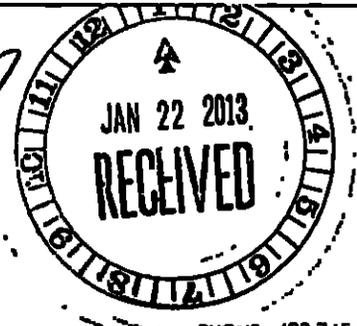




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OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR

JOHN M. GENTRY
County Mayor

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January 14, 2013

Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings

JAN 22 2013

Part of
Public Record

Re: CSX Transportation Abandonment of the Athens Branch in McMinn County, Tennessee,
(STB Docket No. AB-55/Sub No. 694X)

Dear Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of McMinn County, Tennessee to request another 180 day extension of the deadline for negotiations with CSX Transportation, Inc. ("CSXT"), regarding the Notice of Interim Trail Use in the above captioned proceeding with respect to the 6.4 mile portion of the line ("the Athens Branch") that extends northwest from near Englewood to Athens. (between OKW327 0 and OKW333 4 including both spurs located after OKW 332). Pursuant to the August 24, 2012 decision ("the Decision") of the Surface Transportation Board ("the Board"), an agreement for interim trail use/rail banking expires February 23, 2013 ("Negotiating Deadline")

As referenced in the previous extension request, the consulting environmental engineer hired by the City of Athens has now concluded the soils test required by the railroad. The county has also completed a project development cost estimate and highway crossing design by a registered architect. It is important to note that local elections have also now been completed in two of the affected municipalities and meaningful negotiations can now commence. A price for the corridor has been requested from CSX, but has not been provided at this time. We expect to be able to continue negotiations

The County respectfully requests an extension to August 21, 2013 (180 calendar days for the Negotiating Deadline) In addition, the County respectfully requests a waiver of the Boards filing fees in accordance with 49 CFR 1002.2(e)(1)

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Gentry
McMinn County Mayor

cc: Bruce McMahon
Elizabeth Steel

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