

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Railroad veteran named Metra's executive director

CHICAGO (Jan. 31, 2013) – The Metra Board of Directors today unanimously selected Donald A. Orseno, a lifelong railroader who has worked at Metra for more than three decades, as the next Executive Director/CEO of the commuter rail agency..

Mr. Orseno, 59, has served as the interim Executive Director/CEO since last August. Board members said he was the clear favorite among three other candidates who were interviewed today.

“It is a difficult balance to find an individual who has an understanding of railroad operations, customer service delivery, and local and national advocacy, but we have found that individual in Don Orseno,” said Acting Board Chairman Jack Partelow.

“Don Orseno is the man for the job,” said Director Don A. De Graff. “He clearly has the work ethic, and he clearly has the ability and experience.”

“What we have in Don is a railroader with an incredible span of service,” said Director Jack Schaffer. “His resume almost looks like he has been working his way to this job since he was 19 years old. There’s nothing at Metra this man hasn’t done and that he doesn’t understand.”

“Metra is a complex organization,” said Director Martin J. Oberman. “Don Orseno has the qualifications we need for this job. He has the relationships with the staff and unions to move this agency forward. We did look at good candidates, but none came up to the standards and qualifications that we found in Don Orseno.”

“In our search, we looked at candidates on the East and West Coast, and regionally,” said Director Arlene J. Mulder. “It was gratifying and enlightening to see and realize that Don Orseno is the best man for this job. We wanted the very best for this agency and we found it in Don.”

“Many people do not know that Don is highly respected among his peers in the railroad industry,” said Director Norman Carlson. “He is a member of Association of American Railroads’ Safety and Operations Management Committee. There are 20 positions on that committee of senior railroad executives from the U.S., Canada and Mexico, and Don is the only commuter railroad person on that committee. You get on that committee through the recognition of your peers in the industry.”

“I am humbled by the board’s faith in me,” Mr. Orseno said. “I want our riders to know that nothing will be more important to me – and to Metra – than providing safe, dependable and comfortable trains and the best possible customer service.”

Tackling Metra’s huge capital funding needs and restoring the public trust in Metra are among Mr. Orseno’s other priorities, he said.

Mr. Orseno has worked for the railroad industry for 40 years. A native of the Chicago area, he began his career as a Rock Island Railroad trainman. Since joining Metra in 1984, he has quietly risen through the ranks based upon his stellar performance and no-nonsense work ethic.

Mr. Orseno has held progressively responsible management positions throughout his career at Metra, including Senior Trainmaster, Director of Mechanical, Director of Suburban Operations, Director Safety & Rules, Chief Customer Service Officer, Chief Transportation Officer and Deputy Executive Director/Chief Operations Officer.

Well-known and respected in the railroad industry nationwide, as well as by Metra's rank-and-file and senior staff, Mr. Orseno is an active participant and member of the Safety and Operations Management Committee of the Association of American Railroads, the senior management committee for the North American railroads. He served as vice president and then president of the American Association of Railroad Superintendents (AARS) for the United States and Canada. He is an active member of the Chicago Railroad Superintendents Association, having served ten years as their president.

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