

Resolution No. 20 - 07/16

Urging the Surface Transportation Board to Conduct a Thorough Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad

1 Moved/Sponsored by: Public Works Committee
2

3 **WHEREAS**, Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc., (“GLBT”) has sought authority from the
4 Surface Transportation Board of the United States Department of Transportation to construct and
5 operate a rail line of approximately 278 miles in length, from LaPorte, Indiana, through the State
6 of Illinois to a point in the Town of Lima in Rock County, Wisconsin; and;
7

8 **WHEREAS**, under the current proposal, the rail line may include portions of Walworth County;
9 and,
10

11 **WHEREAS**, the Town of Sharon has adopted a resolution expressing significant concerns
12 regarding the project; and,
13

14 **WHEREAS**, among the concerns cited by the Sharon Town Board include the loss of valuable
15 farmland, the potential for environmental contamination, and the inability of emergency
16 personnel to respond to residents in a timely manner due to the closure of roads; and,
17

18 **WHEREAS**, the Town of Sharon relies upon a volunteer fire department and first responders to
19 meet the safety needs of township residents; and this proposed rail line may require the Town to
20 purchase special equipment and pay for additional training due to the potential of a derailment or
21 accident; and,
22

23 **WHEREAS**, the purported benefits of efficiency and time-savings attributed to the proposed rail
24 line must properly be weighed against the enormous tangible and intangible costs that would be
25 imposed on the residents and owners of property through which the rail line would run; and,
26

27 **WHEREAS**, the Walworth County Board of Supervisors expresses concern for the possible
28 destruction of farmland, safety relative to the materials being transported, the effects on traffic on
29 local roadways and dead-ends, and potential negative impact on tourism.
30

31 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors
32 hereby urges the Surface Transportation Board to conduct a thorough environmental impact
33 study for the proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad to weigh the purported benefits of the rail line
34 against the enormous potential costs outlined in this resolution.
35

36 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors opposes
37 shifting the rail line east into Walworth County and the Town of Sharon.
38

39 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Clerk be directed to forward a copy of this
40 resolution to the Town of Sharon and the Surface Transportation Board’s Office of
41 Environmental Analysis, c/o Dave Navecky, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001.
42

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

Nancy Russell

Nancy Russell
County Board Chair

Kimberly S. Bushey
Kimberly S. Bushey
County Clerk

County Board Meeting Date: July 12, 2016

Action Required: Majority Vote X Two-thirds Vote Other

Policy and Fiscal Note is attached.
 Reviewed and approved pursuant to Section 2-91 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances:

<u>DA Bret</u> <u>6/30/16</u>	<u>N Andersen</u> <u>6/30/16</u>
David A. Bret Date	Nicole Andersen Date
County Administrator/Corporation Counsel	Deputy County Administrator - Finance

If unsigned, exceptions shall be so noted by the County Administrator.

This Resolution/Ordinance was:
 Adopted: Roll Call/U.C./Voice
 Rejected/Referred/Laid Over
 Ayes: Noes: Absent:
 Date July 12, 2016

Policy and Fiscal Note
Resolution No. 20 - 07/16

- I. **Title:** Urging the Surface Transportation Board to Conduct a Thorough Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad

- II. **Purpose and Policy Impact Statement:** The purpose of this resolution to encourage the Surface Transportation Board to conduct a thorough environmental impact statement for the proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad.

- III. **Budget and Fiscal Impact:** Passage of this advisory resolution will have no impact on the County budget.

- IV. **Referred to the following standing committees for consideration and date of referral:**

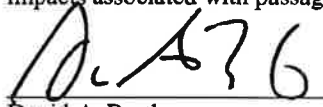
Committee: Public Works

Meeting Date: June 20, 2016

Vote: 5-0

County Board Meeting Date: July 12, 2016

Policy and fiscal note has been reviewed and approved as an accurate statement of the probable policy and fiscal impacts associated with passage of the attached resolution.

 6/30/16

Date

David A. Bretl
County Administrator/Corporation Counsel

 6/30/16

Date

Nicole Andersen
Deputy County Administrator – Finance

If unsigned, exceptions shall be so noted by the County Administrator.