

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the RAFA Club Crook on Tuesday 11th April 2006

The meeting started at 7:35 PM

Those present

Kevin Hillary – Chairman
Mike Wood – Vice Chairman
Brian Cox
Dave Foxton
Tim Hall
Frank Holmes
Trevor Horner
Graham Lord
Gerry Mudd
Norma Richardson
Julian Shepherd
Arthur Temple
James Lynn - Secretary

John Hummel attended the meeting at the invitation of the Trust Directors

1 Apologises for absence

John Askwith, Dave Butler, Ian Gardener, Trevor Hewitt, Steve Raine

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the 14th March 2006 meeting were accepted as a true record (after corrections to items 2, 8a, 8f and 8g) and signed by the Chairman Kevin Hillary

Proposed by Tim Hall
Seconded by Brian Cox

3 Matter actions not covered on the agenda

The Directors agreed that Trust shop operations to be discussed at the next Trust Directors meeting. The Secretary was instructed to add this item to the top of the agenda.

4 Identify other business.

- Opening over the Easter holidays
- Food Festival
- Stanhope Station lease

Note item 5 on the agenda was not discussed due to the non-availability of the Treasurer.

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman (Kevin Hillary) gave a brief oral report (based on his report previously emailed to all Directors). Kevin thanked John Hummel for updating the Directors on the status of the Company and all the members/Directors who have worked in the background to resolve the remaining issues over Administration. Kevin reported that a seat at Wolsingham station has been vandalised and the Directors discussed suitable deterrents (up to £500 cost) to prevent further vandalism.

The Directors approved the Chairmans report

6 Treasurers report

The Treasurer could not attend the meeting and had emailed a report to all the Directors. Trevor Hewitt proposed a vote of thanks to Gerry Mudd for his donation.

Proposal - The Directors expressed their thanks to Gerry Mudd for his donation to the Trust
Proposed – Trevor Hewitt
Seconded – Brian Cox

The Directors approved the proposal.

The Directors discussed the proposal to purchase a Land Rover (offered by a member). Gerry Mudd suggested that this was not a high priority. Arthur Temple commented that there are some vehicles at the Eastgate site which may be donated to the Trust.

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

7 Secretaries report

The Secretary reported that the Charity Return had been completed and was writing the Trustees Annual report.

8 Other Reports from Trust Directors

8a Update of WRT Administration (John Hummel)

John Hummel reported that a meeting had been held with the funders on 10th April and he updated the Directors on commercially confidential information. The next meeting with the funders will take place in a month's time after the Company comes out of administration. There has been no action by the Administrators to get the Company out of administration which is still being blocked by Weardale Steel. A meeting with Les Graham has been arranged for 13th April.

John reported on the timetable for the initial start up of the new Company (assuming issues with Weardale Steel can be resolved and final approval by the board of ECT). By the 3rd/4th week of May the new Company directors will be officially appointed. Conveyancing of the track from Network Rail will then be started (completion date to be advised). Completion of the Administration will allow non passenger trains (in late May) for crew training/engineering (assuming track transfer from Network Rail). Next step is to focus on reopening for passenger trains with a low key opening on a Friday by running a VIP train to thank the local politicians/funders for their help. M&As for the new Company are in the works completion should be in 2 months.

John Hummel asked for details (including insurance information), ownership and values of all equipment on the railway before administration is completed.

The Directors discussed the loop arrangements at Stanhope and if a HMRI inspection was undertaken would they query the temporary structure at Wolsingham. John Hummel reported that the HSE confirmed no action will be taken over the Mardy monster incident.

8b Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

Lottery has taken £540 (£400 profit). The Directors agreed that the lottery should have wider publicity. The Charity Supper will take place on Friday July 7th at Shildon NRM £25/head. 90 tickets have been sold.

8c Marketing sub group report

Tim Hall reported that the next meeting will be held 18th April. New poster strap lines will be sorted out. Agreement is to be sort will WVDC over the use of their OS map licence. Tim reported that WVDC do not have a legal officer which is holding up holding up Stanhope Station lease.

8d Management Group – John Askwith

Meeting minutes 00000 have been issued. Next Management Group meeting will be held on 25th April at Spennymoor.

8e Major Projects and Funding Sub Group – Gerry Mudd/Arthur Temple

Gerry Mudd reviewed the progress to date.

Lafarge – Licences/site survey for Eastgate site should be available by end of week. 2 miles of fencing have been costed. It was reported that 2 Trust members had been observed (by CCTV) on the site. Members are to reminded not to trespass on this site.

New Railway company business plan – Updated railway business plans are needed (5 years in detail & 10 year overview – 2008 is the deadline for European funding). Leadtime on this plan may be at least 6 months.

County Durham Foundation – Arthur Temple reported that funding for small projects has been delayed due the Administration of the Company.

8f Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine– John Askwith

Educational Activities – No volunteer has yet been identified to help with these activities.

Talks – 9th June Bishop Auckland, talk locations/organisations needed for September.

Publications –.No report.

Magazine – Articles by 20th April, 5th May dispatch.

8f Membership Secretaries Report (Frank Holmes)

Frank Holmes reported that membership stands at 780. Number of magazines to be posted stands at 660. Frank reported that 2 members who have renewed have not received their membership cards – the renewal process is complicated by the Post Office sending our mail via the Administrators Office at Leeds. It was agreed to target no renewing members using the positive news article from the Trusts magazine and the recent article in the Northern Echo.

Website – Frank requested more photographs and he will update the website using the article from the Northern Echo.

8g Volunteer Training

Brian Cox reported that rules reassessment will take place on 23rd April.

8i New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner

No report - Directors were reminded to keep coming up with funding ideas.

9 Restoration Activities

9a Locomotives

Letters of intent (subject to boiler inspections) have been sent out. It is hoped to have answers by 18th April. Recommendations will be emailed to Trust Directors for a decision. **(THIS IS STILL COMMERCIALY CONFIDENTIAL).**

The Loco Group have donated a quantity of red diesel for use in the Trusts generator.

9b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities

Work on 3rd coach is ongoing.

9c Infrastructure

Trevor Horner reported that the Landew Crossing work was 75 – 80% complete. He also reported that the footpath crossing Fosterley1 is too narrow.

Canopy – Graham Lord reported that the canopy was fully slated and 1 bay has been glazed. Further progress on glazing requires completion of painting of the structure.

10 Any other business

Bishop Auckland Station

John Hummel reported that the Company will get the lease for the old P-Way building. The Company and Trust will need to come up with a long term plan to take on this station. Heads of Agreement are to be drawn up and the Trust may need to identify a volunteer to take on the station. It was agreed to have displays on the station during the Railway Festival.

Opening over Easter

It was agreed that the Sunday gang will man the station whilst painting however Graham Lord pointed out the station was full of glazing materials for the canopy and this may have H&S implication. It was agreed not to formally open the station but to be available if members of the public wanted railway information. Steve Raine had agreed to man the station on Monday whilst covering the visit of The Avon & Bristol Group.

The meeting closed at 20:50 PM.

12 Date/time of the next meeting is 9th May 2006 7:30PM at the RAFA Club Crook.