

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

July 27, 2010

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority met with the following members present: Bennett, Carter, Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, McDonough – 7. Absent: 0 Also present were Julie Kleinschmidt, County Manager, and Darwin Lookingbill, Director, Civil Division, County Attorney's Office.

Chair McDonough called the meeting to order at 10:46 a.m.

AGENDA

Commissioner Bennett moved approval of the Agenda of the July 27, 2010 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0.

MINUTES

Commissioner Rettman moved approval of the Minutes of the June 22, 2010 Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Parker. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0.

1. Approval of the St. Paul Port Authority's Petition to Vacate City Interest in Duchess Street

Commissioner Bennett moved approval of the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. (R10-35)

WHEREAS, The Saint Paul Port Authority is petitioning the City of St. Paul to vacate the city's interest in Duchess Street; and

WHEREAS, The approval signature of the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority as an abutting landowner is required on the petition; Now, Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority authorizes its Chair to sign the Petition to Vacate City Interest in Duchess Street.

2. Approval of an Amendment to the Phalen Blvd. Easement with the City of St. Paul

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

Chair McDonough commented that this helps to position a couple of properties on Phalen Blvd. for redevelopment where we feel there is strong interest.

Commissioner Parker asked if this will inhibit the potential use of this property for rail.

Chair McDonough replied that future transit is always taken into consideration with these easements.

Roll Call: Ayes – Ortega, Parker, Reinhardt, Rettman, Bennett, Carter, McDonough – 7. Nays – 0. (R10-36)

WHEREAS, On July 22, 2003, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority adopted resolution number R03-39 authorizing the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority to enter into a permanent Easement with the City of Saint Paul ("Easement") for the construction of Phalen Boulevard between Payne Avenue and Johnson Parkway in the City of Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Paul desires to modify the as-built legal description and accompanying depiction (the "Description") to the Easement for purposes of allowing infrastructure modifications to Phalen Blvd.; and

WHEREAS, the modifications will compliment the redevelopment plans of the Saint Paul Port Authority's former 3M site project; Now, Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority authorizes its Chair to execute an Amendment to Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority Easement No EN 049 with the City of St. Paul, dated 2003.

3. Update on the Rush Line Commuter Coach Demonstration Project

Tim Mayasich, Director, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA), said while the majority of staff time is committed to the Union Depot and Central Corridor Light Rail Transit projects, RCRRA staff is also committed and working diligently to develop the other transit corridor projects in Ramsey County. One example of progress being made on a corridor is the Rush Line Corridor. A brief update will be given today on the work that has been progressing on the Rush Line Corridor.

Commissioner Reinhardt said, as Chair of the Rush Line Task Force (Task Force), she wanted to commend RCRRA staff working diligently on the Rush Line Corridor.

Mike Rogers, Senior Transportation Planner, RCRRA, said this project initially began in 2007 as a bus feasibility study. Since then, there have been many trials and tribulations but we are ready to move forward. He referred to the Rush Line Commuter Coach route map to explain the routing, which ultimately ends at the Union Depot; four trips are proposed in both directions during peak hours; the cost is \$3.00 each way and is consistent with the regional fare policy. He added that by being consistent with this policy, fares on the route would increase should the Metropolitan Council chose to raise them system wide during the 12 months of this service. Funding for service is being provided by the RCRRA, as well as the counties of Anoka, Chisago, and Washington. Federal funds will also provide a portion of the funding. The Task Force is the lead in decision making and will select the service provider, determine routing and stops, and make changes to should they be needed to increase ridership and speed. The Met Council has been asked to take an active role in this project and will do so through contract administration. The service is budgeted for 12 months, with an estimated cost of \$751,000, which includes everything from running the buses to marketing and administering the service. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued last Tuesday, July 20th and proposals are due by Friday, August 20th. The Task Force will see the staff recommendation on September 8th, vote on a service provider, which will be forwarded to the Met Council Transportation Committee and then to the full Met Council. The Met Council will act on the Task Force's selection and award a contract on September 22nd. Service is expected to begin on or about October 18, 2010. Also, the RFP includes two additional options in that, if service is successful and funds are available, the provider will be able to offer a second and third year of service.

Commissioner Bennett asked if any facilities or buildings are being constructed in conjunction with this project.

Mr. Rogers said there is no specific construction happening with this project.

Commissioner Parker asked who will be responsible for the marketing. She also added that there has been some confusion about what the commuter coach step is since the Alternatives Analysis (AA) for the corridor has not been completed. She wanted clarification about how the project will evolve if ridership is successful.

Mr. Rogers said the Rush Line Task Force will be leading the marketing. They are beginning that process now, for example, he is meeting this week to work with Anoka County's Transportation

Management Organization, which does a lot of marketing for Anoka County's highway and transit projects. The Task Force is also going to work with the Met Council and the press.

Commissioner Reinhardt added that the two options being explored in the AA for the next level of study are light rail from White Bear Lake to the Union Depot and Bus Rapid Transit from Forest Lake/Columbus to the Union Depot. The AA process will ultimately determine the locally preferred alternative. In the mean time, we need to show that there is a demand for transit and that the ultimate transitway improvement will be successful.

Chair McDonough said it is a typical precursor for these types of corridors, particularly commuter, to start with a dedicated coach service to prepare people for what is being planned. He congratulated the Task Force on their progress.

4. Presentation on the 2011 Supplemental Budget

Julie Kleinschmidt, Ramsey County Manager, began the proposed 2010 budget presentation by saying the key to the proposed budget is that there are no changes. This is consistent with the RCRRA's long term financing plan to set a property tax levy and hold it steady for several years to allow you to build out this system.

[The 2011 Supplemental Budget is on file with the RCRRA office]

Ms. Kleinschmidt reviewed the budget schedule by saying they are running the RCRRA on the same schedule as the County's: RCRRA budget hearing is scheduled for August 17, 2010; RCRRA sets the maximum 2011 property tax levy on September 7, 2010; public hearings will be held on August 17 and November 29, 2010; approval of the 2011 budget and levy will take place on December 14, 2010. She gave the budget overview. The large increase in budget and revenue in the 2011 budget includes the remaining budget necessary to complete the Union Depot Project. She explained that revenue reflects all revenue from non-property tax sources and the RCRRA has been successful in attracting other revenue. It was planned that some fund balance would be used in 2010 and we are increasing the fund balance back in 2011. The property tax levy will have no increase in 2011.

Chair McDonough commented that the long term plan set in 2005 with the levy increase was to have the fluctuations occur in the fund balance rather than on the property tax levy.

Commissioner Rettman said in the County Board presentation of the overall County budget it was mentioned that some adjustments were made between 2010 and 2011 and asked if adjustments were also made here that are not reflected.

Ms. Kleinschmidt said the revenue line in the budget is a combination of many different funding sources. Depending on the amount of additional federal and state funds we are able to attract, the amount may change within the revenue and will ultimately drive how much the RCRRA bonds for. She also highlighted that the Union Depot project is fully budgeted and that the RCRRA continues to pursue funding opportunities at the local, state, and federal levels. If the RCRRA is unable to secure additional state and federal funding for the Union Depot project, the RCRRA will need to finance the budget using bonding or some other type of loan option. An upcoming Request for Board Action will present information on the next phase of construction on the Union Depot with details on financing. She closed by saying transit truly is about economic revitalization. The investments that the RCRRA is making really will leverage private investment and drive economic vitality in our region. She quoted Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, who said 'there is more to come' when she visited the Union Depot on June 26, 2010.

Commissioner Rettman asked when the other financing options would be presented to the Board.

Chair McDonough said it will be presented in September when they examine how to move forward during the construction phase for the Union Depot project. The Mortenson Team is scheduled to return in early September to present the final design and construction plan, and part of this will be how to move forward with a financing plan.

CORRIDOR UPDATES

Red Rock Corridor:

Commissioner Rettman informed the Board that resolutions are being drafted, for an upcoming RCRRA board meeting, pertaining to funding in order to move Red Rock forward. There has also been a lot of involvement and community input. The Red Rock Corridor Commission was presented with the Mortenson Team's Union Depot project update that was presented to the RCRRA Board and the High Speed Rail Commission. The next Red Rock Corridor meeting will take place on July 29, 2010.

I-94 Corridor:

Commissioner Ortega said the new name for the corridor has been set as the Gateway Corridor and the new logo is receiving its finishing touches. The Commission meets monthly and has met with Senators, Federal officials, and business figures. They have received a lot of input and business support.

35-W Corridor:

Commissioner Parker told the Board they will meet with the owner of the Minnesota Commercial Railroad this week regarding the intersection on Silver Lake Road and New Brighton where the pedestrian accident occurred. This intersection is a trail crossing, a railroad crossing, and a busy county road. They are examining the possible solution of adjusting the railroad crossing signals.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair McDonough declared the meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.