



Minutes of the Gulf Coast Rail District Board Meeting – October 11, 2022

A meeting of the Gulf Coast Rail District Board of Directors was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at Houston TranStar and via video conference. In attendance at the meeting were Directors Trey Duhon, Michael Dyll, Robert A. Fry, Jr., Abigail M. Gonzalez, Veronica Chapa Gorczyński, Jon Keeney, Carol Abel Lewis, Bruce Mann, Richard L. Muller, Jr., Allen Owen, and Tina Arias Peterman. Absent were Directors Ronald A. Beeson, Christopher Lane, and Jeff E. Ross. Written notices of the meeting including the date, hour, place and agenda for the meeting were posted with Harris County, with the Secretary of State, and at the Gulf Coast Rail District office located at Houston TranStar in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. The inaudible portions of the recording were removed from these minutes.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright, good afternoon, all. It is two o'clock, so we will call the meeting to order for the Gulf Coast Rail District. I am Dr. Carol Lewis, presiding officer of the Gulf Coast Rail District. Today's meeting is being conducted with options to participate in person or by video conference. The public meeting location is Houston TranStar, 6922 Katy Road, Houston, Texas, Conference Room 120A. Video conference will be conducted through Microsoft Teams, and that meeting link can be found in the meeting invitations, the agenda, and the public postings. The meeting is open to the public. The public will have the opportunity to address the board with a limit of three minutes per speaker. When addressing the board, please approach the podium. If you're online, you can just raise your hand, and Ms. Patke will respond. Board members may participate by video conference in accordance with the provisions of Section 551.127 of the Texas Government Code applicable to governmental bodies that extend into three or more counties including the following. Based on the open meeting acts requirements, the Gulf Coast Rail District board can participate in Microsoft Teams conference and will need to be seen and heard throughout the meeting for attendance and to record voting. Therefore, all members calling in by telephone will not count for the quorum or be able to vote. As required, I'm physically present for the board meeting as is Secretary Duhon, if you're on. I see you are. If you would conduct the roll call please. Please respond audibly when your name is called.

Director Duhon: Alright, very good. Can you hear me okay?

Chairperson Lewis: We can.

Director Duhon: Alright. I'm going to go ahead and call the roll. Ronald Beeson, I don't believe he's attending today, correct?

Ms. Lisa Patke: Correct.

Director Duhon: Alright. Michael Dyll?

Director Dyll: Here.

Director Duhon: Okay, thank you. Veronica Gorczynski?
Director Gorczynski: Here.

Director Duhon: Thank you. Abigail Gonzalez?
Director Gonzalez: I am here.

Director Duhon: Thank you. Jeff Ross? I don't think he's attending today. Tina Peterman? I think I see her.
Director Peterman: Here.

Director Duhon: Thank you. Dr. Lewis, I can see you're present.
Chairperson Lewis: I am.

Director Duhon: Mayor Jon Keeney.
Director Keeney: Here.

Director Duhon: Okay. Bruce Mann?
Director Mann: Here, thank you.

Director Duhon: Thank you. Richard Muller?
Director Muller: Here.

Director Duhon: Thank you, Richard. Allen Owen?
Director Owen: Here.

Director Duhon: Thank you. I am also present. Christopher Lane? Alright. And then Robert Fry, who's ex officio. Are you present?
Director Fry: Yes, I'm here.
Director Duhon: Alright. Did somebody respond?
Director Fry: I'm here.
Director Duhon: Okay, very good then. Thank you, sir.

Director Duhon: Madam Chair, we do have a quorum present to conduct business.

Chairperson Lewis: Great, thank you so much. On to item number three, confirm the meeting posting in compliance with the open meetings act. We did indeed get that posting done. Last week, it occurred on Thursday, a day in advance of our 72-hour requirement. Item number four, discussion of possible action on minutes for the September 13, 2022, meeting. Director Duhon, please. We're not hearing you. I don't know if your mic is off. Yes, your mic is crossed. There you go.

Director Duhon: Alright, sorry about that. My bad. Alright, everyone should have received a copy of the minutes from the last meeting. Do we have any corrections to those minutes?
Hearing nothing, do we have a motion to approve the minutes?

Director Keeney: So moved.
Director Mann: Second, Bruce Mann.

Chairperson Lewis: Okay.

Director Duhon: Okay. And who was the motion made by?

Director Keeney: Mayor Keeney.

Director Duhon: Okay, Mayor Keeney. Alright, we got a motion and a second. Any other discussion? Alright. All those in favor, say aye.

Board: Aye.

Director Duhon: Alright. Those opposed, same motion and state your name. Alright, the minutes are approved unanimously. Madam Chair, I will turn it back over to you.

Chairperson Lewis: Thank you so much, Judge Duhon.

Chairperson Lewis: We'll go on to items five and six. Director Owen, report from the treasurer, and then move on to item six, discussion and possible action on Resolution 22-19. Director Owen, please.

Director Owen: Yes. Madam Chair, I would ask Chris Palis to give us a report on our treasury.

Mr. Chris Palis: Good afternoon, everybody. You should see a copy of the bookkeeper's report dated October 11th. If you turn to page two, you can see a starting cash balance of \$24,535. And total disbursements being presented at today's meeting totaling \$1,805.46, leaving a cash balance as of today of \$92,729.51. Page three is a listing of your account balances. So, you can see the listing of CDs and the Texas Class Money Market funds, and then the checking account with a total balance of \$1,412,851. Pages four and five are your actual versus budget. For the month of September, you can see a total income interest of \$1,584. And then total expenses here of \$769, leaving a net balance of \$815. And page five is just a listing of the pro bono invoices, any kind donations, and a few expenses. And then of course pages six, seven, eight, and nine, no updates since the previous meeting. So, this has remained the same there. That should be it for the bookkeeper's report.

Chairperson Lewis: Director Owen, your mic is off.

Director Owen: I pulled a Judge Duhon. I'm talking, and nobody is listening.

Director Owen: Madam Chair, I would say that if there's any corrections let us know. But otherwise, I would entertain a motion to approve possible action on Resolution 22-19 ratifying our payments. Is there a motion?

Director Keeney: So moved.

Chairperson Lewis: It's Keeney.

Director Owen: And a second? Anybody opposed?

Director Peterman: Second.

Director Owen: Thanks. Judge Duhon, did you make the motion?

Chairperson Lewis: Mayor Keeney made the motion. The second was Tina Peterman.

Director Owen: Okay, Tina made the second.

Chairperson Lewis: Yes.

Director Owen: Did Tina make the second?

Chairperson Lewis: Yes.

Director Peterman: Yes.

Director Owen: Thank you. Somebody has their hand raised. Okay. Chair, that's it.
Chairperson Lewis: Alright, thank you, director Owen. Must appreciate it.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright, that takes us to item seven, discussion and possible action on Resolution 22-20, authorizing the executive director to enter into a letter of agreement with Burton Accounting, PLLC for review of the 2021 annual financial report. Ms. Parker? Do you want to say anything additional about that?

Ms. Katherine Parker: Yes, Mr. Palis will give us the information about it. This is our yearly agreement—one of our yearly engagement letters on the financial side.

Mr. Chris Palis: Yes, so this is something Burton Accounting has done every year for Gulf Coast Rail that works closely with McCall Gibson to review the audit and their work papers. This is to eliminate material weakness that they usually put into the management letters stating that someone has reviewed the audit, and there's no issues involved. So, this is an annual thing that Burton works with McCall Gibson. And so, once Burton finishes their report stating there's no issues and that a third party has looked over the financials then they remove that language in their management letter.

Chairperson Lewis: Are there any questions?

Director Owen: Chair, I would make a motion that we approve the authorization.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright, motion Owen. Is there a second?

Director Keeney: I'll second.

Chairperson Lewis: Okay, Mayor Keeney seconds. All in favor?

Board: Aye.

Chairperson Lewis: Okay. Is there anyone who's opposed? Please voice audibly please. Alright, thank you. Motion carries. Thank you, Mr. Palis.

Mr. Chris Palis: Thank you very much.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright, that takes us to item eight, public comments. Is there anyone present in person or anyone online who would like to address the board?

Ms. Lisa Patke: There is one.

Chairperson Lewis: There is a hand.

Ms. Lisa Patke: Yes.

Chairperson Lewis: That's probably Dominic.

Ms. Lisa Patke: It could be.

Chairperson Lewis: Yes, Dominic, I think you have...

Mr. Dominic Mazoch: Yes, ma'am. Yes, Madam Chair.

Chairperson Lewis: Your name is abbreviated, but yes, go ahead, Dominic. Please introduce yourself and adhere to our three minutes please.

Mr. Dominic Mazoch: Sure, no problem. My name is Dominic Mazoch. I represent myself, and my three minutes begin now. I'm doing this via teleconference. This morning I got an email in my inbox. It was from Railway H, and within this email there was a link to the... within 24 hours, I believe, the recent proposed merger outline that the KCS and the Canadian Pacific Railroad has sent to the Surface Transportation Board. I know you as a board cannot say yay or nay to the merger, but that might be something for you to look at. I still have concerns about the Houston Terminal, and I have mentioned those to certain boards during the open sessions that they had for public comments.

Second of all, Dr. Lewis, Mayor Fry, and most of you, I remember when I was in high school we had this thing called closeup where seniors... It was two parts. Some people were able to go to Washington, and they could visit their congressional party, learn how things operate in Washington, DC. But there was also a local type of close up where juniors and seniors in high school would learn how governments work locally. I think this may be something that needs to be done with the school districts and maybe through H-GAC. But that with Teams and Zoom... how can we incorporate... Like the meeting now? How can this be incorporated into a civics class? And maybe one of the assignments is you have to go to a meeting, or you're on Zoom, and express yourself and that you can speak for that three minutes and make a difference. And with that, ma'am, and the rest of the group, I have no other comments. I'm sending it back to you, Madam Chair.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright. Your comments have been recorded, Mr. Mazoch. Thank you for being here today. Is there anyone else? If not, we'll close item eight and move onto item number nine, reports from our GCRD committees. We've had some very robust, engaging, and productive discussions with our committees over the last couple, three weeks. So, we're going to look forward to those reports. Director Gonzalez, could you begin with Marketing and Outreach Committee please?

Director Gonzalez: Yes. Can you hear me okay? I'm still driving. I'm a few minutes from my destination.

Chairperson Lewis: So, let me change you to second to give you just a little time to get there if you don't mind. Can I do that?

Director Gonzalez: Yes, please do. Thank you.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright, perfect. Thank you. We'll start with Legislative and Funding, Director Peterman, please.

Director Peterman: Yes, thank you, Dr. Lewis. Good afternoon. Dr. Lewis mentioned we did in fact have a very robust conversation and discussion last Friday. We were joined by Director Beeson, who was online with us, and then in person we were joined by Dr. Lewis, Dr. Mayor Jon Keeney, and Director Robert Fry. In addition to those directors, we were also joined in person by

Tyson Moeller and James Hernandez. And then online, we were joined by Jim Webb, Dr. Abraham with Harris County Toll Road Authority, and Eric Potts.

So, we had a pretty lengthy agenda. We went almost the two hours that were allotted. Topics of discussion: James Hernandez, who is an attorney with Orrick, a law counsel firm, provided a presentation and a little bit of history on House Joint Resolution 99, which was the result of... So, basically that allows counties to also leverage TRZ revenues and issue debt. That basically put the resolution before the voters, which came to the voters in November of 2021. It was bipartisan. It was a bipartisan resolution, and it was passed by 63% of the voters, which is pretty remarkable in our current political environment. So, shortly after the election, opponents of the ballot initiative filed a lawsuit challenging the efficiency of the ballot language. And so right now, that is still pending. Basically, what all of this means is that so long as that litigation is still pending, we cannot... county TRZs cannot issue debt against tax increment revenue. I believe Ms. Patke sent around the presentation that was made by Mr. Hernandez. There is a lot of really great information in there including how does the TRZ work. One thing that I learned, and I do this for a living, and I didn't realize this, but the difference between a TRZ, which is a transportation reinvestment zone, and a TIRZ, a tax increment reinvestment zone. They essentially are the same thing. They do the same thing. They were just authorized under different statutes, so that's the main difference. In short, we're hopeful that the litigation can be resolved, and then I think that that would potentially create a path forward for a TRZ encompassing the various counties that comprise the Gulf Coast Rail District. We talked a little bit about mechanics on how you would actually do that because you'd have a... And I'd think you would want to constrain the jurisdiction of the TRZ to a corridor on either side of where we believe this transportation is... a rail corridor, for example. And you would use a local government corporation that would basically be comprised of the various counties that are participating. So, each county would implement its own TRZ. All those revenues would flow up to a local government corporation. Each county would have representation on the local government corporation. And then at that point, all of those revenues could then be leveraged to issue debt in order to fund infrastructure projects. We had some really great Q&A around that presentation. I would really invite the other directors who were present to chime in as they wish. It was a very productive dialogue.

There were four key items on the agenda. The other item that we discussed is... So, thanks to Director Mann. He sent around some information on a rail relocation improvement fund. I'm going to come back to that here in a moment. The other item, number three, that we talked about were potential revenue streams. We talked about a vehicle registration fee. That was something that was before this body a number of years ago, back in 2007, 2008. James Hernandez, who had worked with the Rail District at that time, gave us a little bit of history. There was generally some pushback on using a fee that's associated with cars, with passenger cars, to construct rail projects. Although at that point, at that time, I think our organization, the Rail District, may have been more focused on passenger rail. And so, the point that was made during the meeting is with our focus on at grade separation and increasing mobility, there very definitely is a nexus between cars and vehicle registration fees and those at grade separations. So, perhaps maybe at a different time there is definitely a different political environment. I recognize that many would see this as an additional tax or fee, but I would be very interested in trying to figure out how do we look at leveraging something like this. Brazoria County is either in the process of imposing or they have

imposed a \$10 vehicle registration fee. We've seen this tool used in San Antonio with the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority, as well as down south with Hidalgo County and the Hidalgo County Regional Mobility Authority. Just to give you an order of magnitude, Harris County on average has 3.2 million registrations a year, and if you did a one dollar vehicle registration fee... I can do that math in my head; we're talking about 3.2 million annual revenue. If we take that and we look at this TRZ, now we're really starting to cobble together a real funding stream, which gets us back to the rail relocation.

I'm going to ask Director Mann... I know you and I didn't talk about this beforehand, but I know this is one of your passion projects to talk about CREATE and rail relocation. Before we do that, real quickly... So, Tyson Moeller with UP presented and spoke about the CREATE program. The key takeaway is there are many, many stakeholders ranging from ourselves, the Rail District, H-GAC, TxDOT, each of the cities and counties. And in his opinion what's really missing is a champion and/or leadership—somebody who can start the conversations, get all the necessary stakeholders in a room so we can start having these conversations. Director Mann, if you'd like to talk to us about the rail relocation. What we talked about in the meeting was that is something tangible that this group can do. We can ask each of the governmental entities that we represent. We can forward on the materials that you sent me asking letters be written to our state officials as well as TxDOT officials asking them to fund this program. So, Director Mann, if you wouldn't mind.

Director Mann: Yes. No, thank you. So, this was created by the legislature quite a few years ago, and it's never been funded. With the 27 billion dollars or whatever it is extra that we have this year, there's no better time than now to really try to get them to fund this. I really think it's about presenting it as an opportunity to leverage these funds in the form of grants. Really this is all predicated really by our region getting together and forming kind of a CREATE type program for Houston and really be successful in leveraging those funds. I think I've spoken before about what CREATE is, so I don't want to spend a lot of time restating that. But I think there's no better time than now to try and get the legislature to fund this thing. They have a legislative appropriate request for ports that they've put in. There's some other stuff that they're doing. I think there's a lot of momentum behind this. We wouldn't be the only one asking for it. So, I think now is the time to do it.

Director Peterman: Director Mann, I know you shared with Dr. Lewis and I that the materials maybe that were sent around from that came from the Rail Advocacy Group. Is that something that we can share with the rest of our board and ask each representative if they're amenable to ask? For example, if they're a city appointee, or a county appointee, or what have you, to ask your governmental entity to consider writing a letter asking for this fund to be funded?

Director Mann: Yes. No, absolutely. I think as well, we probably ought to talk... I'm not sure who's running TAG at this moment, but we ought to reach out to TAG and try to work with them to get them to do the same thing.

Chairperson Lewis: So, just a TAG response. The legislative agenda is being coordinated for TAG by Jeff Collins and Darren... What's Darren's last name?

Director Fry: Willer.

Chairperson Lewis: What's his last name?

Director Fry: W-I-L-L-E-R.

Chairperson Lewis: Yes, Willer. Yes. Darren Willer. I'll spell that for you, Lisa, when it's time to do the minutes. But they're coordinating the legislative agenda for TAG. We'll probably have a meeting soon about configuring that legislative agenda.

Director Peterman: And so, then the last sort of call to action item... There were two. One was the rail relocation, and then the other was to ask or visit with this board... And actually, Dr. Lewis, I think you were going to circle back with H-GAC first. But just figuring out on this CREATE concept, how can this body, which is a convener already... That's part of what we do. How can we help bring together all the stakeholders that need to be in the room? The energy in the room last Friday was pretty amazing. I think you've got a lot of... As Director Mann said, there is a lot of energy and momentum around these topics. And timing is critical, and I just want to take this group's temperature on how do we continue to move this ball forward.

Director Mann: Just to comment on that really quick... Let me apologize for not being able to make that meeting. I was in a board meeting at the same time. But H-GAC is starting this, but it really long-term needs to be handed off to us because this is what originally the freight rail district was created for was exactly this. So, this is absolutely what we ought to be doing. So, it's great that we've got H-GAC to start it, but at some point it needs to transition to this entity. I'll stop there.

Director Peterman: Well... there were people in the room on Friday who had the exact same sentiment, so I don't think you're standing alone on that. We also don't want to upset the apple cart before we even get started. So, there are ways to navigate this process.

Director Keeney: Well, just to build on what both you folks have said. There was a great deal of energy.

Chairperson Lewis: Is your mic on?

Director Keeney: It is on. There was a great deal of energy because there's a sequence of events. If we can obtain funding through whatever mechanism, that helps. Getting the state involved opens the door for matching funds to the federal funds. And so, there's just an accessibility issue that if we don't take advantage of this situation... And our friend from UP highly recommended that this group take the lead on that. For me, that was a perfectly reasonable request and one that I think gives this board the incentive to really make a very concerted effort to take that leadership role. I do have to say that Director Peterman did a phenomenal job in leading that meeting and bringing out very critical information from the presenters, from Union Pacific, and all the other stakeholders. So, I congratulate you on creating that energy that you described.

Chairperson Lewis: Concur.

Director Peterman: Thank you.

Chairperson Lewis: So, Director Peterman, does that conclude your presentation?

Director Peterman: Yes, ma'am. Sorry. Yes, that concludes it.

Chairperson Lewis: It's okay. No problem. I'm curious... So, there were three things that Director Peterman talked about that were the focus of the meeting last week. One was the TRZs, which I think we're excited about, but we can do nothing about until the lawsuit is settled. The second one is the rail relocation one that will link with CREATE conversation. One of the things we talked about is we need our own name so that we stop referring to it as CREATE. But for now. And so, one of the things that I felt was important is we don't have an item on this agenda, but we can get one on one next month to get a sentiment from GCRD board about if we indeed as a board would concur with sort of everything that's been discussed in terms of GCRD. Number one having a strong participation in this, and then number two, once we work with H-GAC and other stakeholders to zero in and winnow in on where the lead should be. So, I guess for now for discussion purposes under this agenda item, I just would like feedback. We've heard from Mayor Keeney. I'm wondering what others think. We know what Director Mann thinks, and we know what Director Peterman thinks. What are other thoughts? Alright. Well, we will... Director Muller, thank you.

Director Muller: I was just going to say the concept of this is the year to go get some money and do this is right given what we know about the budget surplus. I just don't know how we get there. Anybody have any suggestions on how to actually get money out of the legislature? I'm not talking about... I'm talking for specific projects. Do you think we could go and get that kind of deal done in Austin?

Director Mann: I'm going to answer that question. I think Tina and I talked a little bit about this, but the rail crossing issue is a hot button item for the mayor. Mayor Turner was in the legislature for a little bit of time. If anybody knows how to navigate that thing, he does. So, we ought to be having a conversation with the mayor to say, "Hey, we think there's this opportunity. Can you help us?" I think that's where we really need to go.

Chairperson Lewis: So, let me offer this. The first thing to me that's important is that our board is unified, and we have consensus around this item. And so, what I will do is if we don't hear any negative comments then I think we can proceed on Directors Peterman and Mann with pulling together something that GCRD board formally adopts as our own position because we can't go to anyone unless we know that our board is united behind the concept. So, I think that's the first thing that we want to do. I think the second thing is to develop a strategy. We were able to be successful in the legislature at the last session with expanding our technologies, and so with that, we had a strategy. And I think that that's the kind of thing that we want to talk about. I think it's got several steps involved in pulling the strategy together to proceed. So, I still want to open it up to other comments. I don't want to sort of act as if there's a stop to the conversation. But I do think that we want our...

Director Muller: You're just looking for us to say, "Go figure out how to get the money."

Chairperson Lewis: Yes, that would be nice. That would be nice.

Director Muller: Do we need a motion to go get the money?

Chairperson Lewis: So, we can't do that because we don't have it on the agenda, so all we can get today is a sense of the direction that the board would like us to proceed with. Once we have that sense then we can formalize it and I think do the things that we need to formally pursue it. I think there are a lot of steps in the process, and there are a lot of people that we'll want to talk to. The other thing I understand is that we're not the only region in the state of Texas who would want to see money in this rail relocation fund. Director Mann knows that and could address it better than I. But I think that if the fund is funded, we would be wanting to posture ourselves and be in a very good position to go in and get money out. So, we don't know how it will be set up yet. We don't know if it will be designated by region, if it would be a pot that we would have to compete for. We don't have any of those answers to those questions. But I think that what we do want to do is, again, get ourselves structured, and organized, and postured so that we can present ourselves well if we're able to get some money into that pot.

Director Keeney: Well, I certainly support moving forward and developing a strategy and having these two folks that you've suggested initiate that activity. But I'll also add in addition to Mayor Turner's 31 other cities that are in Harris County by itself. I assure you that there are grade crossing issues in those cities. I have no trouble as a representative for Mayor and Council gaining hopefully the commitment of that particular group for a strategy. I can tell you that group also has a legislative agenda. This is not on it, at this point in time. There's another group through BAHEP in southeast Harris County who also develops a specific legislative agenda, and this particular issue is not on that agenda either. And so, we need to be consistent throughout Harris County as we approach these legislative folks. To be honest with you, you have to keep it simple stupid for those folks and be very specific about what you're going after. You increase the probability of success by having a consistent message regardless of who is approaching them from either side of the aisle.

Chairperson Lewis: Much appreciated. When we went before, the strategy that you mentioned, we did have loads of support from all of our stakeholder entities, so I'm confirming that that indeed is absolutely important. All of our stakeholder entities including the City of Houston, of course. So, let me just... As we sort of round out this piece, I'm just wanting to... If anyone has a discomfort with the idea, now would be the time to say, "Hey, pause a minute. I've got some questions," or something. So, offering that opportunity at this point. Okay. If not then any other comments on Director Peterman's report? Thoughts? I think we were all very excited about the opportunities. Until you have money, it's a vision out there. But I think in the time I've been on GCRD, we've got more that we're kind of pursuing from a funding standpoint than we have had in a while. So, that, I think, is exciting. Hopefully, we'll get through to the end and actually this time when we're sitting here next year we'll actually have some funding available to us. That would be absolutely exciting. Director Mann, you have raised your hand.

Director Mann: Yes, I was just going to say before I forget it so I can get it in the record. We need to make it's on the Partnership's legislative agenda as well, the Greater Houston Partnership.

Chairperson Lewis: Okay, so we'll be looking for those who have relationships with them. Alright. Anything else? Alright, thank you. That was awesome, Director Peterman. Very excited about all of that. I think Director Gonzalez is at a point where you can speak. How about it?

Director Gonzalez: Yes, thank you so much for moving me to the second place to give the update.

Chairperson Lewis: Absolutely.

Director Gonzalez: Yes, for the Marketing and Outreach Committee meeting, we had a really interesting and engaging conversation about the upcoming website for GCRD. We went over several suggestions that have been provided by some of you, and based on some of our recent conversations, those changes are going to be made. We're still looking at a few of them including how to add drop down menus just to make information more concise and easy to get to for anyone who visits our website. So, that's still something that's going to be ongoing. We went through a few suggestions in terms of changing the names of tabs to make them more cohesive.

We've also discussed changing the domain for our website from GCRD.net to GCRD.org, which is something that is available, but it does cost us some money since it is available for purchase—that domain. So, that's something that we'll be discussing. Aside from the general feedback on the website, we do have one ask which is to have... One of the suggestions I believe Director Peterman made was that we should have someone such as Rich Muller confirm that everything on our website is accurate, true, correct before we go completely public on our website. So, that was a suggestion that came from our committee. We just want to make sure that we're putting out all accurate information and ensuring that someone has given it a thorough look through. I see both of you laughing about the suggestion.

Director Muller: If you'll send me the website, I'll look at it before it goes live.

Director Gonzalez: Perfect, thank you. We appreciate that. We just want to make sure everything is accurate and true. Someone said accurate and true, so going with the legal talk here. We are aiming to have the website updated and ready to go by the next board meeting, so that's our goal. We will keep you all updated on that track and making sure that we go live on the website. So, those are the updates for now, and we'll continue to keep you updated. Again, our goal is to have this done, finished, and ready to go by our next meeting next month.

Chairperson Lewis: So, Director Gonzalez, could you provide to us the cost of buying that other domain, and perhaps the board can consider that? We could actually move forward with it if it's not a million dollars. If it's a million dollars, we'll stay .net.

Director Gonzalez: I'll look into that.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright. Alright, thank you. Alright, thank you. Any questions or other comments for Director Gonzalez? Director Mann has a raised hand. Yes?

Director Mann: I was just going to recommend, if we're going to send that to be reviewed, we probably ought to send it to Mr. Beeson and Mr. Winkler because they've probably been around here as long as anybody. So...

Director Gonzalez: Okay, thank you. I will do that. I will send it to all three.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright, thank you, Director Gonzalez. That is exciting. We'll have a new look as we get some new money. It's going to all come at the same time, so it'll be something for us to look forward to.

Director Gonzalez: Yes, thank you.

Chairperson Lewis: Great, thank you. Again, exciting couple weeks on our committees. And thank both of you directors for taking lead on those for us. Takes us to item ten, report from Ms. Parker.

Ms. Katherine Parker: Thank you so much. Good afternoon to everyone. Just two short pieces. The West Belt Grade Separation Phase One Project, which we all know very well, was submitted for the RCE grant application yesterday. So, now we wait. But everything is turned in, and I believe we'll have a successful application. So, I'll keep you updated as the process and progress for that RCE application.

Next, I put on the agenda future speakers for board meetings. I have had some suggestions from some directors as far as coming to speak to us about our various objectives. BNSF is one, and I'll be asking them to come and give an update and report as we've heard from UP. But if there are other suggestions, and if you all have them, please let me know so that we can schedule them to be a part of our meetings. Our past few speakers have been very informative and helpful to us as we're basically getting our ducks in a row for all of our endeavors that we're taking on for the Rail District. So, that will help as we're ending out our year to kind of get our speakers for the upcoming year, for January of next year. And that's it.

One last thing that's not here, but I attended... an open meetings act meeting. And so, some of the changes that will occur or how they will affect the Rail District is our portions of announcements and reports will have to be much more specific than they've been in the past. And so, we will try to do our best to spell out what will be talked about each time... just as we've done for our action portions so that the public has the opportunity to provide comment or possibly testimony depending on what type of agenda we have for that particular meeting. So, those are the only changes that will apply to our board. Thank you.

Chairperson Lewis: Thank you, Ms. Parker. I really appreciate her attending that open meetings act session. It was sponsored by H-GAC, and I know it was very good. Therefore, I was unable to get specifics on item 11 today, so there will be none today. The only thing I will say is on the heels of our committee meetings, we will begin in earnest because we don't have a lot of time to

take steps to figure out what we're going to do in terms of structuring our CREATE and railroad relocation fund activities. So, we'll get cranking on those. Some of you may hear Director Mann particularly in the middle... If there's something... Because I know you've been working with H-GAC a lot, so it may be that you're a good person to continue dialogue with H-GAC. That may happen before we meet again. So, we will make sure that at the next meeting we have appropriate items on the agenda so that we can continue conversation about next steps here. Other than that, our next meeting is November 8th, 2022. Director Mann, you raised a hand or not?

Director Keeney: That's election day.

Director Mann: Yes, just really quickly. I know Tyson is here, and I just wanted to say hey, Tyson. The rail relocation fund, is that something that UP can add for their public affairs folks to maybe put on a legislative agenda for Texas?

Mr. Tyson Moeller: Absolutely. Is there something specific you're thinking of there?

Director Mann: It's already created. It just needs to be funded. So, it's just saying, "Hey, we want you guys to fund what you've created."

Mr. Tyson Moeller: So, Bruce, I was at a Texas Freight Advisory Committee. That was I believe last week. And so that was something I specifically mentioned from a freight railroad perspective. So, Caroline jumped in on that as well and indicated they would continue those efforts. So, that'll be something that's included in the state plan for legislative recommendations there. UP has always supported that effort.

Director Mann: Okay. Alright, thanks.

Chairperson Lewis: So, I believe that we are now ready to adjourn. So, I would entertain a motion. Mayor Keeney, since you're sitting here, would you give us a motion to adjourn?

Director John Keeney: Sure. So moved.

Chairperson Lewis: Alright. We've got a motion. And a second from anyone?

Director Owen: Second.

Chairperson Lewis: Thank you, Mayor Owen. So, we are now adjourned (2:48 p.m.). I'll see you all on November 8th. It is election day, but we get to early vote. So, everyone early vote.

Director Owen: You're right.

Chairperson Lewis: If not, the poll is open at seven, and they stay open until seven. So, you've got some time.

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

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Trey Duhon, Secretary
Michael Dyll, Vice Secretary
Gulf Coast Rail District

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