



**NORTHERN INDIANA COMMUTER TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

December 16, 2016

Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District

33 East U.S. Highway 12

Chesterton, IN 46304-3514

Public Session – 10:30 a.m. (CST)

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Evans
Mark Catanzarite
Michael Repay

David Decker
David Prancus
Mark Yagelski

Christine Cid
Andrew Kostielney

OTHERS PRESENT:

Adam Wojasinski – Leg. Rep. Smart TP 1526
Ashley Spyrka– Group 7even
Victor Van Santen – HDR
Roger Morrisett – Passenger
Roy G. Benedict – Passenger
Gerald Williamson – Passenger
Paul Bartos – MCC
Timothy Whalen – AECOM
Phil Weiland – The Times

Brian Jones - INDOT
Christopher Murphy – Structurepoint
Patrick Pechnick – HDR
Greg Price – Passenger
Paul F. Willer – Passenger
George Rogge – MCC
Jason Rowley – Hanson Pro. Services
Tim Zorn – Post-Tribune
Bill Hanna, Northwest IN RDA

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Noland
Keith Casey
Anthony Siegmund
Lisa J. Johnson
Laura Harrington
Pat Guest
Raul Agosto

John Parsons
Christine Dearing
Bill O’Dea
Joe Crnkovich
Steve Plesha
Robert Byrd

Chuck Lukmann, Esq.
Boris Matakovic
Vic Babin
Bjarne Henderson
Jessica Wright
Jessie Watts

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chairman, Mr. Evans, called the meeting to order and asked that those present stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Evans requested approval of the minutes from November 18, 2016. Mr. Repay motioned to accept the Public Session and Executive Session Board minutes for November 18, 2016. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kostielney. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Noland stated that this is an historic day and a day for celebration. Mr. Noland informed the Board that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been released for the West Lake Project. Mr. Noland introduced Congressman Peter Visclosky.

Congressman Visclosky thanked the Board and NICTD executives, and their predecessors, for their efforts to fundamentally change the economy and to grow Northwest Indiana. Congressman Visclosky thanked the northwest Indiana legislative delegation and the members of the legislature and Governor Pence for their assistance, as well as the Army Corps of Engineers and local officials. Congressman Visclosky also stated that 16 of the 20 political subdivisions in Lake County, including County Government, have made a commitment to this project. He stated that the application for this project must be filed in August of 2017. Congressman Visclosky also commented on the application for Double Track Northwest Indiana (NWI), which is also due in August of 2017.

Mr. Noland introduced Mr. Bill Hanna, the President and CEO of the Northwest RDA, stating that Mr. Hanna is our financial partner and ally in the West Lake Project as well as with the Double Track Project. The RDA just completed their strategic plan update as well.

Mr. Hanna thanked Mr. Noland and Congressman Visclosky for their efforts in these projects, and also thanked the Board for their efforts. Mr. Hanna stated that Governor-Elect Holcomb has made both Double Track NWI and the West Lake Project, as well as potential Transit Oriented Development (TOD) part of his list of priorities. Mr. Hanna stated that members of the General Assembly are ready to assist us with moving these projects forward.

Mr. Noland introduced Leah Konrady, President of One Region. Mr. Noland then discussed the DEIS for West Lake and noted that it is available for review online, in local libraries, and has been published in the Federal Register. Mr. Noland explained the alternatives that were reviewed and studied. Mr. Noland described the three Build Alternatives, each of which contains various options. He noted that there is also a No Build Alternative. Mr. Noland stated that the Hammond Alternative Option 2 is the DEIS Preferred Alternative for the West Lake Corridor Project. In addition, Mayor McDermott and the Hammond City Council have pledged CEDIT

funds totaling approximately \$900,000/year to this project if Hammond Alternative Option 2 is ultimately the Preferred Alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Mr. Noland described what the Hammond Alternative Option 2 would include 4 stations, a layover facility in Dyer and maintenance facility in north Hammond, a flyover of the CSX north of 45th St. and flyover of the IHB, NS and CSX railroads and Hohman Ave. Mr. Noland stated that economic impact, improved travel times, additional trains and an increase in projected ridership all are important factors that led to the selection of the Hammond Alternative Option 2 and he indicated his belief that this will make this project a success. Mr. Noland stated that according to the Northwest Indiana RDA's Comprehensive Strategic Plan the West Lake Corridor Project alone, there is a projected return on investment (ROI) of 4.4:1 over 20 years including an \$843 million in personal income growth. The project will create 2,500 new jobs, and attract 8,000 new residents. It will also generate \$101 million in state income tax and \$171 million in state sales tax. For Lake County, the project is expected to generate \$36.5 million in local option income tax and an additional \$207 million in property tax.

Mr. Noland informed the Board that we are now in a 45-day comment period. Public hearings are scheduled for January 17 (Dyer), 18 (Hammond), and 19 (Munster). The hearings will be conducted in an "open house" format. Comments may be received through U.S. Mail, via the West Lake website, automated comment line, or in person via comment cards or to court reporter at one of the public hearings.

RESOLUTION 16-11 ADOPTING THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF THE HAMMOND ALTERNATIVE OPTION 2 AS THE LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR THE WEST LAKE CORRIDOR PROJECT.

Mr. Evans thanked Mr. Noland for his hard work and dedication to NICTD. Mark Yagelski asked if West Lake will strictly be passenger trains with no freight trains in the future on the line. Mr. Noland stated that the Federal government will only provide funding for passenger rail and that the bridges are being designed to only support passenger operations – not freight operations. This will solely be a commuter railway. Trustee Yagelski also asked if new passenger cars can operate exclusively on the new line. Mr. Noland responded that the cars will be interchangeable between West Lake and the existing South Shore Line. For this line, NICTD plans to take 36 of the 1982 (oldest cars) and conduct an end-of-life refurbishment on them. This refurbishment should provide an additional 10 or 15 years of use, after which new cars can be purchased.

Mr. Repay motioned to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Mr. Decker. Mr. Repay commented that we have done our due diligence, worked through all the options, read through all of the different components and that he appreciated the work done on the project. Mr. Repay also thanked Mr. Noland for his work on the project and that he is looking forward to working on the project throughout his tenure on the Board.

Mr. Evans thanked again the people who came before and made the project possible. The motion was approved unanimously.

Bikes on Trains.

Mr. Noland discussed the pilot project of Bikes on Trains. He reminded the Board that there was not a lot of marketing for this project and awareness of the program has been shared mostly through word of mouth. Mr. Noland stated that we did learn that we can accommodate the demand. He stated that Double Track NWI will bring raised platforms to more stations which will allow more stations to be bike accessible, and eventually help grow the bike program. Mr. Noland proposed expanding the bike program. Mr. Noland proposed to increase our marketing, eliminate some of the black-out periods and permit bikes on one inbound and one outbound weekday train (Trains 6 and 11) only during the bike season. Mr. Noland requested the Board grant the authority to continue the Bike Program in 2017 with the changes as identified.

Mr. Yagelski motioned to grant said authority to continue the Bike Program in 2017 with the changes Mr. Noland identified. The motion was seconded by Mr. Repay. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Noland stated that due to the ongoing to the overhead catenary wire repair near South Bend, some busing between South Bend and Michigan City was needed due to extremely cold temperatures. A train coming from South Bend did get tangled in the old wire and tore down a large section that contained old and new wire. Train service was suspended for about a day between South Bend and Michigan City and was replaced with substitute bus service.

Mr. Noland recognized outgoing Board members Evans and Decker for their enthusiasm, passion and support in serving on the NICTD Board and their years of service to the railroad.

Chairman Evans stated that the NICTD Board is the best body that meets anywhere in the state because they work together to promote and improve the service and most importantly getting things done.

Mr. Decker thanked those who have paved the way over the years, and thanked Mr. Noland and the other Board Members for their service as well.

Mr. Repay made a motion to approve the meeting schedule for the year 2017. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cid. The motion was approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Catanzarite made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Repay. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

 Board Secretary