

## ProRail Board Meeting Minutes: 1/18/2025

### Discussion Items:

- **Treasurer Update**
- **MIPRC Bill (LB 256)**
- **Bill for a State Rail Plan (Not introduced)**
- **Annual Meeting**
- **Summer/Fall Meetings**
- **Dan Lutz Memorial Scholarship**
- **Membership Letter**
- **Next Meeting February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 – Scooters on 27<sup>th</sup> & Pine Lake at 2:00PM**

### Detailed Notes:

- **Treasurer update from Bridger Corkill**
  - Balance 5/31/2024: \$7,964.95
  - Balance 12/31/2024: \$7,941.69
  - 20 dues-paying members in 2024
  - 2024 IRS Filing is Complete
  - 2025 Biannual report with Sec State due in June
  - Reimbursement approvals for:
    - Jim Hanna \$150.00 MIPRC Conference Reimbursement
    - Dan Bilka \$250.00 MIPRC Mileage Contribution
- **Discussion on a bill to rejoin the MIPRC (LB 256)**
  - Introduced by Sen. Dan Quick. Plan to coordinate with his office before moving forward with bill promotion to align efforts.
  - Richard Schmeling drafted a letter encouraging the LNK city council to resolve to support the MIPRC bill. Bridger agreed to digitize and distribute the letter.
  - Transportation Committee membership discussion. Moser chairs. A few potentially supportive Senators.
  - Discussion of hosting a luncheon with the Lt Governor to support the bill on the day of the hearing.
    - Potential for Missouri or Iowa Reps to attend
    - Iowa House recently passed bill to rejoin MIPRC.
  - Promote bill by highlighting the federal funding Nebraska is missing out on by not participating in MIPRC. FRA funding is contingent on state membership in an interstate rail compact.
  - Discussion about hearing date and schedule (not scheduled yet) anticipate mid-late February at the earliest.
  - Jim Hanna to reach out to MIPRC commissioners for potential letter of support or hearing appearance to support the bill.
  - Discussion of reaching out to large developers, construction, and engineering firms to promote MIPRC and highlight the economic development benefits of improved passenger rail infrastructure. Matt Roque to reach out. Richard Schmeling to reach out to local rail manufacturer for support.
  - Discussion of keeping efforts separate from Omaha streetcar, while highlighting the economic development benefits of other modes of transit when we can.

- **Bill for a State Rail Plan (Not introduced)**
  - Discussion of a bill that we do not intend to support that calls for the Public Service Commission to conduct an update to the state rail plan in coordination with DOT. State rail planning is necessary, but it was not clear why the study would not be done by DOT.
  - Discussion of the role of the Public Service Commission in Nebraska rail historically.
  - Not introduced in the session – not a bill we plan to support at this time.
  
- **Annual Meeting**
  - Potential dates: May 3<sup>rd</sup> or May 10<sup>th</sup>
  - Location: Gretna – Most likely in the public library again. Bridger to reach out and find out what days / times we can reserve.
  - Plan for 2-hour meeting with two 30-minute presentations/Q&As from folks working on passenger rail and related efforts. Potential topics include Amtrak Borealis, increased passenger service in the High Plains, Brightline, and related local transit efforts like the Omaha Streetcar, Star Tran Updates, and the KC Streetcar.
  
- **Summer/Fall Meetings**
  - Discussion of two additional meetings in August and November to host a presentation and discussion.
  - Approximately 45 minutes for a presentation and 45 minutes for refreshments and discussion.
  - Similar potential topics to the annual meeting.
  - Bridger to look into potential venues and locations before the membership letter is sent.
  
- **Dan Lutz Memorial/ Proposed ProRail Scholarship**
  - Brief discussion on the potential to give a small scholarship to a UNL graduate student studying passenger rail annually. Student would have to come to at least one of our meetings and give a presentation on their research. No firm details on this, but agreement to pursue it further. Would be funded from the Dan Lutz Memorial (\$1942 balance).
  
- **Membership Letter**
  - Bridger and Matt to coordinate on membership/dues letter. To include date/location of annual meeting.
  
- **Next Meeting will be Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 PM. Scooters on Pine Lake**
  - 2600 Pine Lake Rd #2, Lincoln NE 68512