



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Legislative Fiscal Bureau Conference Room
Madison, Wisconsin

February 11, 2009
10:00 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the February 11, 2009 meeting of the Special Committee on Regional Transportation Authority. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc>.]

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Robson called the meeting to order. The roll was called and it was determined that a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. Judy Robson, Chair; Reps. Al Ott, Jeff Stone, Barbara Toles and Robin Vos; Sen. John Lehman; and Public Members Larry Arft, Len Brandrup, Gerald Derr, Anita Gulotta-Connelly, Tim Hanna, Richard Johnson, Chuck Kamp, Scott McDonell, Delora Newton, Brian Ohm, Fritz Ruf, Dick Wagner, and Tom Walker.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Public Members Gary Becker, Brett Geboy, and Dick Granchalek.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Scott Grosz and Larry Konopacki, Staff Attorneys.

Approval of the Minutes of the October 9, 2008 Meeting

Larry Arft moved, seconded by Representative Ott, to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2008 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote.

Discussion of Committee Assignment

Legislative Council staff reviewed Memo No. 3, which summarizes the provisions in the most recent committee bill draft (WLC 0063/P2). Chair Robson noted that she had been informed that the Governor's state budget proposal was to include specific regional transit authority (RTA) creation

provisions for the Fox Valley, Southeastern Wisconsin, and Dane County areas, and that it was therefore her intention to not include provisions in the committee bill draft that are specific to these areas.

Chair Robson then asked the committee to offer any comments or suggestions they may have regarding the provisions in the bill draft relating to RTA formation, funding, powers, and withdrawal or dissolution. As a result of discussions surrounding members' suggestions, Legislative Council staff was directed to draft the following changes to WLC: 0063/P2:

- Clarify that resolutions of political subdivisions creating or joining an RTA must identify the required representation on the RTA board, if any, for each participating political subdivision.
- Allow an RTA to provide transit service outside of its jurisdictional area without receiving compensation from the area being served.
- Allow bond proceeds to be used for capital and other expenditures having a useful life of less than five years if those expenditures occur for the acquisition of all or a part of a transit system.
- Direct an RTA to work with the Department of Transportation when exercising its authority to maintain and improve railroad rights-of-way for future transit use.
- Allow a political subdivision that chooses to withdraw from an RTA to negotiate with the RTA board for a termination date for the provision of transit services in the political subdivision by the RTA that is earlier than the date upon which the transit tax will terminate in the political subdivision.
- Clarify the definition of "transit system" to exclude air travel.
- Allow an RTA that includes territory in more than one county to establish different tax rates within the different counties.

County-Related Changes

In addition to the changes above, the committee directed Legislative Council staff to provide more authority to a county to set the jurisdictional area of an RTA, including the following two options:

- A county could designate the entire county as a "participating area" for purposes of RTA creation or joining an RTA. This would allow the county to include the entire county within an RTA jurisdictional area.
- A county with all or a part of an approved metropolitan planning area (AMPA) within the county could designate the area comprised of each municipality within the county with at least 75% of its population residing within the boundaries of the AMPA at the time of creation of the RTA as a "participating area" for purposes of RTA creation or joining an RTA. This would allow the county to include all of this area within an RTA jurisdictional area.

Under either of these options, the county would be required to receive the consent of each municipality within the participating area that is operating a comprehensive unified local transit system at the time that the participating area becomes part of an RTA.

For political subdivisions that straddle county boundaries, only the portion of the political subdivision within the county creating the participating area could be included within the RTA jurisdictional area unless the political subdivision joined the RTA as a participating political subdivision or was included in one or more participating areas designated by the other county or counties encompassing the political subdivision.

A county would be allowed to create an RTA that only encompassed a “participating area,” or it could create or join an RTA with other political subdivisions or participating areas.

Counties would be allowed to participate in more than one RTA provided that the rate of transit taxes imposed by one or more RTAs in any municipality does not exceed the maximum rate established under the bill.

Other Business

There was no other business brought before the committee.

Plans for Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Special Committee will be March 4, 2009.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

LAK:ksm