

NEVADA COMMISSION FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE V&T RAILWAY

Minutes of the Wednesday, March 27, 2024 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Nevada Commission for the reconstruction of the V&T Railway was held at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, in the Community Center Robert “Bob” Crowell Boardroom, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

The meeting video is available on Carson City’s website by clicking on the link below:

https://carsoncity.granicus.com/player/clip/2401?view_id=2&redirect=true

PRESENT: Chairperson David Peterson
Vice Chair Clay Mitchell
Treasurer Leah Kruse
Secretary Stephanie Hicks
Commissioner Michelle Schmitter

STAFF: Mihaela Neagos, Deputy District Attorney
Cherrie Bailey, Executive Assistant
Tamar Warren, Senior Deputy Clerk

1 – 3. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(9:01:20) – Chairperson Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Chairperson Peterson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

(9:02:26) – Chairperson Peterson entertained public comments. Secretary Hicks introduced Carson City’s Government Affairs Liaison and Public Information Officer Cameron Gresh.

5. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 28, 2024 MEETING

(9:03:02) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item and entertained comments or edits to the minutes.

(9:03:19) – **MOTION:** Secretary Hicks moved to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2024 meeting. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Kruse and carried 5-0-0.

6. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE V&T COMMISSION’S STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CHECKS PAID FEBRUARY 1-29, 2024.

(9:03:48) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item and referenced the Staff Report which is incorporated into the record. There were no comments; therefore, he entertained a motion.

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(9:04:15) – MOTION: Treasurer Kruse moved to approve the payable checks from February 1, 2024, through February 29, 2024. The motion was seconded by Secretary Hicks and carried 5-0-0. Commissioner Schmitter was informed that the payment to Gabe Willaman was for several months of track inspections.

7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADJUSTED V&T COMMISSION’S FISCAL YEAR (“FY”) 2023/2024 BUDGET REPORTS, PERIOD ENDED JANUARY 1-31,2024 AND FEBRUARY 1-29, 2024.

(9:06:25) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item and reviewed the Staff Report which included the 2023-2024 Budget Report, incorporated into the record. Storey County Comptroller Jennifer McCain noted that the February bank statement was delayed due to the budget deadlines and explained that an up-to-date report would be delivered during the April 24, 2024 meeting. Chairperson Peterson entertained comments and when none were forthcoming, a motion.

(9:13:24) – MOTION: Treasurer Kruse moved to approve the presented budget reports. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Mitchell and carried 5-0-0.

8. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF A MEMORIAL STATUE OF GROSH BROTHERS (“THE STATUE”) ON PROPERTY OWNED BY THE V&T COMMISSION.

(9:13:53) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item. Robert Thomasson and Ms. Bailey jointly presented the Staff Report and accompanying photographs which are incorporated into the record. They also responded to clarifying questions. Mr. Thomasson believed that the statue would not block the view of the Depot. Discussion ensued regarding a survey and Secretary Hicks suggested speaking to the County Assessor to find out whether a recorded map of the property exists to save money. Vice Chair Mitchell recommended speaking to Graham Ross for the survey and Secretary Hicks suggested speaking to the Clerk-Recorder’s Office for any recorded information. Vice Chair Mitchell noted the difficulties of finding clear titles as things had been “wonky” and could be problematic in getting title insurance. Ms. Neagos clarified that the Commission had the ability not to take action but to provide guidance based on the discussion. She also stated that the commission had to permit the surveyor to go on. Vice Chair Mitchell offered to represent the Commission to work with the surveyor and authorize access. Commissioner Schmitter offered to proceed with searching the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) records. There were no public comments.

(9:50:04) – MOTION: Vice Chair Mitchell moved to direct himself to work with Mr. Thomasson to provide as-needed access to conduct a survey and to authorize Commissioner Schmitter to perform a cultural/archaeological records search regarding cultural resources and artifacts. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schmitter and carried 5-0-0.

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9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE PROPOSED V&T RAILWAY FISCAL YEAR (“FY”) 2025 TENTATIVE BUDGET.

(9:51:07) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item and reminded the Commission that this was a tentative budget discussion as the submission of the tentative budget deadline was April 15, 2024, to the State Board of Taxation. Ms. McCain stated that the 2025 budget groupings were made at the request of the Nevada Board of Taxation Analyst. She also informed Vice Chair Mitchell that the granular line-item detail was also included in the packet. Ms. Bailey noted that the revenue estimates were “conservative.” She also, along with Treasurer Kruse, responded to clarifying questions. Discussion ensued regarding the addition of line items such as the purchase of a shuttle and the hiring of a driver. Treasurer Kruse recommended adding the line item for the 2025 budget with the possibility of purchasing it in a later year. Vice Chair Mitchell offered to work on adding that item to the budget – figures such as \$75,000 capital and \$10,000 for operations expenses were discussed and agreed upon.

(10:14:20) – Secretary Hicks requested the addition of the Carson City District Attorney’s Office services added to the proposed budget. Ultrasonic testing services were removed from the budget via consensus, as they would not be performed in 2025. Secretary Hicks suggested reviewing all the contract dates she also wished to double-check the maintenance funds to ensure enough would be budgeted for that and Vice Chair Mitchell suggested increasing the Professional Services line item. Ms. Bailey confirmed that some of the operating fund increases were due to the addition of train cars and extra train operating days. Vice Chair Mitchell recommended separating the insurance services from operating expenses. Chair Peterson suggested adding to the auditing expenses and reminded the Commission that there would be an opportunity to make adjustments and changes in the April meeting. Discussion ensued regarding capital projects, and it was agreed to revisit it during the final budget discussion after reviewing the capital projects list (read to the Commission by Secretary Hicks). Chair Peterson suggested adding \$25,000 to Government Contributions (making it \$275,000) and adding another \$25,000 to General Professional Services. There were additional comments and Chair Peterson entertained a motion.

(11:01:41) – MOTION: Vice Chair Mitchell moved to approve the Tentative Budget for FY 2024-2025 with the changes discussed on the record, and to authorize Staff to make the changes and to submit to the [Nevada] Department of Taxation. Additionally, to allocate 100 percent of the Surveying (\$25,000) funds to Storey County and request payment of that through Rail Funds (1/4 percent sales tax) through Storey County. The Motion was seconded by Treasurer Kruse and carried 5-0-0.

10. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POSSIBLE NEW TICKET DESIGNS FOR THE V&T RAILWAY TRAINS RUNNING DURING GENERAL SEASON.

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(11:03:23) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item. Ms. Baily Reviewed the Staff Report, incorporated into the record, which included several proposed ticket designs, and noted that the tickets would be printed by the Carson City Culture and Tourism Authority. Treasurer Kruse liked the designs; however, she recommended changing the “I got shot in a saloon” ticket because Virginia City was working on changing its image “to be more welcoming.” Commissioner Schmitter was not fond of the “I got railroaded” message as well. Instead, she suggested “weaving in a little history.” It was agreed to have the Commissioners send their suggestions to Ms. Bailey by mid-April and for Commissioner Schmitter to work with Ms. Bailey on the final designs.

(11:13:46) – MOTION: Chairperson Peterson moved to approve the design of the Historical Ticket with “I rode past wild horses” and two other designs to replace “I got shot in a saloon” and “I got railroaded” and authorize Commissioner Schmitter and Treasurer Kruse to work with Ms. Bailey. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schmitter and carried 5-0-0.

11. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY:

MONTHLY NON-ACTION ITEMS:

a. EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT UPDATE

(11:15:05) – Ms. Bailey received praise for working on the tickets. Chair Peterson also noted that his office had been working on digital advertisements and billboards.

b. OPERATIONS/TRAINS REPORT

(11:16:21) – V&T Railroad (VTRR) Sales and Marketing Coordinator Candy Duncan was not present to provide a report.

c. UPCOMING MEETINGS:

1. COMMISSION MEETING ON APRIL 24, 2024 at 9:00 AM.

(11:16:26) – Chairperson Peterson read the upcoming meeting date into the record.

12. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION.

(11:16:36) – Treasurer Kruse announced that the Territorial Enterprise would be open during Mark Twain Days weekend, adding that the location was not ADA-compliant.

CLOSED NON-MEETING TO CONFER WITH OPERATIONS MANAGER AND COUNSEL.

This item did not take place.

13. PUBLIC COMMENT

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(11:18:16) – Chairperson Peterson entertained final public comments; however, none were forthcoming.

14. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: TO ADJOURN

(11:18:30) – Chairperson Peterson adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

The Minutes of March 27, 2024, Nevada Commission for the Reconstruction of the V&T Railway meeting are so approved on this 24th day of April 2024.

Stephanie A. Hicks
STEPHANIE HICKS, Secretary