** AMENDMENT **

LA CROSSE COUNTY & CITY OF LA CROSSE
NOTICE OF MEETING

COMMITTEE OR BOARD:  SUSTAINABLE LA CROSSE COMMISSION

DATE OF MEETING:  THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2019

MEETING PLACE:  COUNTY ADMIN CENTER, CONF ROOM 1107
212 6th STREET N, LA CROSSE, WI 54601

TIME OF MEETING:  4:30 P.M.

PURPOSE OF MEETING:  AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Approve Minutes of October 17, 2019
4. Reports/Informational Updates:
   a. Energy and Water Teams
   b. Ready for 100 Resolution
5. Strategic Plan Re-Write and Discussion on Priorities – Charlie Handy
   **6. SOLUTIONARY RAIL ELECTRIFICATION PROPOSAL – LEWIS KUHLMAN ** (ATTACHMENT)
7. Next Meeting: January 16, 2019, 4:30 p.m.
8. Future Agenda Items
9. Adjourn

NEWS MEDIA
La Crosse Tribune
Other Media

OTHERS (Email)
Maureen Freedland
Alysa Remsburg
Brian Tippett
Emily Johnson
Jackie Eastwood
Jim Bagniewski
Karen Acker
Karl Green
Margot Higgins
Matt Harter
Casey Meehan
Melissa Erdman
Pat Wilson
Teri Lehrke
Dorothy Lenard

DEPARTMENTS / STAFF
County Board Chair
County Administrator
County Clerk
Facilities
Lewis Kuhlman - City

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Rick Cornforth-County Elected
Mike Giese-County Elected
Cinthia Shireman-Healthcare
Rick Diermeier-Business
Larry Sleznikow-City Elected
Cathy Van Maren-City Comm
Kim Smith-City Onalaska Elected
Carolyn Jenkins-City Education
Vacant-Community County

PUBLIC COMMENT: The Committee may receive information from the public, but the Committee reserves the right to limit the time that the public may comment and the degree to which members of the public may participate in the meeting.

MEMBERS: If unable to attend, call Alice Sorenson at 785-9563. PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: If you need accommodations to attend this meeting, please call 785-9563 as soon as possible.

DATE POSTED: December 12, 2019
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE SOLUTIONARY RAIL ELECTRIFICATION PROPOSAL AND A NORTHERN CORRIDOR DEMONSTRATION

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, over 25 major oil train derailments over the past decade have led to spills, fiery explosions and deaths, underscoring the need for railroads to have an alternative to the bulk freight on which they have relied since public highway and aviation subsidies eroded their mixed freight and passenger markets;

WHEREAS, the coal and oil rail shipping boom of recent years has pushed farm products off the rails and subjected rail workers to schedules that cause dangerous fatigue, and the more recent bust has placed many rail workers on furlough, underscoring the pitfalls of over-reliance on one or two bulk commodities;

WHEREAS, coal and oil create climate disrupting carbon pollution and must be phased out, underscoring the need for new rail markets;

WHEREAS, rail, unique among long-distance heavy transportation modes, can also replace its own oil fuel supply with electricity that can come from increasingly competitive renewable sources;

WHEREAS, rail line electrification can also be leveraged to build transmission lines that make now remote sun and wind energy resources available in metropolitan markets;

WHEREAS, the Solutionary Rail strategy for rail electrification and modernization:

- enables increased speeds and schedule reliability which allow railroads to reclaim mixed freight and passenger markets, providing options to dangerous freight and boom-and-bust cycles,
- reduces reliance on fossil fuel shipments, and reduces fossil fuel use by shifting freight and passengers significantly to transport mode powered by a renewable electricity,
- opens the way to reduce fossil-based electricity by substantially increasing renewable energy transmission and use,
- creates a public financing tool, the Steel Interstate Development Authority, that overcomes capitalization barriers to U.S. rail electrification, and,
- creates a public-private partnership with railroads that can be the basis for improved working conditions for rail workers and renegotiation of track easements across tribal lands,

WHEREAS, Solutionary Rail’s proposal to electrify primary lines of the Northern Corridor from Seattle to Chicago – including the BNSF Northern Transcon and SOO Line / Canadian Pacific that pass through La Crosse – would jumpstart U.S. rail electrification by demonstrating success;

WHEREAS, this proposal supports La Crosse’s Strategic Plan for Sustainability goal to reduce energy consumption due to the efficiency of rail transportation, get renewable energy through transmission lines in the corridor, consume less fossil fuel, and enhance the community’s transportation system;

WHEREAS, rail electrification supports La Crosse’s goal for the community to use 100% renewable energy by 2050, and could economically benefit local rail employees, travelers, and businesses supported by rail freight;
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of La Crosse calls on the governors of the Northern Corridor states as well as BNSF, the major railroad serving the corridor, and its owner, Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway, to begin discussions on a Northern Corridor electrification, and individually and jointly initiate feasibility studies of this highly promising concept.