

River Area Council of Governments
April 17, 2018

Members present: B. Ferguson, W. Mcllroy, R. Schell, P. Smith, T. Stewart,
and S. Storms

Absent: M. Bigness, S. Burto, A. Peck, R. Vary and J. Zando

Others: M. Dietrich, P. Street (THC), H. Tanner (WCTA), Jerry Haenlin (Nat Grid),
M. Lammey (Nat Grid), and J. Skellish (Nat Grid)

Chairman Mcllroy called the meeting to order at 6:00pm at the V/Carthage Municipal Building, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by S. Storms, seconded by B. Ferguson to approve the minutes of March 20, 2018 as presented. Ayes-6, Nays-0. Motion carried.

Mickey Dietrich, Circuit Rider, reported on the following: the vendor for NY Alerts will be able to configure the software to include towns and villages; the MCC intern will present the resource map at the May meeting; two summer interns have been approved – one through the Workplace from July-Aug who will work with GIS and Seth Lapp from New Bremen who will begin in May with an ending date to be announced.

R. Schell questioned if the Council would be interested in a presentation regarding a proposal to establish a tourist railway between Lowville and Croghan and pedal cars from Lowville to Carthage on tracks leased from GBT. The Council agreed, by consensus, to schedule the presentation if it can be arranged.

Presentation

Heather Tanner, Executive Director/Treasurer for the Wilna-Champion Transportation Association (WCTA), presented information regarding the financial and operational status of the transportation program. The non-profit operates on a limited schedule for seniors and the disabled to allow its users to retain their independence. The program operates on a budget of \$55,000, serving one hundred and fifty (150) riders using a 2008 Ford E450 bus with approximately 125,000 odometer miles. The WCTA was included under the Watertown-Jefferson County Area Transportation Council which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated by the Governor for the City of Watertown and surrounding areas in Jefferson County. As a designee under the MPO, the WCTA is no longer eligible for rural transport funding opportunities. Council members asked about the cost of replacing the bus. Ms. Tanner responded that a new 16/2 bus with a lift is \$85-90,000. Members questioned the feasibility of sub-contracting a bus from Birnie Bus Service in

Lowville. Ms. Tanner reported that the WCTA has been in discussions with Sam Purington, director of the Volunteer Transportation Association, regarding tentative plans to provide public transportation to the Carthage area by 2020. W. McIlroy thanked Ms. Tanner for all of her efforts to keep the program operating.

Jerry Haenlin, National Grid, introduced Mike Lammey and Jennifer Skellish from the street lighting division, who presented information to the Council regarding the conversion of- street lighting from high pressure sodium to LED. Mr. Lammey presented a number of alternatives including the following programs:

- 1) Conversion – the customer pays for the un-depreciated value of the existing lighting and related equipment in either a one-time payment or an added surcharge not to exceed ten (10) years. After payment is received the lights would be converted to LED, at no cost for installation, and billed monthly. An energy efficiency incentive is available on a first come-first serve basis on a sliding scale tied to the wattage of the replaced fixtures.
- 2) Opt-In program – the customer indicates in writing their request to have all fixtures that are replaced either because of failure or damage, replaced with an LED fixture. Mr. Lammey cautioned that this approach may not be aesthetically pleasing due to the difference in the appearance of the light produced.
- 3) Private Area lighting – replacement of company owned lighting in parking areas.
- 4) Street lighting sales – negotiations to purchase company owned lighting to be operated by the community.

Mr. Lammey clarified that a 4000Kelvin bulb is the standard for National Grid. In response to questioning, he responded that depreciation is based on an average value of all the lights in a community grouping.

Motion by P. Smith, seconded by S. Storms to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.

Christina Vargulick
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RACOG Secretary