

Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority
Minutes – January 15, 2025 – 8:30 A.M.
Redwood County Government Center, Redwood Falls, MN.

Members Present: Commissioners Steve Saxton, Bob Van Hee, Jon Robinson, Ron Antony, John Fahey, Chuck Steffl – Shipper.
Guests: Dave McKenzie – Bollig Engineering, Jeff Cooley – CDI, Greg Graham – TCW, Craig Carlson, Andrew Rigge, Bruce Rigge, Mike Beard
Staff: MVRR Admin and Staff - Kenzie Taylor, ~~M. Don Lannoye~~

1. **Administrator McKenzie Taylor** called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
2. **There were no additions** to the agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Antony, 2nd by Commissioner Robinson and carried to approve the set agenda.
3. **2025 ANNUAL MEETING**
 - a. McKenzie Taylor called the annual meeting to order and asked for nominations/election of 2025 officers.
 - i. Chairperson – A motion was made to nominate Steve Saxton by Commissioner Antony and was 2nd by Shipper Steffl. A motion was made to cease nominations and pass a unanimous vote for Steve Saxton for Board Chair by Commissioner Antony, 2nd by Commissioner Robinson. Motion passes.
 - ii. Vice Chairperson – A motion was made to nominate Ron Antony by Commissioner Robinson and was 2nd by Shipper Steffl. A motion was made to cease nominations and pass a unanimous vote for Ron Antony as Vice Chair by Commissioner Robinson, 2nd by Commissioner Fahey. Motion passes.
 - iii. Treasurer – A motion was made to nominate Dennis Groebner by Commissioner Robinson and was 2nd by Shipper Steffl. A motion was made to cease nominations and pass a unanimous vote by Commissioner Robinson, 2nd by Commissioner Antony. Motion passes.
 - b. Consent Agenda: A motion was made to approve the consent agenda by Commissioner Van Hee, 2nd by Commissioner Fahey. Motion passes.
 - i. Appointment of Administrator: RADC, McKenzie Taylor
 - ii. Appointment of Legal Counsel: Don Lannoye, Sibley Co. Attorney
 - iii. Appointment of Depository: Minnwest Bank, Redwood Falls
 - iv. Appointment of Official Newspaper: Gaylord Hub / Redwood Gazette
 - v. Designate Regular Meeting Dates / Locations
 1. Odd months – Redwood County – Board room – Redwood Falls
 2. Even months – Sibley County – Board room – Gaylord
 3. 3rd Wednesday of each odd month @ 8:30 a.m. – Redwood
 4. 3rd Wednesday of each even month @ 9:30 a.m. – Gaylord
 - c. Committee Assignments: A motion was made to approve the committee assignments by Commissioner Fahey, 2nd by Shipper Steffl. Motion passes.
 - i. Rehab Committee: Chuck Steffl, Steve Saxton, Ron Antony
 - ii. Budget Committee: Ron Antony, John Robinson, Chuck Steffl
 - iii. Legislative Committee: John Fahey, Dennis Groebner, Steve Saxton
 - d. Adopt the mileage rate for 2025 @ \$.70/mile. A motion was made to approve the mileage rate by Commissioner Ron Antony, 2nd by Commissioner Van Hee. Motion passes.
 - e. **ANNUAL MEETING CLOSED**
4. **Commissioner Saxton took over control of the regular meeting. The minutes** of the December 18, 2024 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Shipper Steffl, 2nd by Commissioner Fahey, and carried to approve the minutes that were presented.

5. New Business:

- a. **CDI – CRISI Grant Update:** Jeff Cooley provided an update on the CRISI Grant project, noting continued progress on NEPA requirements. The wetland delineation and cultural resources survey have been completed, with no issues found in the cultural assessment. With a solid foundation in place, the team is now preparing to move into the preliminary design phase. The next step is developing the Purpose and Need document, which will outline the project's significance. This document is expected to be completed by March. Following that, the team will have 12 months to secure approval for the Environmental Analysis, marking the completion of Phase 1 of the project.
 - b. **Omega Application submitted** to replace a monopole and to install an aerial transverse wireline crossing consisting of four 4.16kV electric wirelines at MP 73.22 near 2nd St. South in Gaylord. Motion to approve the application by Commissioner Antony, 2nd by Commissioner Robinson. Motion passes.
6. **Don Lannoye:** Presented the updated bylaws for the board to review. The board agreed we should have Don brush up on open meeting law for our next meeting to see how we can accomplish implementing zoom for our regular meetings in the future and what that would look like.

7. Dave McKenzie:

- a. Dave presented an RFP for engineering services to address work needed on four bridges along the line. He and Kenzie will adjust the study's completion timeline before finalizing the document. The RFP is due back to the RADCO office by February 13, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. After the meeting, Kenzie will distribute the RFP to various engineering firms.
- b. We received two quotes for Bridges 107.07 and 118.00: Koppers at \$124,780.00 and E80+ Constructors at \$108,087.00. Commissioner Antony made a motion to proceed with E80+ Constructors, seconded by Commissioner Fahey. The motion passed.

8. Administrative Report:

- a. **Conflict of interest forms** were filled out and returned to Kenzie. She will file them when she gets back to the office.
- b. **The Commissioners roster** was passed out with update information for the board. Updates were provided to McKenzie and she will send to the entire board.
- c. **CRISI Reimbursement and Q Reports:** Kenzie informed the board that we have received our second CRISI reimbursement and the quarter 4 reports have been submitted and approved.
- d. **MRSI Grant:** The MRSI grant has one more invoice to be submitted and then Kenzie will work with Meredith to closeout that grant. The remaining grants that are active then are the 2M Legislated Grant, the CRISI Grant, and the IJA grant.
- e. **IJA Grant:** is awaiting final signature. Once the MMB Commissioner signs the agreement, Kenzie and Meredith will work together to figure out how invoicing will go. This grant will cover our non-reimbursable expenses from the CRISI Grant.
- f. **Omega/CCOM** Omega informed Kenzie that they are working with CCOM on the changes that were accepted at the last meeting for the billboard structures in Gaylord.
- g. **NARCOA Ride:** NARCOA would like to ride our line on August 16th. The board agreed that date would be fine. Kenzie will send the paperwork back to NARCOA.
- h. **Taxes:** Kenzie has been working with Oberloh accounting to prepare the 1099s for the 2024 tax year. The bill for this work will be in the next month's payables.

9. Financial Report:

- a. **Kenzie:** presented the monthly payables for approval along with the Budget vs Actual as of 1/13/2025, the balance sheet as of 1/13/2025, the MAGIC Fund account register, the ICS account register, and the Profit and Loss for 2024. A motion was made by Shipper Steffl, 2nd by Commissioner Robinson, and carried to approve the financials.

10. Operator Report:

- a. **Greg Graham** informed the board that they are working with MNDOT for final inspections. They continue to cut down trees and brush, and they are working on putting out advertisements for the speed increases.
 - b. **Jace Whitcomb:** In the month of December, MPLI moved 808 carloads vs a budget of 668 carloads, up 140 carloads. Year to date MPLI moved 9,263 carloads vs a budget of 8,338 up 925 carloads. In December, the ethanol plant moved five ethanol trains and three DDG sweep trains. MPLI had a good month moving organic grain from Redwood Falls and we continued to move corn from TCW to the ethanol plant. Storage inquiries remain low as we move into 2025.
- 11. Mike Beard:** talked about recent events in the state legislature, including a Senate vacancy and special election after a legislator's passing. The governor may have called the election too soon, leading to legal debates. In the House, Democrats refused to attend the opening session, so Republicans elected a speaker and set up committees without them. It's unclear when Democrats will return or how disputed seats will be handled. The Senate is working with a bipartisan system where committees have co-chairs from both parties, and bills need support from both sides to be heard. There's also an ongoing legal battle over whether a legislator was properly elected. Mike also spoke about past election issues, voting concerns, and political power struggles. Budget talks are in progress, with funding for infrastructure being a major focus. The overall situation remains uncertain, with political tensions running high.
- 12. 2025 Meeting Dates** will be posted on our website and are included on the agenda for board members to add to their calendars.
- 13. Adjournment** – Meeting was adjourned at 10:21 a.m.

Date: 2-19-25 Signature: 

