



MEETING MINUTES

Illinois High-Speed Rail Commission

May 30, 2023

Location:

- IDOT Headquarters, 2300 S Dirksen Parkway, Room 347, Springfield, IL 62764
- Virtual Webex Webinar Meeting option available

Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Commission Member Attendees:

- Erin Aleman – Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
- Tim Butler – Illinois Railroad Association
- James Derwinski – Commuter Rail Board
- Karl Gnad – Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District
- Robert Guy, III – SMART-TD
- Richard Harnish- High Speed Rail Alliance
- Raymond Lai – McLean County Regional Planning Commission
- Jason Osborn – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Cassaundra Rouse – Illinois State Highway Toll Authority
- Brian Shanahan – Transportation Communications Union
- P.S. Sriraj – University of Illinois Chicago
- Senator Steve Stadelman – Senate
- Brian Vercruyse – Illinois Commerce Commission

Non-Commission Member Attendees:

- Berenice Alvarez – Morreale Communications
- Shane Cullen – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Brad Franke – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Madeline Herrman - Champaign County Chamber of Commerce
- Roger Huff
- Amanda Lundeen – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Mary McIlvain – Morreale Communications
- Tim McMahon – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Todd Popish – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Elliot Ramos – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Shoun Reese - Illinois Department of Transportation



- Abigail Robinson – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Scott Speegle – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Jeffery Shriver – Chicago Department of Transportation
- DeAnna Smith – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Michael Vanderhoof – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Janel Veile – Illinois Department of Transportation

Commission Members Not in Attendance:

- Senator Don DeWitte – Senate
- Michael Dunn Jr. – Region I Planning Council
- Representative Marty Moylan – House of Representatives
- James Wild – East-West Gateway Council of Governments

Overview of Meeting

I. Welcome and Introductions

Michael Vanderhoof from IDOT welcomed everyone in-person and online through the virtual meeting. Mr. Vanderhoof reviewed meeting minutes from the prior meeting held on April 11, 2023, and prior action items.

- While reviewing the meeting minutes, there was only one comment of feedback, which was from Raymond Lai, to correct his organization name. This closed out the review of the prior meeting minutes.
- Separately, Rick Harnish noted that this [Commission] should be less engineering-focused and more business-plan focused.

Mr. Vanderhoof provided an overview of the key elements of the Procurement Process for Technical Support. He reminded attendees that the key elements included in the presentation will be elaborated on for the final contracted scope.

- Karl Gnat from Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District asked if there is openness to include in the scope a broader perspective on true high speed as opposed to just the higher speed and the line to Moline.
 - Chair member believes that it is not spelled out in the statute.
 - Chair member says it is worded as “it must include” but it does not seem to exclude others.
- Mr. Harnish states the volume from the high-speed line like from Chicago to St. Louis is so much greater and it changes the dynamics of Chicago to Rockford, as now the Chicago to Rockford service can be more robust. Each of these services should be no less than every two hours and it should be possible to travel from Moline to Rockford to Champaign to Chicago, etc. within a reasonable business day, which is not possible



today without a car. The intent is not only how to do the high-speed line but do these schedules in two-hour services throughout the entire state.

- P.S. Sriraj from the University of Illinois Chicago stated it would be good to understand what the bounds of this commission are and how this commission will contribute to a strengthened wider rail network. Mr. Sriraj emphasized the importance of having a clear agreed-upon understanding of what is meant by “true high speed” and “higher speed.” He emphasized the need to put a very specific mandate in front of the chosen consultant.
- Mr. Vanderhoof agreed that it will be helpful for IDOT to fully understand what the commission would like to see in terms of technical support.
- Jason Osborn from IDOT discusses some of the nuances of the RFP and support.
- Raymond Lai from McLean County Regional Planning Commission asks if the legislation mentions where the station/stops will be located.
 - Mr. Vanderhoof answered that it depends on the level of detail the commission decides to go.
 - Mr. Sriraj mentioned that the funding mechanisms might need to be further explored.
 - Mr. Vanderhoof believes it can fit into the scope and highlighted there is specific language in the scope regarding financial analysis. He would like to hear more from the commission on this.
 - Mr. Osborn emphasizes that the takeaway is for it to not just be an engineering feasibility ridership analysis.
- Mr. Vanderhoof references corridor impact analysis examples that will be posted on IDOT’s website for future viewing.
 - Mr. Sriraj provided additional resources in the chat.
 - Mr. Harnish mentioned that the biggest cost items for the high-speed line are getting from McCormick Place to O’Hare and getting from East St. Louis to St. Louis. He believes we should start from McCormick Place to East St. Louis.

II. Open Meetings Act Update

Amanda Lundeen from OCC/IDOT reviewed the meeting requirements now that the disaster declaration has ended. Because this is a state body, there is flexibility in meeting in different locations through interactive video conferencing. There must be a physical quorum – the majority of people currently appointed – to conduct business. Locations must also be accessible to the public should they choose to attend. The act states that individuals may attend remotely under certain circumstances such as employment purposes, illness, disability, and family emergencies. To allow this, the body must have a bylaw in place.

Schedules of meetings and locations must be made publicly available. The statute does not prevent having three or four locations identified. Both locations would serve to meet the quorum



requirement. Ms. Lundeen recommends having one consistent location and the secondary location be adjusted as needed.

- Brian Vercruysse from the Illinois Commerce Commission asked about the frequency of meetings.
 - o Mr. Vanderhoof stated that it must be quarterly and more frequent is up to the commission.
 - o Ms. Lundeen clarified that regular meetings will need to be published at the beginning of the year while special meetings will need to be notified 48 hours prior.
 - o Mr. Vanderhoof stated the importance of meeting more than quarterly and conducting meetings in-person.
- Erin Aleman from Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning asked about alternates in meetings.
 - o Alternates might not have the ability to vote on behalf of members. Ms. Lundeen will follow up.
- Mr. Sriraj shared his thoughts on in-person options.

III. Discuss Commission Organization

Mr. Osborn discussed the drafted By-Laws including authority/general provisions, the role of chair, meeting cadence, conducting business, and additional duties.

- Ms. Aleman asked about the quorum requirements.
- Mr. Osborn clarified that for any action, recommendation, or decision of the Commission a quorum must be present, but that discussions can take place without one.

Mr. Vanderhoof asked if a Doodle Poll should be sent to determine meeting dates and suggested a separate survey might be needed to ascertain future meetings.

Mr. Osborn stressed the importance of sending invites ahead of time to ensure members can block off their calendars and said that a draft schedule for the year should be sent around, with the objective of meeting monthly.

Mr. Vanderhoof asked if the group is ready to identify meeting locations. Members discussed possible locations. A minimum of two locations is being recommended and the Chicago region will be considered.

- Cassaundra Rouse from Illinois State Highway Toll Authority offered to host a meeting at the Illinois Tollway location.
- Jason Osborn also offered space at 69 W. Washington St., Chicago.
- Mr. Vanderhoof echoed the importance of being able to provide seating for public attendance.



Members discussed the nuances of calling additional meetings based on the Open Meetings Act.

Mr. Osborn discussed the agenda preparation and if members would like to edit the draft before the meeting.

Mr. Vanderhoof established that IDOT will prepare meeting minutes and asked commission members when meeting minutes should be published.

- Members stated one week prior to the next meeting would suffice.

Mr. Osborn continued to review conducting business items. He discussed the chair/vice-chair duties.

Mr. Vercruyse asked how IDOT's involvement would be documented in the By-Laws.

- Mr. Vanderhoof answered that IDOT will handle administrative pieces such as minutes.

Mr. Harnish asked if IDOT is choosing the vendor.

- Mr. Vanderhoof stated that it is an IDOT process, it is not set up as the commission will be selecting the contractor.

Mr. Osborn discussed public comment opportunities.

Mr. Vercruyse and members discussed committees and chairs. Plan to vote on chairs at the next meeting.

- Mr. Vercruyse suggested some of the committees include Finance & Budget, Environmental & Sustainability, Engineering & Construction, Outreach & Communications, and Labor & Workforce Development.
- Mr. Osborn expressed that the consultant/vendor might suggest a specific structure for the Commission.
- Mr. Vanderhoof said that depending on the scope of the work/procurement process, a vendor could be on board hopefully by October and maybe September.
- Mr. Vanderhoof said that they would go ahead and draft something for establishing committees.

Mr. Vanderhoof asked the next meeting to be within a month to six weeks.

Draft By-Laws will be ready by the next meeting.

Mr. Harnish expressed interest in being Chair.



IV. Public Comment

The meeting was open to public comment. No public comments were made. Two public attendees were present.

V. Next Steps

The draft By-Laws will be circulated and should be reviewed by the next meeting.

Next steps were reviewed in terms of action items summarized below.

Action Items:

- Doodle poll for next meeting
- Survey on meeting frequency
- Draft meeting schedule
- Draft meeting minutes
- Build out public comment feature on website
- Post meeting materials on website

The meeting adjourned at 11:42pm