

DULUTH TRANSIT AUTHORITY
 2402 West Michigan Street * Duluth, MN * (218) 722-4426
Special Board of Directors Meeting
 Monday, April 29, 2019
 The Depot
 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Directors Present: Aaron Bransky, President Rondi Watson, Vice President Henry Banks, Secretary/Treasurer Ed Gleeson	Julie Zaruba Fountaine Joshua Smerdon Tom Szukis	Directors Excused: Mike Casey Krystal Brandstatter	Directors Absent:
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DTA Staff Present: Phil Pumphrey, General Manager Chris Belden, Director of Planning & Grants	Nancy Brown, Procurement Manager
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Others Present: Jim Heilig, DTA Consultant Jeanne Peters	Mike Gleason Ken Buehler, President, Duluth & North Shore Railway
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Call to Order: President Bransky called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Public Comment

* None.

Action Items

* *Northern Lights Express (NLX) Presentation:* Mr. Buehler announced that it's the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Intercontinental Railroad on May 10, 1869. The big news for the NLX is the Federal Rail Administration's (FRA) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). This is a very positive sign in that all other projects that have reached this level have gained Federal funding. Funding for FRA projects is at 80% Federal and 20% local, as opposed to FTA rail projects being funded at a 50/50 Federal/local match. Additionally, for the first time it is included in the Governor's budget as well as the bonding bill. This project is an Intercity project and Amtrak is very interested in being involved. The trips will connect Target Field with Duluth in a trip of about 2.5 hours and cost about \$30 per passenger one-way trip. There will be 4 trips per day. Total project costs are estimated at \$150 million. The key to this project is economic development along the route which is expected to eclipse the system costs. Director Gleason noted the positive impact the rail excursion train has had on his business in Two Harbors. The Governor has recommended a total of \$31 million over three years with \$11 million in the current budget. There have been three bills drafted for different phases of the project. The section from Target Field to Foley has 128 road crossings that will cost about \$76 million. The Grassy Point bridge in Duluth that significantly speeds up the train is another bill. The bridge cost is \$17 million. The route could be totally high speed for a cost of about \$500 million. Overall, the Wisconsin part of the project totals 13% or about \$19.5 million. The project also contains several transit connections in Minneapolis and Duluth, and therefore would benefit the DTA.

Adjournment

* With there being no further business, the formal meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m. DTA Board members were then invited down to the train area.

Respectfully submitted,
 Jim Heilig, DTA Consultant

 Aaron Bransky, President

 Date