



SEDA-COG JOINT RAIL AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 11, 2023
Union County Government Center, Lewisburg, PA
12:30 p.m.

AUTHORITY MEMBERS

Russ Graham, Centre County
John Spychalski, 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
Michael Krentzman, Mifflin County
Rick Maloyed, Snyder County
Dave Park, Snyder County
Rob Postal, Mifflin County (via teleconference)
David Schultz, Lycoming County
John Showers, Union County
Jennifer Wakeman, Montour County
Matt Weigle, Columbia County

JRA OPERATOR

Jeb Stotter, President & CEO
Diana Williams, Treasurer/Controller

GUESTS

John Ashbridge, Carload Express
Erik Bergenthal, Carload Express Legal Counsel (via teleconference)
Sam Simon, Esq., Houston Harbaugh (for Carload Express) (via teleconference)

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 (via teleconference)

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 12:32 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

Mr. Krentzman expressed shock and sadness regarding the recent tragedy in Israel. He requested prayers for the people of Israel.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Approval of the September 13, 2023, JRA Meeting Minutes

Dr. Sychalski made a motion for the Board to approve the September 13, 2023, Joint Rail Authority Meeting Minutes; Mr. Jenkins seconded the motion; motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report

Mr. Harvey presented the Treasurer’s Report for the month of September 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. Park made a motion for the Board to accept the Treasurer’s Report for the month of September 2023, Mr. Weigle seconded the motion; motion carried.

Staff Report and Events Calendar & Q3 Budget Summary

- Mr. Beattie provided an update of the budget year to date up to Q3. There are some swings but most of this is due to some of the capital projects being delayed. There will be additional payments and potentially several reimbursements by the end of the year. Mr. Beattie stated

that 10% retainage from RTAP 15 was just received, over six months after submission for the final 10%.

- Mr. Beattie summarized the status of various construction projects and calendar highlights.
- There will be 10.66 million dollars in capital improvement projects over the next 12 months. The JRA staff will be working with Jannotti Rail Consulting, and Mr. Shura, to manage these projects.
- JRA staff attended the N.E.A.R.S conference in Portland, Maine. Mr. Beattie gained further insight into the industry, professional connections, and understanding the current state of railroading in Northeastern PA.
- Mr. Beattie recently attended Lycoming & Centre County Commissioner meetings. The Northumberland County Commissioner meeting is scheduled for October 13th. Then the nine-county tour will be complete. The meetings were very helpful with an exchange of ideas and a better understanding of the JRA's mission and purpose.
- Mr. Beattie attended the KSRRRA Meeting for Q3 in Harrisburg.
- In the meeting packet is the BHRS Excursions time table for the end of the month. JRA staff and the operator will work with BHRS on the holiday train schedule.
- Hilex and Bellefonte Yard Improvements - JRA staff submitted the reallocation of funds to allow partial reimbursement for engineering costs related to the project because the construction bid is lower than budget and the grant award.
- Summit Park Development - JRA staff recently attended the PUC field meeting to discuss current conditions, concerns, and scope of work. The Developer would like to make this a public crossing and asked the JRA if state grant funding could include this crossing as it seeks funding on the Lemont corridor for crossing upgrades. Crossing work is estimated to be \$500,000. All costs associated with this project will be paid by the developer.
- Sherwood Lumber – A ribbon cutting occurred last week. JRA staff is working with Sherwood Lumber consultants to finalize the RACP grant award. Construction for this project is anticipated to begin Spring of 2024.
- Carbon Run Branch – The operator requested that the Carbon Run track serving Shamokin Filler be reclassified to Excepted Track between Mile Post 0.41 (Mulberry Street) and Mile post 1.06 (Venn Access Rd). JRA staff consulted with Jannotti and will explore a more stringent agreement with Shamokin Filler (such as side track agreement) to have Shamokin Filler take on the responsibility for maintenance. Based on the amount of maintenance needed for the track, which is usually twenty to thirty rail cars per year, this diverts resources away from track areas with much higher rail traffic.
- The JRA Holiday Dinner will be on Wednesday, December 13th at 5:30 p.m. at the Bull Run Tap House in downtown Lewisburg. The December Board meeting will be at 3:00 p.m. The Property Management Committee Meeting will occur prior to the Board meeting if a committee meeting is necessary.

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 provided the Operator's activities and rail traffic overview.

OLD BUSINESS

Bridge Engineer's Report

- Mr. Shura reviewed the Bridge Engineer's Report for October 2023 provided in the meeting packet.
- There were several preconstruction meetings for the RTAP 2021 projects including the LVRR contract with Lycoming Supply and NSHR pipe culvert at mile post 207.66 contract with Lycoming Supply. The notice to proceed was issued on September 12th. The work is anticipated to begin in November. Also attended a pre-construction meeting for SVRR section 130 corridor project on October 10th. Work is anticipated to begin June 2024.
- The final reviews have been completed for the remaining RTAP 2021 bridge rehab projects, and an updated opinion of probable costs has been provided, which will be used for planning purposes. The easement documents and final permits will be submitted to JRA staff within the next few weeks. The bid documents were submitted to the Bureau of Rail Freight for approval to advertise the projects. The GP-11 permit has been received.
- Comments were received from PennDOT regarding the bidding documents and structural adequacy reviews for Milesburg/Moose Run Culvert. Approval was received from the final utility. It is anticipated that advertising will take place shortly. GP-11 permit was submitted earlier this month.
- Bud Williams Easement – The draft plan was received from Vasallo. Mr. Shura is working with Vasallo to get documents approved so that we can move forward with the subdivision plan.
- Nittany Bald Eagle - Port Matilda Drainage – This is not a JRA project but does occur adjacent to the NBER. The project is completed and will be closed out within the next month.
- Development of Strategic Plan – Mr. Shura is anticipating the draft strategic plan to be completed in November and will be submitted to JRA staff for approval.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Bellefonte Historical Railroad Society Lease – Oil House and Land at WYE (NBER – Bellefonte)

The BHRS has been occupying the former PRR Oil House at the Wye of the NBER – Bellefonte Branch to store railroad-related materials and equipment inside the Oil House and on the property around the house. JRA staff recently discovered that there was not an official written lease for the building and the land. The lease is for a 10-year term. In exchange for leasing the property, BHRS will be required to perform maintenance to the building, such as painting the outside, making improvements to the interior of the building, installing a fence around the perimeter of the leased area, etc. A one-time \$880.00 lease application fee will be assessed. Upon discussion there is some minor language in the lease that will need to be revised.

Mr. Jenkins made a motion to approve the BHRS Oil House Lease Agreement; Dr. Spychalski seconded the motion; motion carried.

Bellefonte Historical Railroad Society Lease – Potter Street Siding (NBER – Bellefonte)

The BHRS stores a non-operational RDC on a 500' siding off the NBER – Bellefonte Branch that runs parallel to Potter Street in Bellefonte. BHRS also uses the track to organize speeder runs. There was previously no agreement between BHRS and the JRA for use of this track. The term of this license agreement is 10 years, and a one-time license application fee of \$880.00 will be assessed. BHRS will be responsible for all track maintenance costs per the license agreement.

Dr. Spychalski made a motion to approve the BHRS Potter Street Siding License Agreement as presented; Mr. Krentzman 2nd motion, motion carried.

Jersey Shore Borough Land Sale Agreement (LVRR – Jersey Shore)

JRA staff has been working with the Jersey Shore Borough to sell them 0.83- acres of land, so the Borough can build a new public works building. Per the Agreement, the Borough must construct a fence or barrier 15' from the centerline of the track to protect JRA property and ensure rail service is not interrupted. The Borough would be responsible for all costs in preparation for this agreement, including the survey, development of the subdivision plan, etc. The Girio Agency appraised the land at \$76,022.10 for the 0.83-acre parcel.

Mr. Jenkins made a motion for the Board to approve this Land Sale Agreement with the Jersey Shore Borough as presented; Mr. Hormell seconded the motion; motion carried.

SEDA-COG JRA Easement with Mertz Real Estate Partnership (SVRR-Sunbury)

Information was included with the packet, but it is not yet complete. This will be discussed at the November 8th meeting.

LEGAL

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 1:12 p.m. to convene into executive session at 1:20 p.m.

Chairman Graham reconvened the regular meeting at 2:23 p.m.

Solicitor Schrack stated that the JRA Board held an executive session with solicitors and JRA staff including a brief discussion addressing potential real estate acquisitions, followed by updates in the litigations pending in Clinton and Columbia Counties. No action was taken in executive session and no action is recommended to be taken.

With there being no further business to come before the JRA Board, Chairman Graham adjourned the meeting at 2:24 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 November 8, 2023.



Secretary/Assistant Secretary