

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
JULY 20, 2010

The Washington County Regional Railroad Authority met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. in the Washington County Government Center, County Board Room. Present were Commissioners Kriesel, Pulkrabek, Peterson, and Weik. Commissioner Hegberg absent. RRA Chair Peterson presided. Also present were James Schug, County Administrator; Molly O'Rourke, Deputy Administrator; George Kuprian, Assistant County Attorney; Doug Johnson, County Attorney; Don Theisen, Public Works Director; Wayne Sandberg, Deputy Public Works Director; Andy Gitzlaff, Associate Planner; Greg Wood, Building Services Manager; Dan Papin, Community Services Director; Patrick Singel, Deputy Community Services Director; Robert Crawford, Workforce Center Division Manager; Richard Backman, Community Services Division Manager; Sheriff Bill Hutton; Chief Deputy Sheriff Mike Johnson; Tom Adkins, Community Corrections Director; Lowell Johnson, Director of Public Health and Environment; Judy Hunter, Senior Program Manager; Kevin Corbid, Director of Property Records and Taxpayer Services; Jennifer Wagenius, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Division Manager; Mjyke Nelson, Information Technology Director; Nancy Brase, Administrative Services Manager; and Yvonne Klinnert, Public Information Coordinator II.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY MINUTES

Commissioner Kriesel moved to adopt the Regional Railroad Authority Minutes from June 22, 2010. Commissioner Pulkrabek seconded the motion and it was adopted unanimously; Commissioner Hegberg absent.

SUPPORT FOR THE TIGER II FEDERAL GRANT FOR THE UNION DEPOT

Commissioner Kriesel moved to adopt **Resolution No. RRA-2010-006** as follows:

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Support for the Submittal of a Transportation Investment
Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II Federal Grant for the
Union Depot Multi-Modal Transit Hub in Downtown St. Paul
by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

WHEREAS, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) will be submitting a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II federal grant request for \$90 million for the Union Depot Multi-modal Transit Hub in St. Paul; and

WHEREAS, the RCRRA has purchased the Union Depots head house and concourse in the process of assembling 40 acres of property for the implementation of a multi-modal transit hub at the Union Depot; and

WHEREAS, this request is consistent with recognition of the Union Depot as a Project of National and Regional Significance in SAFETEA-LU; and

WHEREAS, the award of this funding will allow the build out of the station so that it can accommodate Amtrak, high speed rail, light rail transit, commuter rail, inter and intra city buses, pedestrians, and bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, the Union Depot Multi-modal Transit Hub is the St. Paul station for high speed rail serving the Twin Cities and Chicago and for the Red Rock Corridor Commuter Rail line; and

WHEREAS, the Rush Line and potentially the I-94 Corridor will also share a stop at the Union Depot; and

WHEREAS, improvements in the Union Depot create the opportunity for one investment to benefit multiple transportation corridors; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority hereby supports the efforts by the RCRRA to seek \$90 million in TIGER II funding for the build out of the Union Depot Multi-modal Transit Hub in St. Paul.

Commissioner Peterson seconded the motion and it was adopted 4-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Kriesel, Pulkrabek, Weik, and Peterson; Nays, none; Commissioner Hegberg absent.

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Commissioner Weik noted that Washington County is not obligated to any funding by passing this resolution. Andy Gitzlaff, Associate Planner, stated that is correct the county is not obligated to any funding of the depot and this resolution would not obligate funding.

Commissioner Weik stated that part of this grant would be to expand or help inter and intra city buses, regular route bus service. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that is correct. The depot is planned to have local buses as well as express buses and inter-city Jefferson line buses.

Commissioner Weik asked if this would help the east metro, specifically Woodbury, to have expanded bus service. Right now Woodbury does not have evening or weekend service. Would this resolution be a step toward that? She really wants the county to advocate for more expanded bus service in the east metro. Mr. Gitzlaff stated he believes the Commissioner is right with that assumption that the Union Depot can help spur other bus lines; in particular Woodbury and bus service will be looked at as part of the I-94 alternative analysis.

Commissioner Weik understands this would also help to build out the station so it could accommodate bicyclists. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that is correct. Commissioner Weik asked if he had any details on that, or is it just buses that have the carry platform on the front. Commissioner Peterson stated this is the actual station improvements.

Commissioner Peterson asked when the last presentation of the Union Depot plans was before the Board. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that Mortenson has the design/build contract for the Union Depot and they have made presentations as requested to boards or commissions to give presentations on that project. A presentation was given to the Red Rock Commission in April and they are targeting the I-94 Corridor to give a similar update.

Commissioner Peterson asked if one has been given to this board. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that there has not been a presentation to this board in about a year and a half. That is something that could be requested of Ramsey County.

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Commissioner Peterson stated that Commissioner Weik brings up good questions about the design. These are items that she has seen at various presentations, but she is not sure the entire Board has seen them. The design of the Union Depot and how it has embraced the multi-modal use is very unique. They even took into consideration taxis, private cars, buses, bicyclists, and rail. She feels this is one of the better designs. She feels it would be good for the County Board to see that plan.

Commissioner Weik also asked that the presentation show the ramifications, both pro and con, to the businesses in that area. Commissioner Peterson stated it is very positive to the business community. It enhances the entire development.

Commissioner Kriesel agreed with Commissioner Weik about continually looking for improvements to bus service and express bus service. He is in strong support of the Union Depot; it will be the key hub for Washington County.

Commissioner Weik cautiously supports the resolution. She is worried about the expanding federal deficit, but she does want Washington County to work on and maybe be a driver for creating an east metro coalition. This will help the Stillwater Bridge project and the I-94 Corridor. She will support this today, but with an eye to the ever expanding federal deficit and the fact that this Depot project has a very large price tag on it.

GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR THE RED ROCK AND RUSH LINE CORRIDOR ADVANCED ALTERNATIVES

Andy Gitzlaff, Associate Planner, reviewed grant applications for the Red Rock and Rush Line Corridor Advanced Alternatives Analysis work: the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II grant and the Alternatives Analysis (AA) Livability grant. The county is requesting a maximum of \$3,000,000 for the Tiger II grant and a maximum of \$2,000,000 for the AA Livability grant. The local match for the Tiger II grant would be \$750,000, Washington County's portion of \$225,000; and the local match for the AA Livability grant would be \$500,000, Washington County's

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portion of \$150,000. Sources identified to fund these matching grants would be the Regional Railroad Authority levy. The costs could be built in over the 2011 and 2012 fiscal years. There are already budgeted funds to go to Red Rock and Rush Line as part of those years. The other option is the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) funds. Washington County has the exemption where the county can use the CTIB funds for planning studies to advance the corridor. This would be an eligible source for that local match. If the county was successful in obtaining these applications, they would need to get the projects started by September of 2012 for the TIGER II grants and within 12 months for the Alternatives Analysis Livability grant which would probably be the end of 2011.

Commissioner Weik thought that Ramsey County was a lead agency for Rush Line. Mr. Gitzlaff stated they discussed this with Ramsey County staff. It was more of a work load decision. Ramsey County is focused on the Union Depot. As Washington County is going forward with Red Rock, there was some economy to focus on Rush Line at the same time since they are two very important east metro corridors, and they saw some system benefits in going for both. They expect that Ramsey County will continue to be the lead on the Rush Line Corridor moving forward.

Commissioner Weik asked if they would provide funding for the local match. The table has changed drastically from what she reviewed over the weekend. Mr. Gitzlaff stated what was done with the chart before the Board today was to just focus on the grant applications. That chart that was on the Board Action started to lay out what it would take, total dollar amounts, to take both of these corridors through advanced environmental work and locally preferred alternatives. That is a higher amount than the amount that is in this grant. These grants are just focusing on getting the funds going, what would be required as far as this grant submittal.

Commissioner Weik stated if the grants were received, there is a tight deadline and the projects would have to get started by September 2011. The sheet that she looked at this past weekend showed funding would be use of fund balance. So by default, the county would be designating \$375,000 worth of fund balance toward Rush Line and Red Rock Corridor. She has a lot of concerns about designating fund balance at a time when they know that the State of Minnesota is poised to withhold more of their

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program aide. She is not comfortable with this resolution and believes there are a lot of unanswered questions regarding the AA Livability grant. She appreciates that more information was provided today on that.

Commissioner Kriesel stated the county is not committing to anything other than submitting the application for the grants. The Board could hold a workshop that could address some of the concerns that Commissioner Weik has. He feels they have to be careful that they don't just piecemeal what's going to be approved or not approved. That is not a good path to follow. The concerns that Commissioner Weik raises are worthy of answers. If they are awarded the grant, the Board could always turn it down. He believes the Board should have a workshop and sort this out.

Commissioner Peterson moved to approve the submittal of two grant applications by the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority for Red Rock and Rush Line Corridor Advanced Alternatives Analysis work: the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II Grant and the Alternatives Analysis (AA) Livability Grant. Commissioner Kriesel seconded the motion and it was adopted 3-1 with a vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Kriesel, Pulkrabek, and Peterson; Nays, Commissioner Weik; Commissioner Hegberg absent.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Regional Railroad Authority, Commissioner Pulkrabek moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Kriesel and it was adopted unanimously; Commissioner Hegberg absent. The Regional Railroad Authority adjourned at 9:37 a.m.

Myra Peterson, Chair
Regional Railroad Authority

Attest:

James R. Schug
County Administrator