

## AGENDA

Chippewa-St. Croix Passenger Rail Commission  
Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 9:15 A.M.  
***Virtual Meeting by Microsoft Teams***

**Join on your computer, mobile app or room device**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 212 574 243 134

Passcode: JkFpxy

**Or call in (audio only)**

[+1 929-352-2178,,596298045#](#)

Phone conference ID: 596 298 045#

1. Call to Order and confirmation of meeting notice
2. Roll Call
  - Voting Members
  - Ex-officio Members (by organization)
  - All others
3. Public Comment
4. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes – **Discussion/Action**
  - January 29, 2025
5. Updates from:
  - WisDOT
  - MnDOT
  - Ramsey County
6. Resolution requesting the State of Wisconsin budget for ensuring the local match to continue the FRA Corridor Identification and Development Program for routes serving Wisconsin – **Discussion/Action**
  - Encouraging Commission member entities and others to pass similar resolutions
7. Next meeting date
  - April 30 (hybrid)
8. Announcements
9. Future meeting agenda items
10. Adjourn

## MINUTES

Chippewa-St. Croix Passenger Rail Commission  
Wednesday, January 29, 2025, at 8:30 A.M.  
***Virtual Meeting by Microsoft Teams***

Present (voting members): Gretchen Yonko, Taylor Greenwell, Gary Stene, Robbie Krejci, Jim Dunning, Scott Rogers, Ann Schell, Emily Berge (8:34 a.m.)

Present (ex-officio): Eric Anderson, Erik Guenard, Kevin Roggenbuck, Bambi Pattermann, Vic Stone, Kyran Hamill, Adam Wehling

Others: Samantha Kraegenbrink – Committee Clerk, Krista Vind (technology resource), Ray Chambers, Dan Schillinger, Emily Shively, Heather Graves, Ian Weisser, Janet Campbell-Lorenc, Jeff Abboud, Beth Kulick, Andy Olson, Sara Allen, Steve Jahn, Terry Brown

### **Call to Order and confirmation of meeting notice**

Chair Dunning called the meeting to order and confirmed meeting notice.

### **Roll Call**

Indicated above.

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 4, 2024**

Motion by Gary Stene, seconded by Ann Schell. No deletions, corrections, or additions. All in favor, motion carried.

### **FRA Scoping Study Update – HDR**

Andy Olson provided an update on the scoping study update.

### **Updates:**

- West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition
  - Scott Rogers provided an overview of the most recent West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition. A recording is available from this meeting.
  - March 5<sup>th</sup>, Chippewa Valley Rally. If interested, reach out to Scott Rogers.
  - If members would like an update/presentation to your entity, reach out to Scott Rogers.
- Ramsey County/Union Depot
  - Kevin Roggenbuck provided an update and presentation.

**Preliminary discussion on Step 2 and matching fund sources**

Scott Rogers briefly spoke about step 2 (Service Development Plan) and funding required during this step. Step 2 is a 90% federally funded study, leaving 10% for state/local entities to cover. Encourages communities to begin conversations to help identify funding for the 10%.

**Next meeting date**

The next meeting will be on March 19 (virtual only.) The following meeting will be on April 30 (hybrid.)

**Future meeting agenda items**

None at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Samantha Kraegenbrink – Committee Clerk  
*Executive Office Administrator (Eau Claire County)*

ATTEST:

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Gretchen Yonko – Commission Secretary

RESOLUTION  
Chippewa-St. Croix Rail Commission

RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE STATE OF WISCONSIN BIENNIAL BUDGET INCLUDE FUNDING TO ENSURE MATCHING FUNDS FOR CONTINUATION OF WISCONSIN-RELATED PASSENGER RAIL CORRIDOR STUDIES.

WHEREAS, passenger rail service currently provides valuable mobility and economic benefits to Wisconsin citizens and communities in select locations. The Chicago-Milwaukee Hiawatha train service has been one of the most successful services in the country, and strong ridership on the newly-implemented Borealis train between Chicago, Milwaukee, La Crosse and the Twin Cities demonstrates the pent-up demand for passenger rail service in our state and its neighbors.

WHEREAS, the expansion of passenger rail service to other high-potential Wisconsin corridors is a needed and worthwhile investment for the economic future of our state. Frequent service to more cities will help attract and retain business and the talent critical to its success; provide a convenient, economical, and environmentally-friendly alternative to driving; accelerate economic growth opportunities; improve quality of life; increase tourism; and add resiliency to our transportation system.

WHEREAS, the State Rail Plan envisions enhancement of current routes and expansion of passenger rail service to communities throughout the state including such cities as Eau Claire, Menomonie, Baldwin, Hudson, Madison, Superior, Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, Fox Cities, Green Bay, and others.

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin has made an initial commitment to the future mobility needs of our citizens and economic health of our communities through its participation and support of Step I Scoping studies underway for Wisconsin corridors in the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Corridor Identification and Development Program (CID). These are the same corridors included in the State Rail Plan.

WHEREAS, the Chippewa-St. Croix Rail Commission is the sponsor of one of those studies, Eau Claire-Twin Cities, which was supported by WisDOT, and the Commission supported WisDOT's CID applications.

WHEREAS, continued participation in the CID program provides the path needed to fully determine the feasibility of these corridors, the investments needed, and to calculate the benefits of bringing passenger trains to more cities across Wisconsin, including those in West Central Wisconsin along the Eau Claire-Menomonie-Baldwin-Hudson-Twin Cities corridor.

WHEREAS, With the Step I Scoping studies moving towards completion in 2025, it will be critical for all of these corridors to move into the next Step, Service Development Plans (SDPs). These plans are the heart of the program to provide the information necessary to identify the costs, benefits, value, and return on investment to determine the feasibility of these corridors and timeline for their implementation.

WHEREAS, the Chippewa-St. Croix Commission's proposed corridor contemplates key innovations including a competitive process for selecting an operator, applying a direct access model for use of track capacity on the host railroad, and inclusion of transportation oriented economic development as an integral part of its implementation. These innovations could provide significant benefits in terms of cost

effectiveness, reduced upfront capital requirements, and local economic development impact. As these concepts are piloted on this corridor, value from lessons learned would also accrue to WisDOT and other corridor sponsors as they chart future passenger rail development.

WHEREAS, SDPs benefit from 90% federal funding under the CID program, requiring a 10% state/local match to continue in the pipeline. Therefore, it will be important in the state's 2025-27 biennial budget to include the resources to ensure that all of these studies move forward with the needed matching funding.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, we respectfully request that the Wisconsin State Legislature, Governor Evers, and WisDOT ensure funding in the 2025-27 biennial budget and technical support are available so that all of the CID corridors serving Wisconsin successfully move into Step 2, Service Development Plans. This includes the four WisDOT-led applications (including the Milwaukee-Madison-Eau Claire-Twin Cities route) and the Chippewa-St. Croix Commission-led Eau Claire-Twin Cities regional corridor, as well as participating in an appropriate way with the Minnesota DOT-sponsored Twin Cities-Superior-Duluth corridor, and the Big Sky Rail Authority's North Coast Hiawatha corridor (Chicago-Milwaukee-Twin Cities-southern North Dakota-southern Montana-West Coast).