

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

March 17, 2009

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority met in the Council Chambers, Third Floor Court House, with the following members present: Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 6. Absent: Bennett - 1.

Chair McDonough called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM

AGENDA

Commissioner Carter moved approval of the Agenda of the March 17, 2009 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Roll Call: Ayes – Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Carter, Ortega, McDonough – 6. Nays – 0. Motion accepted.

MINUTES

Commissioner Reinhardt moved approval of the Minutes from the January 20, 2009 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Roll Call: Ayes – Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Carter, Ortega, McDonough – 6. Nays – 0. Motion accepted.

1. Approval of the I-94 Joint Powers Agreement

Commissioner Ortega moved approval of the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt.

Commissioner Rettman pointed out that the language on line 23 of the draft resolution should be consistent with the Joint Powers Agreement document so that it says “bus rapid transit”.

The Commissioners agreed with the change.

Roll Call: Ayes – Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Carter, Ortega, McDonough – 6. Nays – 0. Motion accepted. (R09-09)

WHEREAS, The I-94 Corridor currently carries over 130,000 vehicles a day at Trunk Highway 52 and 110,000 vehicles a day at I-694; and

WHEREAS, The Draft 2030 Transportation Policy Plan forecasts traffic and congestion to increase substantially by 2030 resulting in congestion/congestive conditions for the entire length of I-94 from the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul to the St. Croix River; and

WHEREAS, The Draft 2030 Transportation Policy Plan identifies the I-94 Corridor as a transitway corridor in need of analysis; and

WHEREAS, This analysis is needed to identify how mobility can be maintained and improved in the Corridor; and

WHEREAS, Transitway analysis has been completed by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and its partners on similar transitway corridors such as Red Rock and Rush Line; and

WHEREAS, This partnership has been formalized through joint powers agreements; and

WHEREAS, A joint powers agreement has been drafted allowing the Washington and Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authorities in partnership with Corridor cities and towns to advocate for and analyze the feasibility, environmental impacts, engineering, and construction of a multi-modal transportation system that may include light rail, bus rapid transit, commuter rail, multi-use trails,

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and associated land use and development impacts along the corridor; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority approves the I-94 Corridor Joint Powers Agreement, and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority authorizes the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the I-94 Corridor Joint Powers Agreement, and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority authorizes a payment in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 for its share of the cost of the agreement, and Be It Further

RESOLVED, Authorize the County Manager to make all necessary budget adjustments in a form approved by Budgeting and Accounting, and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority hereby appoints Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt as the I-94 Corridor Commission representative for 2009.

2. Support of a \$500 million request for the design and construction of Minnesota's portion of the St. Paul to Chicago High Speed Rail Corridor

Chair McDonough introduced the following resolution and explained that it contains a resolve that would allow them to work jointly with Wisconsin to possibly create one joint proposal for the build out of the entire line.

Commissioner Ortega moved approval, seconded by Commissioner Parker.

Commissioner Rettman recommended two amendments to the resolution: omit the word "was" on line 28; change lines 36 and 37 of the first resolve to "including the study of a possible future connection to Minneapolis and beyond".

Commissioner Reinhardt asked for reassurance that the language regarding the possible extension to Minneapolis in the resolution was consistent with the language agreed to previously.

Chair McDonough confirmed that the language was consistent and should remain as amended.

Commissioner Rettman also pointed out that the language in the whereas on lines 25 and 26 needed to match the amended resolve.

The amendment was accepted as friendly.

Roll Call: Ayes – Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Carter, Ortega, McDonough – 6. Nays – 0. Motion accepted. (R09-10)

WHEREAS, The Midwest Regional Rail Initiative has identified a High Speed Rail corridor between the Twin Cities and Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the identified Corridor is federally designated and enters Minnesota at La Crescent and travels northwest along the Canadian Pacific Railway track to the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Recovery and Investment Act provides \$8 billion for the implementation of High Speed Rail; and

WHEREAS, accessing this funding requires an application be submitted by a state, group of states, or Amtrak; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Transportation is requesting project sponsors to submit potential stimulus projects for their review and support; and

WHEREAS, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority is a project sponsor for High Speed Rail; and

WHEREAS, a request will need to be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, Corridor legislators recently sent a letter to members of Minnesota's federal delegation seeking their support for a \$500 million request to design and construct the Minnesota portion of the High Speed Rail corridor from the Union Depot in St. Paul to Chicago including a study of a possible future connection to Minneapolis and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the success of this request could be substantially increased if submitted in partnership with Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, all efforts to develop this dual proposal with the State of Wisconsin should be explored by legislators, the State of Minnesota, and project sponsors. Now Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, that the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority supports a request of \$500 million for the design and construction of High Speed Rail from the Union Depot in St. Paul to La Crescent along the federally designated High Speed Rail Corridor, including the study of a possible future connection to Minneapolis and beyond, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority authorizes the submittal of an application for funding to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for \$500 million, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority supports the submittal of a joint High Speed Rail request from the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation to the Federal Railroad Administration for the completion of High Speed Rail from St. Paul to Madison and Milwaukee as part of the larger St. Paul to Chicago High Speed Rail Corridor.

There being no further business, Chair McDonough declared the meeting adjourned at 10:07 AM.