

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
JUNE 20, 2023**

The Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) met in regular session at 9:35 a.m. in the Washington County Government Center, County Board Room. Present were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Kriesel, Bigham, and Clasen. WCRRA Chair Karla Bigham presided. Also present were Kevin Corbid, County Administrator; Susan Tice, County Attorney Civil Division Chief; Stephanie Kammerud, Administrative Assistant; and county staff.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of WCRRA Minutes from May 9, 2023

Commissioner Karwoski moved to approve the WCRRA meeting minutes from May 9, 2023. Commissioner Clasen seconded the motion, and it was adopted unanimously.

PUBLIC WORKS

Resolution to Set Permit Fee for the Forest Lake School District

Planning Manager Lyssa Leitner presented a resolution to set the permit fee at \$0.75 per square foot of impacted surface of property for the Forest Lake School District's bus parking and direct staff to execute the permit.

Ms. Leitner reported that in 1994, the WCRRA began purchasing Burlington Northern Santa Fe property for future transit. Hardwood Creek Trail is in the WCRRA right-of-way (ROW).

In 2017, WCRRA worked with the Forest Lake School District to permit its encroachment on WCRRA property for school bus parking and WCRRA approved a five-year permit. The school district acknowledges that the county would prefer they vacate the ROW, however, they need more time to relocate buses.

In summer 2022, the school district indicated that they would like to renew the permit for an additional five years to give them time to assess their needs. WCRRA approved a new five-year permit in September 2022. After the permit approval, the school superintendent requested a reduction in the annual fee.

Ms. Leitner stated the WCRRA Property Management Plan guidance established the rate for use of ROW is \$1.50 per square foot for the first five years. If the permittee meets performance expectations, WCRRA can choose to set a different rate or keep \$1.50 per square foot for another five years. The school district has been a good partner with this use, with no additional encroachment and well-maintained facilities. School buses are a form of transit service that serves the community, and the long-term goal of the Plan is to preserve the corridor for future transit use. Eventually, above ground use of ROW in the WCRRA/Hardwood Creek Trail Corridor by permit will end.

Ms. Leitner is requesting to amend the permit that was approved in September 2022 to reduce the rate by half, from \$1.50 to \$0.75 per square feet, for the next five-year term. The fee would be \$16,080 annually from 2023-2027. The encroachment allows the trail to function, and Rush Line is not anticipated in the next five years.

Commissioner Miron moved to adopt **Resolution No. RRA-2023-004** as follows:

**RESOLUTION TO SET THE PERMIT FEE FOR THE
FOREST LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT BUS PARKING**

WHEREAS, Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) adopted a Property Management Plan in 2002 that addresses current and future uses of WCRRA property, current access to the property and future access needs, current condition of the property, and disposal of the property; and

WHEREAS, the Property Management Plan has goals to preserve linear corridors and provide transportation uses that are compatible with the current and proposed land uses in affected jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, the WCRRA began purchasing Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) property for future transit and that right-of-way (ROW) is currently occupied by the Hardwood Creek Regional Trail; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the WCRRA began working with the Forest Lake School District to permit their 21,440 square foot encroachment on WCRRA property for school bus parking; and

WHEREAS, the WCRRA approved a five-year permit that escalated in price to the full \$1.50 per square foot amount of \$32,160, which expired at the end of 2022, to allow temporary use of WCRRA ROW for the school bus parking; and

WHEREAS, the School District requested a reduced fee for the encroachment for the next five year permit; and

WHEREAS, the Property Management Plan allows the WCRRA to set a rate if the permittee's previous performance was satisfactory.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority hereby sets the fee at \$0.75 per square foot of impacted surface of property for the Forest Lake School District's bus parking and directs staff to execute the permit.

Commissioner Kriesel seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Kriesel, Clasen, and Bigham. Nays, none.

Resolution to Appoint Alternate to the Gold Line Joint Powers Board

Senior Planner Sara Allen presented a resolution to appoint Commissioner Karla Bigham as alternate to the Gold Line Joint Powers Board. Ms. Allen stated that the Gold Line Joint Powers Board functions as financial oversight to the METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit project. Commissioners Clasen and Karwoski serve alongside designated Ramsey County commissioners on the board. The METRO Gold Line has moved into active phases of construction, and legal counsel has advised that there should be an alternate on the board, should there ever be a need to take an action with immediacy.

Commissioner Miron moved to adopt **Resolution No. RRA-2023-005** as follows:

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT AN ALTERNATE MEMBER TO THE GOLD LINE JOINT POWERS BOARD

WHEREAS, the Gold Line Joint Powers Board was established on July 23, 2019, as a joint powers board under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Section 471.59 and Chapter 398A; and

WHEREAS, the Gold Line Joint Powers Board acts as financial and contingency management oversight to the METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit project; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority appoints a representative to the Gold Line Joint Powers Board annually; and

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 1.b of the Gold Line Joint Powers Agreement and Article IV, Section 1 of the Bylaws of the Gold Line Joint Powers Board require each Party to appoint an alternate to serve on the Joint Powers Board in the event the appointed member cannot be present for a meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Commissioner Karla Bigham be appointed to the role of alternate as representative of the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority, a Party to the Gold Line Joint Powers Board.

Commissioner Clasen seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Kriesel, Clasen, and Bigham. Nays, none.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the WCRRA, Chair Bigham adjourned the meeting at 9:49 a.m.

Attest:

Kevin Corbid

Kevin Corbid
County Administrator

Karla Bigham

Karla Bigham, Chair
Washington County Regional Railroad Authority