

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
DODGE COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY
MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF DODGE)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2015-01 Meeting

The Dodge County Regional Railroad Authority met in regular session March 24, 2015, in the Commissioner's Room at the Courthouse Annex, Mantorville, MN, at 6:38 p.m. CST. County Administrator Jim Elmquist opened the meeting at 6:38 p.m. CST.

Meeting Convened

The County Administrator acknowledged those present and established that there was a quorum:

Those Present

Members present:	John Allen	District #1
	Tim Tjosaas	District #2
	Rodney Peterson	District #3
	Steven Gray	District #5
Members absent:	David Erickson	District #4
Also present:	Jim Elmquist	County Administrator
	Becky Lubahn	Deputy Clerk

County Administrator Jim Elmquist took nominations for the position of Chair of the Dodge County Regional Railroad Authority. Commissioner Peterson nominated Commissioner Allen, Commissioner Tjosaas seconded the nomination. The County Administrator called three times for further nominations. Hearing none, the County Administrator closed nominations. Motion by Erickson seconded by Tjosaas to cast a unanimous ballot for John Allen as Chair of the Dodge County Regional Rail Authority for 2015. *Motion adopted unanimously.*

Commissioner Allen
Elected Chair for
2015

The meeting was turned over to the new Chair, John Allen.

Meeting Turned
Over to New Chair

Commissioner Allen took nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Dodge County Regional Railroad Authority. Commissioner Erickson nominated Commissioner Gray, Commissioner Peterson seconded the nomination. Commissioner Allen called three times for further nominations. Hearing none, the Chair closed nominations. Motion by Erickson seconded by Peterson to cast a unanimous ballot for Steven Gray as Vice Chair of the Dodge County Regional Railroad Authority for 2015. *Motion adopted unanimously.*

Commissioner Gray
Elected Vice Chair
for 2015

Commissioner Allen took nominations for the position of Secretary/Treasurer of the Dodge County Regional Railroad Authority. Commissioner Erickson nominated Commissioner Tjosaas, Commissioner Peterson seconded the nomination. The Chair called three times for further nominations. Hearing none, the Chair closed nominations. Motion by Erickson seconded by Peterson to cast a unanimous ballot for Tim Tjosaas as Secretary/Treasurer of the Dodge County Regional Railroad Authority for 2015. *Motion adopted unanimously.*

Commissioner
Tjosaas Elected
Secretary/
Treasurer for 2015

The Chair appointed County Administrator Jim Elmquist as the Clerk of the Dodge County Regional Railroad Authority.

Clerk Appointed

Motion by Tjosaas seconded by Peterson to approve and adopt the agenda as presented. *Motion adopted unanimously.*

Agenda Approved

General discussion took place regarding where things are at with the zip rail discussions, high speed rail discussions, etc. There were no members of the public present in the audience for this discussion item other than the two members of the news media who regularly attend the County Board meetings.

Railroad Projects Discussion

The Board discussed the need for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) if the zip rail route ends up going through Dodge County. It was noted that primary funding for an EIS will come from the State.

Discussion took place regarding the pros and cons to having a Dodge County representative on the Zip Rail Board.

Commissioner Allen felt having a member on this Board could be construed as Dodge County supports a zip rail route through Dodge County.

Commissioner Erickson commented the reason for having representation at the zip rail meetings is 1) to make sure Dodge County isn't left out of the conversation since their decisions may impact our county, and 2) to have someone available at the meetings to voice our concerns and remind them that Dodge County opposes any plans to build a zip rail through our county.

Commissioner Allen questioned whether or not there was still a need for a representative on the Zip Rail Board.

It was the consensus of the rest of the County Board that Dodge County does still need representation on this board. Commissioner Allen didn't agree with that concept.

Discussion took place regarding the fact that private investors may be willing to contribute money towards a zip rail project in Minnesota.

Commissioner Peterson commented there will still be taxpayer's expenses associated with the proposed zip rail project.

Commissioner Peterson felt it was important to reemphasize Dodge County's opposition to a zip rail in our county.

Commissioner Gray informed the Board that Concord Township passed a resolution on March 12, 2015 in opposition of a zip rail in Dodge County. A copy of the resolution will be placed with agenda packet material for this meeting.

Commissioner Peterson questioned what the intent of the high speed rail was. Was it to get people to come to Rochester from the cities or to get people from Rochester to the cities? If the intent is to get people from Rochester to the cities, he felt they were taking money and business away from Rochester by supporting the zip rail.

It was Commissioner Erickson's opinion that the idea of the zip rail was to get people from other areas to come to Rochester.

Railroad Projects
Discussion -
Continued

Dodge County resident Mark Moenning arrived to the meeting and informed the Board that he has been in contact with other citizen regarding the high speed rail proposal.

Mr. Moenning shared with the Board his understanding of the high speed rail proposal. It was Mark Moenning's understanding that no money was available for this project at the federal level. Mr. Moenning reported they are being told the high speed rail will be built without public funding.

Mark Moenning informed the Board the zip rail route has been narrowed to two options, either along the Highway 52 corridor or the Highway 56 corridor.

Mr. Moenning discussed with the Board House Bill 920. The bill pushes for no public funding to be spent on the development of the Destination Medical Center in Rochester.

Commissioner Erickson questioned where the funding was coming from to pay for the EIS.

It was Mark Moenning's belief the funding for the EIS, which is part of Tier One, would come out of the Passenger Rail Forum funding. The cost of the second study would be taken on by the new private investor as there is no support for public funding for this project.

The Board thanked Mr. Moenning for his input.

Commissioner Gray informed the Board he will continue to follow the inner city rail forum.

Motion by Gray seconded by Peterson to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. CST.
Motion adopted unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

JOHN ALLEN
CHAIR, REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY

BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK

DATED: