



SEDA-COG JOINT RAIL AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, June 14, 2023
Union County Government Center, Lewisburg, PA
12:30 p.m.

AUTHORITY MEMBERS

Russ Graham, Centre County
John Gummo, Clinton County
Scott Harvey, Lycoming County
Lisa Hoover, Northumberland County
Bob Hormell, Northumberland County
Rick Jenkins, Columbia County (via teleconference)
Brent Jones, Clinton County
Rick Maloyed, Snyder County
Dave Park, Snyder County (via teleconference)
Rob Postal, Mifflin County (via teleconference)
David Schultz, Lycoming County
John Showers, Union County
John Spychalski, Centre County
Jennifer Wakeman, Montour County
Matt Weigle, Columbia County (via teleconference)
Eric Winslow, Union County

JRA OPERATOR

Jeb Stotter, President & CEO
Diana Williams, Treasurer/Controller
Jeff Pontius, Penn Valley Railroad, L.L.C

GUESTS

Mark Rosner, Carload Express
Adam Hartzell, Baker Tilly
Sam Simon, Esq., Houston Harbaugh (for Carload Express) (via teleconference)
Andy Wagner, Counsel for Penn Valley Railroad

JRA LEGAL COUNSEL

John Bee, Esq., McQuaide Blasko
Tom Schrack, Esq. McQuaide Blasko

JRA CONSULTING PROFESSIONALS

Dan Mazur, Operating Agreement Consultant
Jason Shura, P.E., Stiffler McGraw (via teleconference)
Jeff Stover, JRA Consultant

JRA STAFF

Michelle Ballou, Program Assistant
Steven Beattie, Executive Director
Kyle Postupack, Property & Maintenance of Way Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Welcome – Chairman’s Statements

The Chairman stated that the use of audio or video recording devices at the public meeting is permitted. The Authority does not require pre-registration for recording purposes; however, any individual intending to record all or any part of the meeting must notify the Chairman or the Executive Director in advance of such recording. If the Authority recesses to Executive Session, no recording of that session shall be permitted.

Public Forum

The Chairman asked if there is any public comment to come before the Board. Mr. Wagner stated that PVRR is in favor of the agreement for Bellefonte Historical Railroad Society but would like to ensure there is no confusion with technical aspects of the agreement.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Approval of the May 10, 2023, JRA Meeting Minutes

Dr. Spychalski made a motion for the Board to approve the May 10, 2023, JRA Meeting Minutes; Mr. Showers seconded the motion; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Harvey presented the Treasurer's Report for the month of May 2023, as well as the JRA's Loan Summary, Money Market Account Financial Statement, the PIB Loan Financial Statement, and the JRA's detailed accounting associated with the operating fees paid by the Operator.

Mr. Gummo made a motion for the Board to accept the Treasurer's Report for the month of May 2023; Mr. Schultz seconded the motion; motion carried.

2022 Audit Presentation

Mr. Hartzell, CPA from Baker Tilly, presented the draft 2022 JRA audit. A copy of the draft audit was provided to Board members via email and copies were provided at the meeting. The audit is close to completion and the final audit will be presented to the Board for approval at the July meeting.

Close JSSB Business Checking Account

Mr. Beattie stated that there is one remaining account with Jersey Shore State Bank that will need to be closed and funds transferred to an First National Bank Reserve account. A letter requesting closure of Business Account was presented to the Board Officers for signature.

Mr. Winslow made a motion to approve closing the JSSB Business Checking Account and to transfer funds to the FNB Reserve account; Ms. Wakeman seconded the motion; motion carried.

Staff Report and Events Calendar

- Mr. Beattie summarized the status of various construction projects and calendar highlights.
- Mr. Beattie, and Mr. Hunter visited with ShailRail to discuss moving to a longer-term lease arrangement with the JRA. The details will need to be discussed in further detail. A new lease could be obtained by the end of this year.
- Mr. Beattie recently attended Norfolk Southern annual Short Line Meeting at the NS Headquarters in Atlanta on May 23rd and 24th.
- MS-4 Williamsport - Mr. Beattie is slowly working through the details to share with local Representatives and Senators, along with the proposed bill's effect on the JRA and statewide. The Williamsport Sanitary Municipal Authority has not responded to the letter sent on March 16, 2023.
- Mr. Postupack recently met with K.W. Resse and Shamokin Valley Railroad Staff to discuss details on the SVRR Bridge 1.48 bridge timbers replacement project in Sunbury.
- Eastern Crossing Seminar held at the Penn Stater Conference from August 22 through 25th. Some of the attendees will be Class 1 Railroads and PennDOT officials. Attendance by JRA representatives is highly recommended.

Operator Status Report

A copy of the Operator's Report was provided to Board members via email and copies were provided to Board members at the meeting. Mr. Stotter reported on the Operator's activities and rail traffic overview.

OLD BUSINESS

Bridge Engineer's Report

Mr. Shura reviewed the Bridge Engineer's Report provided in the meeting packet and gave a brief update to the Board on items included in his report.

- Two plan review submissions have been received for JVRR in Juniata Terrace Borough for a pipeline crossing and the Susquehanna River Walk Extension in Williamsport. Revised plans were received and are being reviewed. Response is pending.
- Bridge safety inspections for 2023 have continued. Nittany Bald Eagle is complete, and the report has been submitted. Lycoming Valley and JVRR field work is complete. Final deliverable is ready for signature. Field survey on the NSHR is complete with reports pending. The six bridges inspected on the SVRR. Mr. Shura does expect to complete the field inspection in early July and submit all reports prior to the August board meeting.
- 2021 RTAP Projects – Lycoming Valley RR bridge rehab project has been readvertised. The pre-bid meeting was on June 13th. The bids will be due on June 29th. A recommendation will be provided at the July meeting. NSHR Culvert Replacement at MP 207.66 bidding documents and permit application were submitted to DEP for review on June 13th. Once approval has been received the project can be advertised. Bidding will not be open until this fall.
- Bud Williams Easement (LVRR Antlers I.T. Bridge 179.44 Replacement); The signed agreement has been received. Vassallo Engineering will begin preparing proposals to submit subdivision plans to the Township.
- Shamokin Valley Railroad Section 130 – Comments from JRA and PennDOT were received and addressed. Advertisement for this project is pending receipt of several easements, Which Mr. Shura has been working with JRA staff to obtain. A let date will be established once this has been resolved.
- Selinsgrove IT Embankment Repair – Working with JRA staff for recommendations on green solutions. Exhibits and cost estimates were prepared for a going green application.

NEW BUSINESS

PADEP Grant Application Slope Stabilization Repair (S.I.T.)

Mr. Beattie stated that a need for embankment repair was identified in the Jannotti 2022 Track Inspection Report, located at approx. MP 1.5 adjacent to Susquehanna University. The JRA would like to take more of a green approach which is also more cost effective. The PADEP Growing Greener Plus Grants Program is currently open and due June 23rd. The grant application does not have an official match requirement, however PADEP guidance suggests 50%. The JRA, the Operator, and Chesapeake Conservancy have all made a financial commitment to the project. JRA staff has had discussions with SU, PADEP, and the Chesapeake Conservancy on the “green infrastructure” repair option. JRA staff and SMA have vetted the proposed bank stabilization repair option and use of Envirolok wall system, which allows for vegetative growth within the wall system.

Ms. Wakeman made a motion to approve Growing Greener Plus Grant application submission, including JRA match of \$176,000; Mr. Harvey seconded the motion; motion carried.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

CRODA LICENSE AGREEMENT (NBER – Mill Hall)

Croda contacted JRA staff regarding installing a barrier within the JRA ROW to provide protection to personnel from a new piece of equipment on Croda property. The new piece of equipment is off the JRA ROW, but the barrier will be within the ROW and approximately 25’ from the centerline of track. NBER, JRA, and Croda staff met on-site to view and approve the location. Croda will be assessed an annual fee of \$440 for the barrier, which is subject to CPI increases, and a one-time license preparation fee of \$880.00.

Mr. Jenkins made a motion to approve the Croda license agreement; Ms. Wakeman seconded the motion; motion carried.

Mifflin County Municipal Authority Easement

JRA staff was contacted by Mifflin County Municipal Authority consultant about replacing the 100-year-old existing water main with an 8” ductile iron pipe. The 8” iron pipe will be encased in a 24” steel casing pipe and will be installed by jack and bore. The Mifflin County Municipal Authority will be assessed an annual fee of \$880, subject to annual CPI adjustments, and a one-time \$880 license preparation fee. All plans have been reviewed and approved.

Mr. Jenkins made a motion to approve the Mifflin County Municipal Authority Easement Agreement; Dr. Spychalski seconded the motion; motion carried. Mr. Postal abstained.

Recording of City of Williamsport Land Sale Agreements

The City of Williamsport contacted JRA staff regarding deeds for six land parcels that were conveyed to the City by the JRA in the mid-2000s. The JRA approved the land sales, signed the deeds, and then returned them to the city. The city then paid the JRA \$54,045.00 for the land but never recorded the deeds. The city requested the JRA officers sign the deeds, and then they will record them. The JRA staff has requested copies of the recorded deeds be sent to JRA staff to ensure the deeds have been recorded.

Mr. Jenkins made a motion to approve executing deeds for the City of Williamsport JRA officers sign the deeds and Mr. Harvey 2nd motion, motion carried.

PASSENGER EXCURSIONS COMMITTEE

Discussion concerning proposed excursion round trip between Sunbury and Shamokin for the Shamokin Area Businesses for Economic Revitalization (SABER), and The National Museum of Industrial History.

The National Museum of Industrial History, and the Shamokin Area Business for Economic Revitalization (SABER) requested a round trip excursion between Sunbury and Shamokin. The discussion was concluded with the consensus that further consideration of operational feasibility for the requested trip is needed by North Shore Railroad (NSRR), Penn Valley Railroad (PVRR), and Joint Rail Authority (JRA). Mr. Beattie will arrange a conference call with representatives of all parties involved.

LEGAL

BHRS-sponsored speeder event June 17, 2023

This speeder event is locally sponsored and is not affiliated with NARCOA. Proper insurance is on file and approved by JRA Staff.

Mr. Winslow made the motion to approve the BHRS speeder event scheduled on June 17, 2023; Ms. Wakeman seconded the motion; motion carried.

Solicitor Schrack stated he has nothing further to discuss in public session and recommended that the Board recess into executive session.

Chairman Graham recessed the regular meeting at 1:45 p.m. to convene into executive session at 1:50 p.m.

Chairman Graham reconvened the regular meeting at 2:50 p.m.

Solicitor Schrack stated that the JRA Board held an executive session with its solicitor to discuss litigation and personnel matters. No action was taken in the executive session and no action was recommended at this time.

With there being no further business to come before the JRA Board, Chairman Graham adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven M. Beattie, Executive Director

I hereby certify these minutes were approved by the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority Board of Directors on July 12, 2023.



Secretary/Assistant Secretary