Cities to Chicago would be an incredibly valuable asset that I know my friends and I would utilize.  
**Calli – Red Wing, MN / Milwaukee, WI**



As the baby boomers age, and millennials spread their wings, traveling by train for a fun getaway trip to Winona would be possible to attend our many art events and festivals.  
**Leone – Winona, MN**



Folks have told me personally they would love to have a second option in getting to and from Chicago.  
**Steve – Goodview, MN**



I travel back and forth to Chicago on the Empire Builder every two months to visit my children and grandson. The drive is too difficult for me so I am grateful to be able to take the train.  
**Robbie – Harmony, MN**



UNION DEPOT, SUITE 200, 214 4TH STREET EAST, ST. PAUL, MN 55101 • 651-266-2760 • WWW.GREATRIVERRAIL.ORG



**TO:** Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission Members  
**FROM:** Jeff Dehler,  
**DATE:** April 25, 2019  
**RE:** Public Advocacy and Outreach: March – April 2019 Report  
**ACTION:** Information

### Major Activities

Since our last report of February 2019 our major activities have included finalizing the rebranding process, focusing on email communications and social media, drafting and sending an op-ed, promoting corridor advocacy events, website coordination, and legislative planning.

### Work Summary

- Focus is on communication during the legislative session
- Drafted 5 op-eds for Commission members to share with local newspapers – 3 printed so far
- Sent eblasts to subscribers and posted Facebook messages promoting Day on the Hill event and requesting phone calls to legislators
- Finalized and sent 2018 annual report newsletter
- Other: Website homepage feature, planning for Train Days, Summer events listing

### Analytics Report

#### Highlights

- Website analytics for the new Great River Rail website were monitored under the old name but are accurate. They will be monitored under the new web URL in the next report.
- Website visits are up slightly with a large number of new visits. After the homepage, the most visited pages are Second Train At a Glance; New Name, New Train (news article about the name change); and Get Involved.
- We sent two eblasts and one annual report enews to subscribers as well as drafted content for another two eblasts.
- Facebook likes increased slightly to 2,084



Website:

The Google analytics report for [www.greatriversrail.org](http://www.greatriversrail.org) for the current time period is attached. Below are basic web statistic comparisons. Website views are up slightly from the last period and up from the same period a year ago with new pages growing in audience size.

Time Period	Sessions	Sessions/Day	Pages/Session	Ave Session Duration	% New Sessions
Feb 21- Apr 20, 2018	676	11	1.93	1:17	97%
Apr 21-June 20, 2018	763	12	1.79	1:21	97%
Jun 21-Aug 20, 2018	1028	16	1.75	1:22	94.1%
Aug 21-Oct 20, 2018	647	11	2.65	2:34	97%
Oct 21-Dec 20, 2018	746	12	1.59	1:08	97%
Dec 21, 2018-Feb 20, 2019	770	15	1.80	1:13	90.5%
Feb 21-Apr 20, 2019	925	15	1.97	1:45	93.7%

E-newsletter:

Emails were sent to subscribers via Constant Contact including March meeting invite and reminder emails. The email template was completely redone to reflect the new branding, as well as a new, contemporary look, and to be responsive to different size screens (it now looks great on any device).

Emails continue to outperform industry averages for both Government and Transportation-related businesses and organizations.

The industry average open rate for Government Agencies or Services is 22.93% with a 9.55% click rate.

The industry average open rate for Transportation is 17.51% with a 15.19% click rate.

The statistics for the MNHSR emails sent this period are:

- 3/1/19 – March Meeting Invite – Open Rate 30% – Click Rate 7%
- 3/4/19 – March Meeting Reminder and Day on Hill Reminder – Open Rate 32% - Click Rate 9%
- 3/18/19 – 2018 Annual Report Enewsletter – Open Rate 32% - Click Rate 10%

Facebook:

Facebook posts placed an emphasis the website content and recent news. Posts continue to attempt to drive traffic via shares and clicks. Facebook offered a \$30 credit to promote the new URL and website, so we took advantage of the offer and resulted in 3,822 impressions and 153 link clicks.

Facebook still shows the posts to less users but attempts at getting shares and activity have driven the number of higher viewed posts back up. Crafting shareable posts will continue to be a focus moving forward. One post was boosted announcing the new name and is still running at the time of this report.



The Facebook Insights report for the current time period included these basic statistical comparisons:

Time Period	Likes	Posts Reaching >300
Feb 21 – April 20, 2018	2,058	11
April 21 – June 20, 2018	2,058	7
June 21 – August 20, 2018	2,063	12
August 21 – Oct 20, 2018	2,065	11
October 21 – Dec 20, 2018	2,061	18
Dec 21, 2018 – Feb 20, 2019	2,053	22
Feb 21 – April 20, 2019	2,084	26

The top 5 performing posts from the period (not including the new name promotion) were:

Posted	Post Message	Unique Users	Comments	Likes
4/16/19 8:09 AM	WisDOT Passenger Rail Manager Arun Rao said of the TCMC Second Train: "This is transportation improvement that is low cost, high benefit."	728	2	40 1 love 1 wow
2/23/19	Check in with the folks looking to connect the Twin Cities and Duluth with fast trains.	726	4	27 on post 5 on shares 4 love
4/16/19 5:34 PM	"Please let Gov. Walz and Minnesota Legislators know how important it is for you to have transportation options. Your voice matters. If you support passenger rail, now is the time to speak up. We want a TCMC Second Train to serve Winona and beyond."	711	4	28 on post 4 on shares 1 wow on post
3/9/19 10:45 AM	Have you never traveled via intercity rail? What keeps you from choosing trains?	709	20 on post 5 on shares	9
3/4/19 9:55 AM	MnDOT has the facts on the TCMC Second Train	683	11 on post 1 on shares	34 on post 2 on shares 1 love



4/23/2019

Time for action on passenger rail | Lake City Graphic

LOGIN

SEARCH

# The Lake City GRAPHIC

LAKE CITY, MINNESOTA

Click here to subscribe  
LakeCityGraphic.com  
Full online access just \$35 per year

HOME	NEWS	SPORTS	COMMUNITY	OBITUARIES	UPCOMING EVENTS	OPINION
Image Galleries	Subscriptions	Submissions	Contact	Election HQ 2018		

HOME / HOME

Lake City, MN  
52° F  
Fair  
Hazardous Weather Outlook - 1

LAKESHORE AGENCY  
Get Independent  
GRINNELL MUTUAL

## Time For Action On Passenger Rail

Wed, 04/17/2019 - 2:30pm

BY: CHERYL KEY, WABASHA COUNTY COMMISSIONER

This spring, legislators are having a serious debate on passenger rail in Minnesota. As a member of the Great River Rail Commission, I believe they should invest now. You may have heard about an effort to increase passenger rail service in the area. The Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Second Train would double Amtrak service, bringing enhanced transportation options and economic opportunities along the Mississippi River route.

Want to read the full article? Full access to lakecitygraphic.com is only \$35 per year. If you live in Goodhue or Wabasha County, you'll receive the print edition in the mail each week at no additional charge. To begin, fill out the form below. Already a subscriber? Log in or request an account below.

Bank on your terms. Anywhere.

LEARN MORE

ALLIANCE BANK Lake City (651) 345-3311

## Popular Today

1. Lake City Airport display grand opening is April 25
2. Lois Brunkow Obituary
3. Marvel Holden Obituary
4. Donna Herbst Obituary
5. DNR: Bat population decline continues as expected

## User Login

Username \*

Password \*

Request new password

Log in

## Graphic Newsletter

Graphic headlines, in your inbox, every week, for free

E-mail \*

Subscribe

Subscribe To The Lake City Graphic



winona's twice-weekly newspaper since 1971  
**winona**post

[Jobs](#) [Classified](#) [Subscription](#) [Event Calendar](#) [Archives](#) [Contact Us](#)

Winona's Twice-Weekly Newspaper Since 1971. [Click here to Advertise in the Winona Post.](#)

## OPINION

# Guest Opinion: Second train will benefit Winona

(4/22/2019)

by Winona Mayor Mark F. Peterson

Those of you who know me well are aware of my lifelong passion for history. It was my major in college. It has been my vocation at the Winona County Historical Society. I even taught it at Winona State University. History is important — we really can learn from our past experiences to help shape a better future.

A few people look at the idea of expanding passenger rail service as a nostalgic throwback to yesteryear. They wonder who would even ride a train anymore. Well, here in Winona, quite a few people do, and that's on a service — the Amtrak Empire Builder — that is sometimes late as it comes from the west. Approximately 120,000 trips are taken annually between the Twin Cities and Chicago. Last year, more than 14,000 boardings took place here in Winona. Every year nearly 10-million trips are taken between the Twin Cities and Chicago by car, plane and train. There is demand, and there are people who don't want to take a plane or a car to get to where they are going.

The idea of a second train has been around for a few years and is partway through the planning stages. The Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Second Train is not a throwback to the Iron Horse. It is a forward-looking proposal for a modern, comfortable, safe, alternative means of transportation that provides other benefits, such as job creation, tourism expansion, safety improvements and economic development. Here in Winona, I'm excited to get more visitors to Steamboat Days or the Shakespeare Festival. College students are riding — 41 percent in Winona have taken the train to or from school, and 57 percent have said they would take the train if more frequent service were available. Wouldn't our local manufacturing executives like to occasionally take advantage of the "rolling office" of a train while also traveling for business?

Our city would be improved as part of the TCMC Second Train project, which includes reconstructing the siding and station platform in Winona to allow Amtrak to pull right up to the edge of the platform closer to the station. People would not have to cross tracks and climb up on a stool to board the train.

Our city officials have historically supported the idea of expanding passenger rail service, and I am one of them. Momentum is building. This year, the Winona Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution in support of the second train. Both Minnesota Governor Walz and Wisconsin Governor Evers included funding for passenger rail in their budgets. We should thank our own Senator Jeremy Miller for authoring a bill on behalf of the second train.

Your voice is also needed. Go to [www.GreatRiverRail.org](http://www.GreatRiverRail.org) to learn more about the second train and how to get involved. We want the TCMC Second Train to serve Winona and beyond. All aboard!



4/23/2019

Marie Kovecs and Paul Schollmeier: Spring — a time for action on passenger rail at the Capitol | Columnists | winonadailynews.com



[https://www.winonadailynews.com/opinion/columnists/marie-kovecs-and-paul-schollmeier-spring-a-time-for-action/article\\_1f63055e-8720-510d-8c18-2e6546e43e1c.html](https://www.winonadailynews.com/opinion/columnists/marie-kovecs-and-paul-schollmeier-spring-a-time-for-action/article_1f63055e-8720-510d-8c18-2e6546e43e1c.html)

GUEST VIEW

## Marie Kovecs and Paul Schollmeier: Spring — a time for action on passenger rail at the Capitol

Apr 15, 2019



Marie Kovecs



Paul Schollmeier

Winona is one of the oldest communities in Minnesota. From our spot on the Mississippi River, nestled between our bluffs, we have witnessed the arrival of many springtimes.

This spring, our legislators are engaged in serious debate about passenger rail service in Minnesota. We, as members of the Great River Rail Commission, believe they should invest to improve this system now.

You may have heard about an effort to increase passenger rail service in our area. A second train for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) route would double Amtrak service in Winona, bringing enhanced transportation options and economic opportunities.



4/23/2019

Marie Kovecsi and Paul Schollmeier: Spring — a time for action on passenger rail at the Capitol | Columnists | winonadailynews.com

A second train would allow travelers to take advantage of the wide range of events in Winona. College students, already fans of this train (according to a recent survey), would have more options for getting to and from school. Business people would have the chance to work while traveling. Rail provides ample work space, free Wi-Fi and with reliable rail scheduling (this train would not suffer from delays from the Western train), people would be able to avoid road construction or other traffic headaches in the Twin Cities or Chicago. More people would be enjoying the unique beauty offered by our river communities.

This spring, support is lining up like tulips getting set to bloom. Gov. Tim Walz included passenger rail in his bonding proposal. Train projects are having hearings in the Minnesota House. Resolutions of support recently arrived from Winona, Winona County, and local Chambers of Commerce (Red Wing, Winona and Wabasha).

Things are happening regionally, also. Transportation Departments in Minnesota and Wisconsin have worked cooperatively on the TCMC Second Train Project since 2013. Wisconsin's strong support of the Project was reiterated in a letter from WisDOT Secretary Craig Thompson to MNDOT Commissioner Margaret Kelliher in March.

Thompson notes that Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers' budget includes money for rail passenger service development.

Like spring flowers, there's a limited window of time to advocate for local projects at our state Capitol. Our commission members are working hard to tell the story but legislators need to hear from constituents, also. Our website ([www.GreatRiverRail.org](http://www.GreatRiverRail.org)) has more information about getting involved.

Please let Gov. Walz and Minnesota Legislators know how important it is for you to have transportation options. Your voice matters. If you support passenger rail, now is the time to speak up. We want a TCMC Second Train to serve Winona and beyond.

All Aboard!

Marie Kovecsi is a Winona County Commissioner. Paul Schollmeier is a Winona City Council member. Both are members of the Great River Rail Commission.

