



Great River Rail Commission Meeting

Thursday, November 7, 2019
9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

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

AGENDA

Item		Action
1.	Call to Order and Introductions	
2.	Approval of Agenda	Approval
3.	Page 2 Minutes of September 5, 2019 Meeting *	Approval
4.	Page 8 Checks and Claims *	Approval
5.	Page 17 Great River Rail Commission Bylaws: Second Reading *	Approval
6.	Page 18 2020 Work Plan and Budget *	Approval
7.	Page 25 Advocacy and Public Outreach: September - October 2019 Report *	Information
8.	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 33 Report on the Minnesota Legislature Mini-Session in Winona * Paul Schollmeier and Sean Dowse	Information
10.	Commissioner Reports	Information

Next scheduled meeting: January 2, 2020

*Information Enclosed

Questions? Contact Commission staff person 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, September 5, 2019
Meeting Summary

MEMBERS:

Dakota County, Mike Slavik	Goodhue County, Paul Drotos
Ramsey County, Trista MatasCastillo	Wabasha County, Cheryl Key
Washington County, Wayne A. Johnson	LAPC, Peter Fletcher
Winona County, Chris Meyer	City of Cottage Grove, Wayne Butt
City of Hastings, Mark Vaughan	City of St. Paul Park, Sandi Dingle
City of Red Wing, Sean Dowse	City of St. Charles, Wayne Getz
City of St. Paul, Jane Prince	

OTHERS:

Ramsey County, Kevin Roggenbuck	Ramsey County, Sandie Jacobson
MnDOT, Frank Loetterle	Citizen, Rachel ?
Dakota County, Joe Morneau	All Aboard MN, Edward Johnson
All Aboard MN, John Goodman	Amtrak, Derek James
Amtrak, Ken Hawkins	All Aboard MN, Leone Mauszycki
Citizen, Ken Bjornstad	Washington County, Sara Allen
All Aboard MN, Brian Nelson	MnDOT, Mary McFarland Brooks

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Vaughan called the meeting to order at 9:32 am. Introductions were made, and Chair Vaughan welcomed Peter Fletcher, Executive Director of the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, to the Commission.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

3. MINUTES OF MAY 2, 2019 MEETING

A motion to approve the minutes from May 2, 2019 was requested. Councilmember Getz moved for approval of the minutes, seconded by Mayor Dingle. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. CHECKS AND CLAIMS

Mr. Kevin Roggenbuck reported on two invoices from Jeff Dehler, public communications consultant to the Commission. Mr. Roggenbuck said invoice #190664 was received on July 1, 2019, reviewed by staff and paid, per Ramsey County policy and the agreement with Mr. Dehler.



Commissioner Drotos commented that he was pleased to see that the Commission had a presence at the Goodhue county fair. Commissioner Slavik said advocating for the Second Train at the county fairs fits within the communication work scope but was concerned about the expense of paying people to staff the tables. Chair Vaughan asked if staff should have reached out to the Commission members prior to paying the bill.

Commissioner Slavik suggested having the Chair and Vice Chair review the invoices when the Commission doesn't meet, prior to paying. Commissioner Slavik stated he would like staff to send information on the cost of rebranding prior to the next Commission meeting.

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Key moved for approval of the checks and claims, seconded by Mayor Dowse. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. **RENAMING AND REBRANDING: SELECTION OF A TAG LINE**

Mr. Roggenbuck reported on the meeting held by the tagline subcommittee and referred to the memo prepared by Jeff Dehler that summarizes the sub-committee's discussion. The tag line preferred by the sub-committee is "Ride into Our Future". Commissioner Johnson suggested replacing the word "our" with "your". Mayor Dingle agreed that using "your" individualizes it more. Commissioner Chris Meyer said we need to think about the person reading this tagline, as we read it to ourselves. Commissioner MatasCastillo stated this tag line isn't about our generation, it's about the younger generations. There was much discussion on using "our", "your", "my" and "the" in the tagline.

After additional discussion it was agreed the new tag line should read "Ride into Your Future".

A motion to approve was requested. Commission Drotos moved for approval of the selection of a tag line, seconded by Mayor Dingle. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. **LIABILITY INSURANCE WAIVER**

Mr. Roggenbuck provided information on the liability insurance waiver. Staff recommends continuing this coverage through the League of Minnesota Cities and not waiving the statutory tort liability limit.

Commissioner Slavik recommends budgeting closer to \$1,000 each year instead of \$2,000 each year since we have always spent \$1,000 or less on this in the past.

A motion to approve was requested. Commissioner Slavik moved for approval of the staff recommendation to continue insurance coverage through the League of Minnesota Cities and not waive the liability limit and authorize the chair to provide written documentation to the League of Minnesota Cities Trust. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Key and passed unanimously by voice vote.

7. **GREAT RIVER RAIL COMMISSION JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT**

Mr. Roggenbuck described how the Commission has moved toward renaming and rebranding itself by choosing a new name and logo, and by rebranding its advocacy materials and social media platforms. The final step to officially change our name and allow us to do business as the Great River Rail Commission is for each Party to approve the restated and amended Joint Powers Agreement. Mr. Roggenbuck reported that all



Parties to the agreement have provided resolutions approving the change and the new agreement is fully executed.

Chair Vaughan welcomed Washington County back to the Commission. Commissioner Johnson stated he didn't see the resolution that was signed by Washington County. Mr. Roggenbuck will look into this.

8. **GREAT RIVER RAIL COMMISSION BYLAWS: FIRST READING**

Mr. Roggenbuck reported that we need to bring the bylaws of this Commission up to date with the new language in the Joint Powers Agreement. Our amendment process requires that we review and discuss a marked up copy at a Commission meeting, staff makes revisions per the direction of the Commission, and brings another revised copy to the Commission for approval at the following meeting.

Commissioner Key suggested that instead of being so specific on the meeting dates that we state, "to meet every other month". This way if our meeting dates change, we don't have to change the bylaws again. Mr. Roggenbuck made a recommendation for new wording to be less specific. Chair Vaughan suggested making the statement that at the first meeting of the year the meeting dates will be set for the year.

Commissioner Slavik said there may be times where we only need to meet four times a year, but if we change the wording to "meet as needed and meeting dates will be set at the first meeting of the year" then we don't have to change the bylaws in the future.

Commissioner Key asked for staff to send the draft of the changes in advance. Chair Vaughan said staff will send the packet to the members one week prior to the next meeting and that will be our review time.

Commissioner MatasCastillo asked if board members could call in to the meeting. Chair Vaughan asked staff to consult with the Ramsey County Attorney's Office about possible conflict with open meeting laws. Commissioner Drotos said it's important to him that we meet in person and we could look for another meeting location in Goodhue County with conference call capability.

9. **DRAFT 2020 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET**

Chair Vaughan opened the floor for discussion. Mr. Roggenbuck said the draft is brought to the Commission in September for review and comment, and final work plan and budget will be brought back in November for adoption, with any revisions agreed to by the Commission. Mr. Roggenbuck said most things in the draft 2020 Work Plan and Budget are the same as the previous year but noted a typo in the Expenditure page; Public Communications Assistance is \$37,000 not \$42,000.

Mr. Roggenbuck referred the Commission to the updated work plan from Dennis Egan and said the Commission can add up to \$15,000 in the second year of his contract. Several Commission members spoke in favor of funding the second year of the contract with Dennis Egan and the importance of having a lobbyist. Commissioner Slavik would like for Mr. Egan to report more often and directly with the Commission. Commission members discussed whether to direct Mr. Egan to provide the number of hours he works for the Commission. The Commission decided not to ask for hours worked but to direct Mr. Egan to provide more detail of the work he does for the Commission in his monthly invoices. Chair Vaughan asked if the Commission is open to directing more dollars to lobbying while doing the same advocacy activities in previous work plans. Commissioner



MatasCastillo recommended adding \$15,000 to the 2020 work plan and budget for lobbying for Dennis Egan, Commission members agreed.

Mr. Roggenbuck asked when does the Commission want Mr. Egan to start working? Commissioner MatasCastillo said Dennis Eagan's work plan should include establishing this Commission as part of his bonding tour. Councilmember Prince stated this is pre-session work. Commissioner Meyer stated Representative Gene Pelowski has reinstated the legislative mini-session taking place October 3 & 4 in Winona. Commissioner Meyer will send information to staff for distribution to all Commission members.

Chair Vaughan summarized the discussion and stated the Commission agrees to add \$15,000 for lobbying and to continue with Mr. Egan as our lobbyist, but it's very important that he update us more frequently.

The Commission discussed projected expenditures in 2020. Commissioner Slavik recommended reducing the budgeted amount for liability insurance from \$2,000 to \$1,000 since our premiums have always been less than \$1,000. Commission members agreed.

Commission members discussed having a communications approach that is more focused on promoting the Second Train and increasing ridership. The Commission agreed that after the Second Train is running, the Commission's communication efforts could be more targeted to certain regions or groups, but for now, we are just trying to open people's minds to passenger rail travel. Members discussed the Commission's strategic communications plan. Its purpose is outreach and getting our message to the public and to legislators. The Communications team is working closely with Dennis Egan to also engage and inform state legislators about the Second Train. We also want to activate the public to contact their legislators in support of the Second Train.

Mayor Dowse moved for approval of the changes to the draft 2020 Work Plan and Budget discussed by the Commission, seconded by Commissioner Drotos. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

10. **PUBLIC ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH: JULY – AUGUST 2019 REPORT**

Mr. Roggenbuck summarized the July-August 2019 activity report provided by Jeff Dehler. Highlights include staffing a booth at the Winona and Goodhue County Fairs, and the Union Pacific Big Boy event at Union Depot; conference call with the tagline subcommittee

11. **PASSENGER RAIL REPORT: DAN KROM AND FRANK LOETTERLE, MNDOT**

- a. TCMC Intercity Passenger Rail Study – Frank Loetterle reported that Phase 1, alternatives analysis, is complete. Mr. Loetterle described the two service alternatives that will be evaluated further in the preparation of a Service Development Plan. MnDOT will update their project website to include the most current information about the Second Train. Work on the Service Development Plan is moving forward with funding from the Wisconsin DOT. MnDOT did not receive funding in the last legislative session but if they receive funding in the 2020 session, it can be added to Wisconsin's funds to complete the environmental analysis. The environmental analysis of the two service alternatives will likely be Categorical Exclusion is short for there are a list of actions a railroad can take that don't affect the environment and can get this approved. MnDOT hopes to complete the Service Development Plan in the early spring.

Derek James, Amtrak, stated he wants to affirm Amtrak's commitment to this Commission. Adding additional service gives consumers additional options. We spent a day this past spring working with legislators and asking for bonding dollars. We had a bonding meeting yesterday in St. Cloud. We are working to build the growth of rail state-wide. There may be another bonding tour in October. Mr. James introduced Mr. Ken Hawkins, Amtrak's Federal Affairs professional and Senior Manager of Government Affairs and our lobbyist in the upper Midwest.

Mr. Hawkins said Amtrak has the strongest relationship it has ever had with Capitol Hill. We see additional support (\$1.39 billion and now at \$1.94 billion). This happens on an annual basis. Re-authorization – every five years there is supposed to be a service transportation bill (DOT Safety, etc.) we're part of that but we have to go back annually to request funding. This is to replace the FAST Act. Within the next six months we will be replacing a re-funding bill – for where we should expand and modernize and what policies we need. New laws to help with long time performance. We will be doing a series of outreach meetings. We don't want this to be an Amtrak proposal. This is the ongoing dialogue we want to have with you and want to start that now. Commissioner MatasCastillo asked as we're putting in the proposal is there any money in increasing the customer service assistance? There is currently no red cap service in St. Paul and we need to increase that customer service piece and put the quality back into that service. Mr. Hawkins said we are onboard with that. Commissioner Drotos asked if there are other areas where there are growth potential. Mr. Hawkins said yes there are other areas. Mr. James stated other states are pursuing other projects and mentioned several recent expansions in several other states. There are a lot more applications coming in to Amtrak for these additional services.

Chair Vaughan asked what would be more impactful to support Amtrak's endeavors. Mr. James responded that it would be helpful if your city councils and county boards pass resolutions and author a letter and then to have this Commission do this, would be even better.

Brian Nelson, All Aboard Minnesota, showed a map of what Amtrak service could look like in 2030. Mr. Hawkins said this map is a good example of what Amtrak is working on.

Mr. Frank Loetterle clarified that federal grant programs require a state or local match to be able to use it. A grant through the Federal Railroad Administration provides between 60 and 80% of the project. It's a good way to get money back into the state that would otherwise be going somewhere else.

Chair Vaughan asked whether anyone in the audience had a question for MnDOT or Amtrak.

Ed Johnson asked if Mr. Anderson (Amtrak CEO) is still committed to the national network. Mr. Hawkins confirmed there is great support for the national network and the Empire Builder.

Ms. Leone Mauszycki said Winona lost their station master and they have lost a huge ridership. She explained in detail the issues they are currently experiencing in Winona and asked that they provide staffing for those stations.



12. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Johnson – thank you and we are excited to be back on this Commission.

Peter Fletcher – the La Crosse Area Planning Committee’s policy board is committed to this.

Commissioner Key – reported the mayor of Lake City is questioning belonging to this Commission. Commissioner Key did explain to their city council, but she doesn’t think they will be sending anybody to these commission meetings. Mr. Roggenbuck stated he did talk with the Mayor and that they don’t have time to come and wouldn’t send a representative.

Commissioner Slavik stated Dakota County will not be at the November meeting due to budget meetings.

13. **OTHER**

- a. Next scheduled meeting: November 7, 2019

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Drotos, seconded by Mr. Fletcher. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Chair Vaughan adjourned the meeting at 11:25 am.



Agenda Item #4



TO: Great River Rail Commission
FROM: Staff
DATE: October 31, 2019
RE: Checks and Claims
ACTION: Approval

Attached is invoice #191072 from Jeff Dehler Public Relations for services related to advocacy and outreach for the Great River Rail Commission. The invoice covers the time from August 21 through October 20, 2019 and includes some out of pocket expenses. Staff reviewed the invoice and found it to be accurate.

The action requested by staff is for the Commission to approve payment of invoice #191072 from Jeff Dehler.

Jeff Dehler Invoice #191072	\$ 2,263.71
TOTAL	\$ 2,263.71

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 #191072, the remaining contract balance is \$36,458.98.





Educate. Communicate. Motivate.

October 30, 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 Great River Rail Commission from August 21 to October 20, 2019. Invoice 191072 is for a total of \$2,263.71 and includes a number of out of pocket expenses and subcontracted work including:

- \$8.71 to 1&1 Internet for website hosting fees
- \$25.00 to Facebook for boosted posts
- \$180 to Idealspeech for website updates
- \$82.50 to Teresa Lund for graphic design of TCMC Fact Packet

Media Relations – Noyed – .25

- Media checks
- Media posts

Corridor Advocacy – Dehler – 1.5 Noyed – 4.25

- Action Alert
- Supporter Spotlight
- AAMN coordination and event posts
- Mailing list
- New subscriber welcome
- Tagline

Public Information – Dehler – 5; Noyed – 10.25

Dehler

- Website edits
- Newsletter
- Fact Sheet



Noyed

- Email drafting and sending
- Draft, edit and schedule FB posts
- Launch and monitor Facebook ad campaigns
- Edits to website, communications with webmaster
- Eblasts and enews
- Ad research and planning
- Meeting event promotion
- New subscriber communications

Strategic Counsel – Dehler – 2.5 ; Noyed – 3

- Planning; emails, phone calls/meetings between consultants, webmaster, MnDOT representatives and K. Roggenbuck
- Project management: Report, File and database management
- Reporting and commission communications
- Meeting Report
- Manage commission email account
- Review internal communications
- Budget tracking
- Memos

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
191072	10/21/2019	\$2,263.71	11/20/2019	Net 30	

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
08/23/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - Stats and report, cover letter, categorize time	2:15	50.00	112.50
08/23/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Corridor Advocacy - update county fair report	0:30	50.00	25.00
08/25/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Strategic Counsel - report	0:15	120.00	30.00
08/26/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - finalize and send welcome emails, draft welcome email to Goodhue County fair respondents, check and organize GRR and MNHSR email accounts	1:15	50.00	62.50
08/26/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Corridor Advocacy - Add Goodhue County fair contacts to spreadsheet/mailling list	1:00	50.00	50.00
08/27/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Strategic Counsel - report	2:15	120.00	270.00
08/29/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - website	0:15	120.00	30.00
09/04/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - FB post of slide, add link to event, update/consolidate mailing lists	0:45	50.00	37.50
09/04/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - Budget Tracker	0:30	50.00	25.00
09/11/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Export and share media lists	0:30	50.00	25.00
09/13/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - Draft newsletter update	1:00	120.00	120.00
09/18/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Web hosing for Great River Rail	1	8.71	8.71
09/24/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - Fact sheet, letterhead edits	0:30	120.00	60.00
09/27/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info -Review and respond to comments, pull quotes for supporter spotlights	0:30	50.00	25.00
09/30/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - create boosted ad campaign, action alert and	2:00	50.00	100.00



DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
10/01/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	facebook post, research and draft Nov and Dec event posts, enews stories and formatting	1:00	50.00	50.00
10/01/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Corridor Advocacy - Action alert eblast and email list creation, tagline review and comment	1:00	120.00	120.00
10/03/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Strategic Counsel - Check, organize email accounts, update CC accounts	0:15	50.00	12.50
10/03/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Corridor Advocacy Tagline graphic, action alert	0:30	120.00	60.00
10/04/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - Newsletter articles	1:00	120.00	120.00
10/06/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	public info - Draft news articles, reorder template, legislative update webmaster, edits to enews, update links, finalize and send enews	2:15	50.00	112.50
10/06/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - Newsletter article, review and edits	0:45	120.00	90.00
10/07/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Corridor Advocacy - Supporter spotlight and AAMN event posts, update internal mailing lists	0:45	50.00	37.50
10/09/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - Newsletter review and edit	1:00	120.00	120.00
10/14/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Media - story posts on FB, story to webmaster	0:30	50.00	25.00
10/14/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Corridor advocacy - Pull supporter spotlight quotes	0:15	50.00	12.50
10/14/2019	-Jeff Dehler \$120	Public Info - website updates, fact sheet	0:30	120.00	60.00
10/15/2019	-Kyle Noyed \$50	Public Info - Review and respond to messages/comments, create boosted FB ad, draft and edit nov and dec FB posts, schedule nov and dec FB posts, review web edits, create links.	3:30	50.00	175.00
10/20/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Great River Flyer Edits and Flyer Collection	1	82.50	82.50
10/21/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Boosted post Ads	1	25.00	25.00
10/21/2019	NMU Subcontracted	Website updates	1	180.00	180.00

BALANCE DUE

\$2,263.71



1&1 IONOS Inc.
701 Lee Road
Suite 300
Chesterbrook, PA 19067
USA

Jeff Dehler
DehlerPR
10569 Camille Ct

Indianapolis, IN 46236-8293
UNITED STATES

Invoice Date: 09/16/2019
Invoice: 202025349331
Contract: 27845148
Customer ID: 25273708

Help Center: ionos.com/help
PHP Extended Support: ionos.com/help/hosting/php

My 1&1 IONOS: my.ionos.com/invoices
Phone support: 1-877-300-8316
E-mail support: billing@ionos.com
Service hours: 24/7

Please have your personal phone PIN available for quick and secure authentication when speaking with our agents. You can set and manage this by logging in to my.ionos.com.

Invoice Summary (Beginner Package Linux)

Billing period starting: 09/15/2019

Item	Service	Charges	Usage	Total
1	PHP5.4 Extended Support 09/03/2019-10/03/2019	\$8.71 a month	1 mo.	\$8.71
Total amount due <small>Please DO NOT send cash, check or money order</small>				\$8.71

The total amount due will be charged to your credit card within the next seven days. Thank you.

Do you have questions regarding this invoice?
Please refer to your [Help Center](https://ionos.com/help) or log in to my.ionos.com for further information.



PROJECT INVOICE

Client: Great River Rail (Jeff Dehler)
 Projects: Flyer edits and file collection
 Hourly Rate: \$55/hour Invoice Sent: October 20, 2019

DATE	PROJECT TITLES	HOURS
10.20.18	Great River Flyer Edits & Flyer Collection for Client	1.5
TOTAL HOURS		1.5
		1.5 X \$55
		\$82.50

THANK YOU

INVOICE SENT TO:
 Terese Lund
 9634 Black Bear Circle : Brainerd, MN 56401
 ph: (218) 232-3774



Receipt for Kyle Noyed

Account ID: 40815888



Invoice/Payment Date

Oct 20, 2019, 6:20 PM

Payment Method

Visa®3728

Reference Number: 2JXCTPJSU2

Transaction ID

2537484289701564-4040529

Product Type

Facebook

Paid

\$25.00 USD

You're being billed because you reached your \$25.00 billing threshold.

Campaigns

Post: "New to Great River Rail on Facebook? Learn more..."			\$10.00
From Oct 1, 2019, 12:00 AM to Oct 20, 2019, 6:20 PM			

Post: "New to Great River Rail on Facebook? Learn more..."	422 Impressions		\$10.00
Post: "Here's a great story on passenger rail projects..."			\$15.00
From Oct 1, 2019, 12:00 AM to Oct 20, 2019, 6:20 PM			

Post: "Here's a great story on passenger rail projects..."	1,814 Impressions		\$15.00





creative.idealspeech.org
 michael@idealspeech.org
 (952) 201-1550

Invoice 0076
 October 20, 2019

FROM

Idealspeech Creative
 Michael Westerlund
 1449 Wellesley Avenue
 St. Paul, MN 55105

TO

Dehler PR
 Attn: Jeff Dehler
 10569 Camille Court
 Indianapolis, IN 46236

ITEMS

	Date	Hours	Cost
GRR - News Updates	7/8/2019	0.5	\$30.00
GRR - Document Uploads	8/29/2019	0.5	\$30.00
GRR - News Updates	10/6/2019	0.5	\$30.00
GRR - News Updates	10/14/2019	0.5	\$30.00
GRR - Sitewide Updates	10/19/2019	1.0	\$60.00

Special Notes

*Credit Cards Accepted via Square Register
 Checks Accepted via our Mailing Address
 Make Checks Payable to Idealspeech Web Design, LLC*

AMOUNT DUE

Total Hours	3.0
Hourly Rate	\$60.00
TOTAL	\$180.00



Agenda Item #5



TO: Great River Rail Commission
FROM: Staff
DATE: October 31, 2019
RE: Great River Rail Commission Bylaws: Second Reading
ACTION: Approval

Following execution of the amended and restated Joint Powers Agreement, the Great River Rail Commission revisited their bylaws to ensure that they are consistent with new language in the Agreement. The draft revised bylaws were reviewed by the Commission on September 5, 2019. At the direction of the Commission, the following change was made to the draft bylaws:

- Under Article 7, page 4, Meetings and Notices: States when the Commission has traditionally met and states that the Commission will set its meetings for the year at its January meeting.

Staff also made two additional minor edits to:

- replace an incorrect reference to the MN High Speed Rail Commission under Article 11, page 6, Work Plan and Budget, to correctly refer to the Great River Rail Commission, and
- revise the definition of Financial Party to match the definition in the Joint Powers Agreement.

Staff provides the revised Great River Rail Commission Bylaws to the Commission for its second reading.





TO: Great River Rail Commission

FROM: Staff

DATE: October 31, 2019

RE: 2020 Work Plan and Budget

ACTION: Approval

The draft 2020 Work Plan and Budget was brought to the Commission at its September 5, 2019 meeting for discussion and refinement. Staff has made the following revisions per the Commission's direction and brings the final 2020 Work Plan and Budget to the Commission in November for approval:

- Budget \$15,000 for lobbying, and
- Reduce the budget amount for insurance from \$2,000 to \$1,000.

Below are several bullet points highlighting the draft 2020 Work Plan and Budget.

- Focus on traditional efforts of advocacy and outreach through the Great River Rail Commission website, printed materials, e-newsletters and social media.
- Continue to provide logistical support for the Speakers' Bureau advocacy efforts and Train Day events held by member organizations.
- Continue to have a presence at Train Day celebrations and other opportunities for public engagement.
- Continue to engage state legislators before, during and after each legislative session.
- Actively lobby state legislators to support bills to fund MnDOT passenger rail planning activities and implementation of the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train.
- Continue to provide an outlet for public information and engagement for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service Study.
- Continue to budget funds for insurance.
- Continue to maintain a contingency amount for unforeseen advocacy opportunities.
- Continue to apply unspent appropriations from previous years to offset membership dues.



Great River Rail Commission 2020 Work Plan and Budget

1. **Passenger and Freight Rail Advocacy Activities**

The Great River Rail Commission (Commission) will work with counties, cities, the Prairie Island Indian Community, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), the Metropolitan Council, Amtrak, Canadian Pacific Railway, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, Union Pacific Railway, corridor chambers of commerce and others to continue the advancement and development of more frequent and faster passenger train service between Chicago and Saint Paul along the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor. To accomplish this the Commission will do the following:

- Monitor progress and offer guidance on the Twin Cities–Milwaukee–Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service Phase 1 Study and any future phases of work.
- Provide a means for public engagement and an outlet for public information about the Twin Cities–Milwaukee–Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service Phase 1 Study and any future phases of work where public engagement is part of the work scope.
- Monitor progress and offer guidance on the Chicago to Twin Cities Tier I EIS.
- Work for the seamless integration of passenger rail into the comprehensive plans of municipalities in the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor.
- Offer guidance and assistance to municipalities, MnDOT, Metropolitan Council, freight railroads, and others for the advancement of the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train.
- Monitor progress and offer guidance on freight rail studies involving the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor and rail activities in the United States that could have an impact on the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train.
- Coordinate with MnDOT on passenger and freight rail studies that impact the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor.
- Offer formal comments on passenger and freight rail studies and state and federal policy affecting passenger rail as needed.

General Activities will be led by Commission staff working with agency staff to advise the commission on when its involvement is needed.

2. **Advocacy and Legislative Coordination**

The Commission will continue to develop policy positions and work cooperatively with its partners for more frequent and faster passenger train service in the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor and throughout the Midwest Regional Rail System.

To accomplish this, the Commission will do the following:

- Inform legislators about the benefits of the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train.
- Advocate and lobby for state funding of MnDOT’s passenger rail planning activities including future phases of work on the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service Study.
- Advocate for capital improvement projects that benefit passenger rail service and freight rail movement.

- Inform legislators about the benefit of and need for increased freight rail capacity.
- Coordinate legislative initiatives with impacted freight railroads, the Prairie Island Indian Community, MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council, the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, Amtrak, other passenger rail corridors, and other impacted parties.
- Coordinate legislative initiatives with partner agencies for those initiatives that impact the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor.
- Establish and communicate positions on state and federal legislative initiatives that affect passenger and freight rail movement in the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor.
- Host joint meetings and forums with passenger rail advocates to encourage the implementation of the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train.
- Advocate for a multimodal transportation system that improves mobility through connecting corridor communities without stations to each other and to communities with stations.
- Advocate for rail safety improvements including at-grade crossings and track upgrades.
- Consider membership in similar advocacy organizations such as the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission and Rail Passengers Association.

Advocacy and legislative coordination activities will be led by Commission staff working with the Chair to identify which items merit Commission involvement. If Commission involvement is merited, and time allows, the items will be brought to the Commission for discussion. If time does not allow, the Chair will determine whether the Commission shall be involved. In all instances, the Chair shall be the first option as spokesperson for the Commission.

3. Public Engagement

The Commission's public engagement activities will be developed to increase public awareness of the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service Phase 1 Study and any future phases of work, the Chicago to Twin Cities Tier I EIS, the Commission, the larger Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, and the importance of investing in more frequent and faster passenger rail service. These activities will be separate from but coordinated with MnDOT's public engagement activities related to the implementation of the Minnesota State Rail Plan, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service, and the Chicago to Twin Cities Tier I EIS. Specific Commission activities will include:

- Implement a Public Communications strategy that builds upon the Commission's Strategic Communications Plan. This strategy will guide the Commission's public engagement activities including:
 - Public Engagement and Information Sharing
 - Legislative Coordination
 - Community Relations
 - Media Relations
 - Corridor Positioning
 - Website Presence
 - Social Media (Facebook)
 - Supporter Distribution List
 - Materials Development and Production
- Revise the Strategic Communications Plan as needed.



- Coordination with partner agencies when advocating for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train.
- Presentations to civic and community groups throughout the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Rail Corridor.
- Support for similar organizations (e.g. All Aboard Minnesota).
- Media recognition of Commission meetings and events through print, radio, and public access television.
- Coordination and recruitment of supporters, including those in the business community, to advance the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train.

Public engagement activities will be led by Commission staff working with the Commission's public communications consultant. Public involvement strategies will continue to be discussed with the Chair before being brought to the Commission.

4. Management, Policy, and Administrative Activities

Commission activities will include but not be limited to the following:

- Prepare and adopt the 2021 Work Plan and Budget.
- Review insurance needs and procure appropriate insurance.
- Provide Commission and staff administration.
- Manage Commission expenses.

Management, policy, and administrative activities will be led by Commission staff. The deliverables will continue to be brought before the Commission for their approval.



2020 Expenditures

Expenditure Category	Amount
Advocacy and Legislative Coordination	
- Publications	\$2,000
- Materials	\$3,000
- Special Events/Mileage ¹	\$1,000
- Lobbying	\$15,000
Subtotal	\$21,000
Public Communications Assistance	
- Implement HSRC Strategic Communications Plan	\$37,000
Management/Administration	
- Materials	\$3,000
- Insurance	\$1,000
Subtotal	\$4,000
Contingency	\$3,000
Total	\$65,000

¹ Travel to out of state events/conferences would be the responsibility of each individual member.

Note: Multiple Financial Parties currently have contracts with federal and state lobbyists. These lobbyists may provide federal and state lobbying services as an in-kind contribution of the Financial Party members to the Commission.

Unadjusted 2020 Revenue

Revenue Source		Amount
Federal Appropriations		\$0
Subtotal		\$0
State Appropriations		\$0
Subtotal		\$0
Financial Party	Percentage ¹	2020 Contribution
Ramsey County	33.1%	\$21,515
Dakota County	16.4%	\$10,660
La Crosse Area Planning Committee	12.8%	\$8,320
Winona County	12.0%	\$7,800
Washington County	10.9%	\$7,085
Goodhue County	10.7%	\$6,955
Wabasha County	4.1%	\$2,665
TOTAL	100.0%	\$65,000

¹ Per the Amended and restated Joint Powers Agreement (adopted 2017), the Financial Parties' contribution is based on the following formula: 50% based on the proportionate share of population among all Financial Parties; 10% based on the proportionate share of corridor mileage among all Financial Parties; 31% based on the location of existing or planned high speed passenger rail stations within the Financial Parties' jurisdiction; and 9% allocated equally among the Financial Parties.

Adjusted 2020 Revenue

Revenue Source		Amount		
Federal Appropriations		\$0		
Subtotal		\$0		
State Appropriations		\$0		
Subtotal		\$0		
Financial Party	Percentage	2020 Contribution	Proposed Offset ¹	Adjusted 2020 Contribution
Ramsey County	33.1%	\$21,515	\$8,606	\$12,909
Dakota County	16.4%	\$10,660	\$4,264	\$6,396
La Crosse Area Planning Committee	12.8%	\$8,320	\$3,328	\$4,992
Winona County	12.0%	\$7,800	\$3,120	\$4,680
Washington County	10.9%	\$7,085	\$2,834	\$4,251
Goodhue County	10.7%	\$6,955	\$2,782	\$4,173
Wabasha County	4.1%	\$2,665	\$1,066	\$1,599
TOTAL	100.00%	\$65,000	\$26,000	\$39,000

¹ Proposed offset to reduce Financial Party contributions.

Fiscal Note: As of September 6, 2018, the Commission has approximately \$120,000 in unexpended previous year's appropriations.



TO: Great River Rail Commission

FROM: Jeff Dehler

DATE: October 21, 2019

RE: Advocacy and Public Outreach: August – October Activity Report

ACTION: Information

Major Activities

Since our last report of August 2019 our major activities have included publicizing the Winona legislative hearing, updating the logo with a tagline, more supporter spotlight quotes, and continuing efforts with publications, social media and website.

Work Summary

- Focus was prepping materials, publicizing and reporting on the Winona legislative hearing, including revising the TCMC Fact Packet, eblast, and e-newsletter article
- Sent eblasts to new supporters from the Big Boy event and Goodhue and Winona County Fairs
- Finalized the tagline process
- Updated mailing lists and organized subscriber lists
- Continued planning for the coming months including fall events, Facebook ad campaign, new website content, and email calendar
- Continued social media efforts with a focus on events and TCMC Second Train information

Analytics Report

Highlights

- Monitoring analytics continues to be uncertain due to transition from MNHSR to GRR websites, as many of the same physical pages used on the old website were updated with new content for the GRR website
- 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 three eblasts welcoming new supporters from Summer events, one meeting invitation reminder, one action alert to Winona area supporters, and an October enews
- Facebook remained steady at 2,087



Website:

The Google analytics report for www.greatriverrail.org for the current time period is attached. Below are basic web statistic comparisons. Website views are slightly down from the past period which could have resulted from the analytics being reset in order to get access to the new pages. In addition, the website is not mobile friendly, so cell phone users may not spend much time on the site.

Time Period	Sessions	Sessions/Day	Pages/Session	Ave Session Duration	% New Sessions
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%
Apr 21-June 20, 2019	410	7	1.20	0:43	93%
Jun 21-Aug 20, 2019	529	9	1.35	0:43	93%
Aug 21-Oct 20, 2019	497	8	1.24	1:51	97%

E-newsletter:

The statistics for the Great River Rail emails sent this period are:

- 8/26/19 – Big Boy Event Welcome – 46% open rate, 6% click rate
- 8/26/19 – Winona County Fair Welcome – 25% open rate, 25% click rate
- 8/27/19 – Goodhue County Fair Welcome – 56% open rate, 40% click rate
- 9/1/19 – Meeting Invite reminder – 32% open rate, 9% click rate
- 10/2/19 – Winona Action Alert – 21% open rate, 13% click rate
- 10/9/19 – October Enewsletter – 27% open rate, 16% click rate

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.

Number of subscribers:

Media: 131

New Subscribers from 2019 Events: 131

Commission Members (and extra contacts): 21

General Interest: 651

City/County Communicators: 16



Facebook:

Facebook posts placed an emphasis on Fall River Route events and information on the TCMC. Boosted posts are now targeting specific geographic areas down to a certain town to try to increase awareness along the River Route. Views are generally down, but our open-ended questions continue to drive discussion. Recent media coverage provided a much-needed boost in views and participation.

Facebook still shows the posts to fewer 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. A targeted campaign focusing on demographics who would use train travel and local business is being designed.

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

Time Period	Likes	Posts Reaching >300
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
April 21 – June 20, 2019	2,085	18
June 21 – August 20, 2019	2,080	11
August 21 – Oct 20, 2019	2,087	11

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

Posted	Post Message	Unique Users	Comments	Likes
10/14 2:11 PM	Here's a great story on passenger rail projects including the TCMC Second Train. Share it with others who may be interested in the project! (Boosted)	2,009	12 on post 10 on shares	197 on post 31 on shares 24 love on post 3 love on shares 1 haha 9 wow 1 angry
8/30 4:37 PM	See what All Aboard Minnesota has to say about what more passenger rail service could offer.	547	1 on shares	22 on post 4 on shares 4 love
9/26 8:08 AM	Why do you like traveling by train?	543	16 on post 3 on shares	11 2 love
10/13 9:06 AM	How would you use a second daily round-trip train between the Twin Cities and Chicago?	537	10	13 1 love
9/28 12:09 PM	New to Great River Rail on Facebook? Learn more about the Commission and its goals on our website. (boosted)	517		7 on post 1 on shares



10/30/2019

Rail backers plot their push for Duluth line, second Chicago train - StarTribune.com

LOCAL

Passenger rail service to Duluth, another train to Chicago, still being considered

Backers say legislative support is needed for the Chicago, Duluth proposals.

By Janet Moore (<http://www.startribune.com/janet-moore/10645476/>) Star Tribune |

OCTOBER 14, 2019 -- 8:54AM

Supporters of passenger rail service in Minnesota, including restoration of the route from the Twin Cities to Duluth and additional service to Chicago, are plotting their push for state funding to keep expansion efforts alive.

The nexus of their efforts will come during the legislative session, which begins in February. But if this year's experience is any guide — where funding requests for passenger rail projects were thwarted by lawmakers — the undertaking could be a bit of a slog. And there's no shortage of opponents who feel passenger rail is a waste of money.

"It's like a MnDOT road project; you can't just say, 'OK, there's the line and let's build it,'" said Dan Krom, director of the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Passenger Rail Office. "There's a lot of process involved."

One project adds a second daily train (<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/passengerrail/tc-mil-chi/index.html>) in both directions between Union Depot in St. Paul and Chicago's Union Station, serving 13 stations on Amtrak's Empire Builder long-distance route. Since the service would not be part of the Empire Builder's far-flung route between Chicago and Seattle/Portland, Ore. — which in fiscal 2018 had a 46% on-time performance in St. Paul — supporters say it will be faster and more reliable. MnDOT estimates the cost of establishing the service would be about \$160 million, with costs shared with Wisconsin and Illinois.

The Northern Lights Express (NLX) service (<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/nlx/>) would re-establish Amtrak service between the Twin Cities and Duluth, which was discontinued in 1985. The trip would take about 2.5 hours, similar to driving, with four daily trips and stops in Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley and Superior, Wis. It would cost from \$500 million to \$600 million to launch.



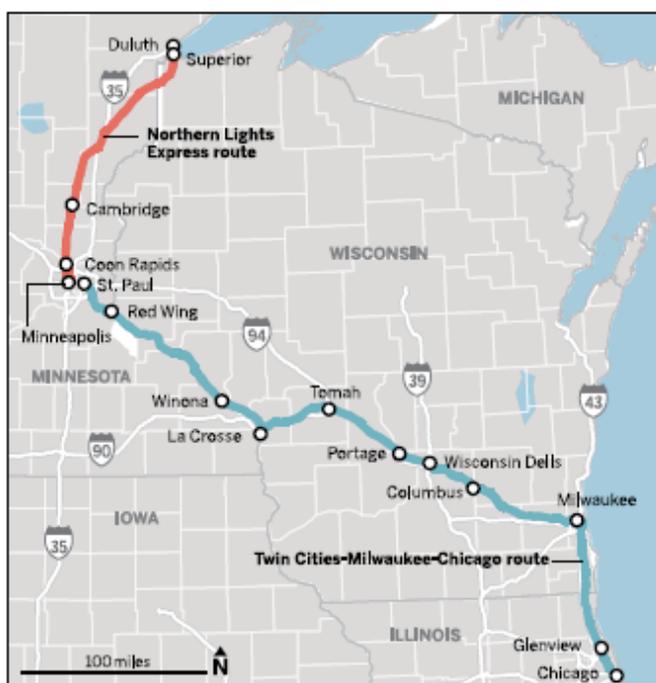
LEILA NAVIDI - STAR TRIBUNE

Passengers boarded the eastbound Empire Builder train to Chicago at St. Paul's Union Depot in 2016. Rail backers are pushing a plan



10/30/2019

Rail backers plot their push for Duluth line, second Chicago train - StarTrib



Source: ESRI

RAY GRUMNEY • Star Tribune

The \$30 million funding request from state coffers would move Northern Lights into its final design phase, with service beginning in 2023.

Rail planners say local and state funding is critical to coaxing federal grant dollars to Minnesota. "The only way we can demonstrate support is if the state and local communities have provided sufficient money to match federal grants," said Frank Loetterle, MnDOT project manager.

One fan of the so-called "short-haul" service is Amtrak chief Richard Anderson, the former chief executive of Northwest Airlines and Delta Air Lines and executive vice president at UnitedHealth Group. Well known in Twin Cities business circles, Anderson is determined to change the transportation paradigm for passenger rail service in the United States.

"Airlines have abandoned small cities in the Midwest," Anderson said at a recent forum sponsored by the travel website Skift. "What's happened in these really dense markets, like Milwaukee to Chicago, is that Amtrak [has] over 90 percent market share; no one flies anymore.

"As these urban corridors densify, all the millennials move to cities and don't own cars, we gradually take over more and more of the market share from airlines," he said.

Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari said in an e-mail, "We're very interested in both [Northern Lights and the second train to Chicago]. We've been working closely with state and local agencies and advocates on both of the projects."

One such millennial who would frequently use service to both Duluth and to Chicago is David Baker, 27, a St. Mary's University student from Minneapolis who holds down two part-time jobs.

"I don't get vacation time at my jobs so taking weeklong trips is a very rare occurrence; a three-day weekend in Duluth or Chicago is pretty much the extent of the travel I can afford," Baker said via Twitter. "Cutting down on travel time by taking the train vs. a car would allow more time for relaxing, especially because I could be reading or finishing school assignments while on the train. I'd also feel better about the lower carbon emissions."



10/30/2019

Rail backers plot their push for Duluth line, second Chicago train - StarTribune.com

Amtrak could operate both the Chicago and Duluth service. "They provide service between places like Chicago and Milwaukee and Boston and Portland, Maine, and they're doing it like a vendor," said MnDOT's Loetterle. "They take in passenger fares, but if there's a shortfall then the state has to make that up. So [Amtrak] doesn't have any risk in those situations."

Another challenge involves reaching agreements to use track owned by freight railroads — notoriously tough to negotiate with. "We'll evaluate the Northern Lights Express project for safety and impacts to our freight capacity," said Amy McBeth, spokeswoman for BNSF Railway, which owns freight track between the Twin Cities and Duluth. (Canadian Pacific owns the track that would be used for the second train to Chicago.)

Last week, the Minnesota House Transportation Committee held a hearing in Winona about the second Chicago train project. "We visited the rail depot and all these passengers were sitting around the station because the train was very late because of snow in Montana and Wyoming and freight issues in North Dakota," said Rep. Alice Hausman, DFL-St. Paul. That reinforced how a second train from St. Paul wouldn't be dogged with similar delays, she said.

Rep. Paul Torkelson, R-Hanska, who serves on the committee, said reliable service on a second train to Chicago "might make it a more useful service," but he stopped short of supporting the proposal. The Northern Lights Express project, he said, is "a lot further from reality."

"Our history with passenger rail in this state is not all that pretty," Torkelson said, referring to Northstar passenger rail, a highly subsidized route between Minneapolis and Big Lake.

But Mayor Mark Peterson said Winona is "100 percent behind it. We think it will help not only our business community, but universities and tourism here. Come to think of it, we're 120 percent behind it."

Transportation reporter **Janet Moore** covers trains, planes, automobiles, buses, bikes and pedestrians. Moore has been with the Star Tribune for 21 years, previously covering business news, including the retail, medical device and commercial real estate industries.

janet.moore@startribune.com 612-673-7752



10/31/2019

Jeffrey Dehler Mail - GRR Action Alert – Your input needed on Governor’s bonding bill



Jeff Dehler <jeff@dehlerpr.com>

GRR Action Alert – Your input needed on Governor’s bonding bill

1 message

Great River Rail Commission <info@greatriversrail.org>
 Reply-To: info@greatriversrail.org
 To: jeff@dehlerpr.com

Thu, Oct 31, 2019 at 9:37 AM



October 31, 2019

Great River Rail Action Alert

Dear Great River Rail Supporters:

The Governor wants to hear from you! Take action now.

Funding for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Second Train could be included in the Governor’s bonding bill if he receives input from Minnesotans. To provide a second round-trip, \$10 million in state funding is needed to match a federal grant application to construct track, signal and station improvements in Minnesota.

Wisconsin will request funding from their legislature, and we need to work together! Click [this link](#) to provide your opinion before Nov. 30.

Provide your opinion!

Instructions:

Fill in your name, email, and zip code.

Select “Ramsey County” under Q4, Local entity requesting funding

Click next,

Select “Ramsey County – Twin Cities Milwaukee Chicago Second Train”

Click next,



10/31/2019

Jeffrey Dehler Mail - GRR Action Alert – Your input needed on Governor's bonding bill

Fill out the last three questions and click submit.

More info:

(From the Minnesota Management and Budget website) Earlier this year, local governments submitted more than 200 requests for investment in their communities, totaling more than \$1.3 billion, for consideration during the 2020 Legislative session. We want your input! Fill out our online form to comment on local government investment projects up for consideration in the 2020 capital budget (bonding) bill. Let us know what projects you support and why. Governor Walz will review this information with Minnesota Management and Budget staff as they develop his capital budget proposal which will be submitted to the Legislature in January 2020. The public comment period will be open through Nov. 30.



Union Depot, Suite 200, 214 4th St. E.
St Paul, MN 55101
Website: greatriversrail.org
Phone: (651) 266-2790
Email: info@greatriversrail.org

**SECOND TRAIN
GET INVOLVED
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NEWS**

Header photo courtesy of Amtrak/Marc Glucksman

Great River Rail Commission | Union Depot, Suite 200, 214 4th Street East, Saint Paul, MN 55101

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Agenda Item #9



TO: Great River Rail Commission
FROM: Staff
DATE: October 31, 2019
RE: Report on the Minnesota Legislature Mini-Session in Winona
ACTION: Information

From 1985 to 1997, the Minnesota House of Representatives held extensive hearings and forums away from the State Capitol. Occurring mainly in odd-numbered years, these "mini-sessions" were held to expand legislators' horizons and to give citizens living outside of St. Paul more access to legislative proceedings. Mini-sessions were often centered in a specific city with hearings held in cities and towns in the surrounding region.

Between 1998 and 2018, there were no formal mini-sessions but hearings were occasionally held around the state. Rather than mini-sessions on a variety of topics, committee hearings were selected based on topics of interest to citizens in the chosen city and region. The mini-session tradition was revived in 2019 by the House of Representatives with meetings in Winona on October 2-4, the 30th anniversary of the 1989 Winona/Rochester mini-session.

Seventeen House committee hearings were scheduled. The hearings were open to the public and people were invited to testify. Commission members Paul Schollmeier and Sean Dowse testified before the House Transportation Finance and Policy Division on behalf of the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train, as did several project supporters from the Winona area and All Aboard Minnesota.

