

# ***NEWS***

## ***OHIO RAIL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION***

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **ORDC Commissioners OK Freights Projects / Re-open Executive Director Search**

**(Columbus)** – Freight railroad projects that will spur economic and job development in Licking, Knox, Columbiana and Fayette counties were approved Thursday by the Ohio Rail Development Commission. An emergency grant to assist a Cleveland area railroad with track repairs was also announced.

Approved by Commissioners:

- **Agreed to have ORDC manage a \$1.7-Million dollar Ohio Department of Development grant for repairs to 44 grade crossing surfaces on the Newark to Mount Vernon rail line operated by the Ohio central Railroad. The repairs are part of an overall rail rehabilitation project which will allow more shipments by two major Mount Vernon Shippers and allow expansion of business to create more jobs.**
- Approved a loan revision and assignment from the Columbiana County Port Authority to the new Eastern States Railroad to allow continued investment in rail line upgrades. The railroad is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the line's major shipper, Total Waste Logistics.
- Approved a \$207-thousand dollar loan package and \$513-grant to combine with funds from the West Central Ohio Port Authority and

the Indiana & Ohio Railroad to replace a small but vital railroad bridge on the rail line between Springfield and Washington Courthouse. Replacing the bridge will enable better rail service and allow more carloads of freight to be hauled by rail. In addition to serving existing business, the line will also serve a new fertilizer plant and runs adjacent to an Ohio Job Ready Site that was recently under consideration for Honda plant that eventually located to Indiana. The bridge replacement will make the site more attractive to new business.

Commissioners were also briefed on a project approved by the Acting Director and Commission Chairman that directs an emergency grant of \$55,000 to the Cleveland Commercial Railroad for badly needed track and crossing surface repairs along the line between Glenwillow and Cleveland. The railroad says this will reduce the possibility of derailments over what was once a deteriorating line.

In other business, Commissioners decided in executive session to re-open the search for a new Executive Director to replace retired Executive Director James Seney. No reason was stated for re-posting the job, but the following motion was approved unanimously:

- To direct ORDC staff to immediately re-post the job position. (That was done as of the Thursday afternoon). The job posting will be open for a period of 10 days.
- Direct ORDC Chairman James Betts to appoint a Screening Committee of four Commissioners. Commissioners Solomon Jackson, James Hartung, Eric Neff and Tom McOwen agreed to serve.
- Directed that all previous candidates that had been interviewed for the position will be reconsidered without having to re-apply.
- Directed staff to immediately forward all new resumes to the Commissioners and Screening Committee.

**(The Ohio Rail Development Commission is an independent agency operating within the Ohio Department of Transportation. ORDC is responsible for economic development through the improvement and expansion of passenger and freight rail service, railroad grade crossing safety and rail travel & tourism issues. For more information about what ORDC does for Ohio, visit our website at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ohiorail/>)**