Next ProRail Nebraska Meeting

Saturday, December 1, 2018 – 9:00 am – Lincoln, NE

Where: St. Marks Episcopal Church on the Campus, 13th & R Streets, Lincoln, NE

Time: 9:00am (Doors open about 8:30 am)
All ProRail Nebraska meetings are open to the general public!

Tentative Agenda

9:00 - Welcome & Introductions (Matt Roque, PRN President)
9:05 – Report on MIPRC Annual Meeting in Milwaukee – Sen. Dan Quick, District 35 (invited) & Bob Kuzelka, PRN Vice President
9:30 - Presentation on Lincoln's StarTran Transit System
10:00 - Update from Citizens For Improved Transit – Richard Schmeling, President - CFIT
10:15 - Break
10:30 - Update from Lincoln's Railroad Transportation Safety Dist. - Roger Figard, RTSD Exec Dir (invited)
10:50 - Status report on 33rd & Cornhusker railroad project – Roger Figard (invited) & Bob Kuzelka
11:00 - Report of Rail Passengers Association meeting in Miami - Jim Hanna, PRN Board member
11:30 - Plans for 2019 NE Legislative Session – Sen. Dan Quick (invited) & Bob Kuzelka
11:45 - PRN Secretary and Treasurer Reports – Morrie Tuttle & Ralph Haden
11:50 - Other ProRail Business, set dates for future meetings - Matt Roque

Noon - Adjourn

For more information contact Bob Kuzelka (402) 417-9424 (Lincoln) email rkuzelka1@unl.edu. It may be possible to participate by conference phone. Contact Bob if interested.

Please join us on December 1st to better understand why we feel so strongly that Nebraska must become an active participant in the future of passenger rail travel.

Directions to Reach the December 1st Meeting

MEETING LOCATION: St. Marks Episcopal Church on the Campus, 13th & R Streets, Lincoln, NE. Take O Street to 13th, turn north on 13th and proceed three blocks to the church. See map on page 4.

(Continued on page 2.)
PARKING INSTRUCTIONS for the Dec. 1st meeting: Parking should not be a problem on this non-
football Saturday but it will cost. The UNL lot to the east of the church has guest meters plus there are
city meters on the streets but usually for only 90 minutes. Remember to bring change! You can also park
in the LARSEN Building lot which is south of the church across “Q” Street (850 Q St.) for $1.00/hr.

It’s Almost Membership Renewal Time

If you are a ProRail Nebraska member, please watch for your 2019 membership renewal letter
which will be mailed in late November. If you would like to become a member, please send a
check for $20 (more is always welcome!) to Morrie Tuttle, ProRail Nebraska Secretary, 1910
Lake St., Lincoln NE 68502-3816 or call Morrie at (402) 435-5454 for more membership
information.

MIPRC Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
October 3 – 5, 2018
Submitted by Bob Kuzelka – Vice President, ProRail Nebraska

The Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission’s 2018 annual meeting convened in Milwaukee on
October 3-5 to review developments since the 2017 annual meeting and lay the groundwork for what
promises to be a busy 2019.

MIPRC welcomed new commissioners from Illinois and Missouri, along with new partners and allies.
Overall, 54 people attended the meeting, which began at Chicago’s Union Station with a presentation on
and tour of renovation work there, an overview of the state-sponsored Chicago-Milwaukee Hiawatha
service, and a 90-minute ride on the Hiawatha to Milwaukee’s Intermodal Station.

Hosted by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation in its offices at the station, MIPRC’s agenda
included a recap of the previous year by Director Laura Kliewer, a review of MIPRC’s annual trip to
Washington, D.C., on May 23-24, and presentations on:

- Member states’ passenger rail developments;
- Updates from the Federal Railroad Administration, including on the FRA-led Midwest Regional
  Rail Planning Study, and from Amtrak;
- Updates on the Next Generation Equipment Committee and the new locomotives and coach cars
  for Amtrak Midwest service; and
- Brightline’s passenger rail service in Florida and future plans, along with potential lessons for
  similar, potential corridor services in the Midwest. (Brightline's presentation included a new
  promotional video, which can be seen here (https://gobrightline.egnyte.com/dl/sOxn7RizYB) and
  seems to hint at interest in the Chicago-St. Louis corridor.)

Participants toured the Milwaukee Intermodal Station – which was built in 1965, given a $16.9 million
renovation in the mid-2000s and a new $22 million passenger concourse in 2015-16 – and the private
railcar Caritas.

They also toured the nearby maintenance facility for Milwaukee’s new streetcar system, The Hop, which
is scheduled to begin service on November 2. Once it’s running, Amtrak passengers can use it to access
the city’s Third Ward, East Town and Yankee Hill neighborhoods. A spur to the lakefront is scheduled to
open in 2019.

Commissioners agreed to hold MIPRC’s 2019 Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., next fall.
More than 100 rail advocates from across the country gathered in Miami for RailNation:Miami sponsored by Rail Passengers Assn. where they heard from an outstanding line-up of speakers and presenters.

The program got underway on Friday, October 19 with a ‘Fireside Chat’ led by Jim Mathews with former Amtrak President Joe Boardman answering questions live and pre-recorded responses from former Amtrak President David Gunn; Trains Magazine Columnist Fred Frailey and Governor Michael Dukakis.

Saturday’s program included an opening presentation by Joe Boardman on his perspectives on railroad safety. Morning concurrent sessions included ‘Why The Swiss Can Build Big Projects Cheap And We Can’t…’ moderated by Sean Jeans-Gail; How To Pay For Infrastructure; Unlocking The Value of Real Estate’ moderated by Abe Zumwalt and ‘Envisioning The Future Of The U.S. Rail Network; which was led by Jim Mathews. The morning concluded with a lively panel presentation ‘Passenger Rail On Freight Tracks’ with Patrick Goddard (President/CEO - Brightline); Gene Skoropowski (Retired from Brightline & California’s Capitol Corridor) and Jay Westbrook (General Manager - Florida Dispatch Company) participating.

Saturday’s lunch special guest was Stephen Gardner, Amtrak’s Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer. Stephen addressed a number of timely topics and he reinforced that Amtrak is committed to a National Network.

Afternoon sessions included ‘The Miami SMART Plan’s First Mile/Last Mile Opportunities’ moderated by Joe Aiello; ‘Amtrak’s Upcoming Re-Authorization – The Next Opportunity & Challenge’ moderated by Joe Boardman and ‘Introducing RPA’s Station Volunteer Program’ moderated by Carolyn Cokley.

Attendees gathered on Saturday evening at Brightline’s Miami Central Station for a benefit reception in support of the Jim Hamre Scholarship Fund. Over $2,200 was generously raised towards the initial $100,000 Fund goal.

It was announced during the Sunday morning Council Business Session that the RPA Fall 2019 gathering will be held in Sacramento, CA over the dates of October 18 - 21, 2019. Other Sunday sessions included a review of the Summer By Rail 2018 intern trip and a lively interchange on ‘RPA’s Passenger Experience; What Do We Want To See In The Future?’

Tours held in conjunction with RailNation Miami included a Miami to Fort Lauderdale round trip on Brightline and a visit to the Gold Coast Railroad Museum.

Jim will provide a full report with photos at PRN’s meeting Saturday, December 1 in Lincoln.

Amtrak Executive to Visit Nebraska Mayors in December

By Richard Schmeling – ProRail District 1 Director

Derrick James, Director, Government Affairs at Amtrak for the Greater Chicago Area, will be in Omaha Monday, December 10th to meet with Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert to get her support for continued operation of Amtrak’s California Zephyr across Nebraska. She will be asked to contact Nebraska Senators Fischer and Sasse and District 2 Representative Don Bacon encouraging them to fight against any cutbacks in Zephyr service.

He will then travel west across Nebraska visiting the mayors in Lincoln, Hastings, Holdrege, and McCook asking them to take action to support the California Zephyr. Derrick James has been invited to speak to a meeting of ProRail Nebraska members and allies in Lincoln on the evening of Monday, December 10th. If Mr. James accepts the invitation, the meeting will be at the Gere Public Library, 2400 South 56th Street (SE corner - 56th St. & Normal Blvd.) Please check the ProRail Nebraska website http://www.trainweb.org/prorailnebraska/ to see if Mr. James accepted the invitation, or call Richard at 402-853-9537.
Fall Meeting Sat. Dec. 1st

ProRail Nebraska’s Fall Meeting will be in Lincoln on Saturday, December 1st, at 9:00 am (doors open about 8:30 am). The general public is welcome!

Where: St. Marks Episcopal Church on the Campus, 13th & R Streets, Lincoln, NE. Metered street parking is available near the church, or you can park in the LARSEN Building lot which is south of the church across “Q” Street (850 Q St.) for $1.00/hr.

See page 1 for details.

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