

NEVADA COMMISSION FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE V&T RAILWAY

Minutes of the Wednesday, October 23, 2024 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Nevada Commission for the reconstruction of the V&T Railway was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 23, 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/2542?view_id=2&redirect=true

PRESENT: Chairperson David Peterson
Treasurer Leah Kruse
Secretary Stephanie Hicks
Commissioner Michelle Schmitter

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

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

(9:01:07) – Chairperson Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Commissioner Schmitter arrived at 9:09 a.m. Vice Chair Mitchell was absent. Chairperson Peterson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

(9:02:13) – Chairperson Peterson entertained public comments; however, none were forthcoming.

5. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2024 MEETING

(9:02:50) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item and entertained comments, edits, or a motion.

MOTION: Secretary Hicks moved to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Kruse and carried 3-0-0.

6. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE V&T COMMISSION’S STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CHECKS PAID AUGUST 1-31, 2024 AND SEPTEMBER 1-30, 2024.

(9:03:24) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item. Ms. Baily provided clarification on the revenue received from the use of a locomotive for filming purposes.

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MOTION: Treasurer Kruse moved to approve the payable checks totaling \$72,521.85 for September (2024) and \$118,279.83 for August (2024) as recommended. The motion was seconded by Secretary Hicks and carried 3-0-0.

7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADJUSTED V&T COMMISSION’S FISCAL YEAR (“FY”) 2024/2025 BUDGET REPORTS, PERIOD ENDED AUGUST 31,2024 AND SEPTEMBER 30, 2024.

(9:05:54) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item and referenced the Staff Report which is incorporated into the record. Secretary Hicks requested a running total of the “cash on hand” available funds. Treasurer Kruse noted that a balance sheet would be provided to the Commissioners as requested. Chairperson Peterson announced the arrival of Commissioner Michelle Schmitter.

MOTION: Treasurer Kruse moved to approve the budget reports. The motion was seconded by Secretary Hicks and carried 4-0-0.

8. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY: DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION BY KPS3 OF THE V&T COMMISSION’S NEW WEBSITE REDESIGN.

(9:08:05) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item. KPS3 Marketing Vice President Andy Walden reviewed a presentation titled *V&T Railway Website Strategic Foundation*, incorporated into the record, and responded to clarifying questions. He also stressed the importance of a user-friendly, scalable, and accessible website. Mr. Walden reviewed the roles and responsibilities, timeline, and strategic recommendations which are incorporated in the presentation. Chair Peterson thanked the Commissioner for meeting with KPS3 and entertained discussion. Secretary Hicks thanked Mr. Walden for consolidating the Commission’s suggestions and Commissioner Schmitter recommended adding more Nevada History content. Treasurer Kruse and Chair Preston were in favor of incorporating user experiences and possibly partnering with the State and Railroad museums to include a combined pass purchase or cross-promotion.

(9:42:15) – V&TRR Sales and Marketing Coordinator Candy Duncan encouraged working with schools and student families for field trip accommodations. Chair Peterson expected “zero down time” when switching from one website to the other. No action was taken on the item.

(9:49:06) – Chairperson Peterson recommended discussion of agenda item 10 prior to item 9.

9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENT #1 TO CONTRACT FY23- 001 WITH COONS CONSTRUCTION, LLC EXERCISING THE OPTION TO RENEW THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT FOR THREE ADDITIONAL YEARS, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2027, AND MODIFYING THE SCOPE OF WORK TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL NECESSARY SERVICES FOR THE SETUP, TEARDOWN AND MAINTENANCE OF THE NORTH POLE FOR THE POLAR EXPRESS TRAIN RIDE, FOR AN ADDITIONAL AMOUNT

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OF \$11,857 IN 2024, AND FOR THE AMOUNT OF \$62,485 YEARS 2025 THROUGH 2027, AND A TOTAL CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$339,312.00.

(9:59:04) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item and explained that the North Pole scenes of the POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride Event had experienced much wear and tear over the years. In response to a question by Treasurer Kruse, Carla Wilson, POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride Event Production Director, noted that many of the existing structures had been flooded, vandalized, and deteriorated over the years. She also highlighted the fact that they must follow the technical guide provided by Warner Brothers to match the movie experience. Chair Peterson entertained additional comments and when none were forthcoming, a motion.

MOTION: Secretary Hicks moved to approve the amendment as proposed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schmitter and carried 4-0-0.

10. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A PROPOSED AGREEMENT WITH CELADON EVENTS, FOR CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS AT THE EASTGATE DEPOT DURING THE 2024 POLAR EXPRESS TRAIN RIDE EVENT, FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$7,800.00.

(9:49:04) – Chairperson Peterson introduced the item. Celadon Events owner Elizabeth Leonard reviewed the agenda materials, incorporated into the record, including a cost estimate and a proposed contract. Secretary Hicks inquired whether existing lights could be used to save some money; however, Chair Peterson noted that multicolored lights could not be used per the agreement with the POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride Event agreement. There were no additional comments; therefore, the Chair entertained a motion.

MOTION: Treasurer Kruse moved to approve the agreement with Celadon Events as presented for the total not-to-exceed amount of \$7,800.00. The motion was seconded by Secretary Hicks and carried 4-0-0.

11. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY:

MONTHLY NON-ACTION ITEMS:

a. EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT UPDATE

(10:08:05) – Ms. Bailey announced the end of a successful long-line season. She also stated that the Davis Fire firefighters had been invited to attend the Media Night event and ride the 8 p.m. POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride Event. Treasurer Kruse recommended highlighting the event in social media. Ms. Wilson recommended inviting the dispatchers as well and Chair Peterson offered to work with Jon Bakkedahl, Carson City Deputy Emergency Manager. Ms. Wilson suggested handing out the collector mugs from the previous year’s merchandise to the 8 p.m.

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passengers. Ms. Duncan announced that 173 firefighters and family members had already booked their trips.

b. POLAR EXPRESS PRODUCTION UPDATE

(10:13:50) – Ms. Wilson updated the Commission on the auditions and casting, noting that she had hired 55 people, including some from the Reno Improv. She also stated that she had created a mountain backdrop and a street scene using AI technology that had been approved by Rail Events. Ms. Wilson noted that new elf costumes had been purchased for a more uniform look and the script had been modified to accommodate the 20th anniversary, incorporating the theme “Do you Believe?” She also updated the Commission on the ordered merchandising materials and inquired about submitting an invoice to pay for the cast. Ms. Wilson responded to clarifying Commissioner questions as well.

c. OPERATIONS/TRAINS REPORT

(10:24:12) – V&TRR Sales and Marketing Coordinator Candy Duncan announced that the No. 18 Train equipment was on its way to its filming location site. She also recommended having a discussion regarding diesel and Sunday excursions during the Commission’s retreat. Ms. Duncan also updated the Commission on the POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride Event ticket sales, which had been selling out fast. Discussion ensued regarding highlighting available dates on social media and possible retreat topics including tying in the Virginia City events.

d. UPCOMING MEETINGS

V&T COMMISSION MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2024 AT 9:00 AM

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

(10:43:57) – V&TRR employee Darnel George recommended using Train No. 18 for the POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride Event upon its return from filming since it would “have to go up the hill anyway.” Treasurer Hicks gave an update on the upcoming legislative activities.

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

This item did not take place.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

(10:51:25) – Chairperson Peterson entertained final public comments; however, none were forthcoming.

11. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: TO ADJOURN

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(10:51:35) – Chairperson Peterson adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

The Minutes of October 23, 2024, Nevada Commission for the Reconstruction of the V&T Railway meeting are so approved on this 20th day of November 2024.

STEPHANIE HICKS, Secretary