

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held at the RAFA Club Crook on Tuesday 13th September 2005

The meeting commenced at 7:35 pm

Those present:

Kevin Hillary – Chairman
Trevor Hewitt - Treasurer
John Askwith
Brian Cox
Dave Foxton
Tim Hall
Graham Lord
Steve Raine
Mike Wood
James Lynn – Secretary

Please note minutes for the second half of the meeting were taken by Trevor Hewitt

Gerry Mudd attended the meeting (by invitation of the Trust Directors)

1 Apologies

John Chatfield, Frank Holmes, Steve Race, Julian Shepherd, Ian Gardiner

2 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The minutes from the 9th August 2005 meeting were accepted as a true record (after corrections) and signed by the Chairman Kevin Hillary

Proposed by Brian Cox
Seconded by Mike Wood

3 Matters/actions not covered on the agenda

3 items were identified (see AOB agenda item 11)

4 Identified other business

1 item was identified

1. Coach and Carriage Group update - Gerry Mudd

5 Chairman Report

The Chairman Kevin Hillary presented an oral report. He (along with other Trust Directors) expressed concern about the 'abusive' content of the web chat group – publishable comments such as head of the KGB have been levelled at the Chairman.

Proposal – The Directors agreed that a clear statement from the Trust covering issues of concern to members be published on the Trusts website. The Directors are to ask Ian Gardener (?) to help with the preparation of this statement.

Proposed Mike Wood
Seconded Brian Cox

The Directors approved the motion unanimously.

The Directors were reminded of the open meeting for members on Saturday 17th September. The Secretary reported to the Directors that he would not be available on that day due to a previously arranged family commitment. Trevor Hewitt also reported he could not attend the open meeting again due to previously arranged commitment.

The Chairman reported that whilst manning the Trusts stand at Romalldkirk Fair he had discussions with a traction engine owner who would attend (with other steam vehicles) at next years Transport Festival.

6 Treasurers Report

The Treasurer reported that August had been a quiet trading month and he wished to bring to the attention of the Directors the following items:

1. VAT repayment of £4000 has been received from the Inland Revenue.
2. Trevor reported that £2000 had been received from the Sir John Knott Trust. A total of £55,000 is available for a steam engine.
3. Trevor commented that interest on our funds is paid into general funds.
4. A £3500 grant from Awards for All (Lottery) had been made to cover publicity, timetables, posters and volunteer expenses. The Directors thanked Arthur Temple.

Shop Operations – Trevor is now running the Shop. Cover for September and October has been arranged. Trevor will contact volunteers to ascertain their availability for the rest of the year.

Café – Trevor reported that Cafe operations will be taken over by the new company and further discussions will take place between the Trust and the new company. Trevor will approach Joanne about her future intentions on providing refreshments in the interim particularly for the Santa Specials. The Directors wondered if she was in breach of the contractual agreements. Trevor also reported that there is no equipment such as cutlery and crockery in the Café.

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

7 Secretary's Report

The Secretary had no written report to present

Correspondence – None received.

AGM – It was reported that St Thomas Church Hall Stanhope.

Trust M&As – As per Arthur Temple's request the Secretary had contacted Phil Davis (2D). Phil confirmed that the M&As did not need revising as they had been approved by the Charity Commission. Awards for All will now accept such approved M&As for grants.

Scrap – The Secretary reported that his neighbours company North Eastern Iron Ltd were prepared to purchase the cast iron chairs from the Trust. However the Directors wanted to have all the ‘scrap’ inspected before taking the decision to sell off as scrap. It was agreed to provide a couple of scrap rail samples to see if it would be suitable for North Eastern Iron Ltd needs.

8 Other Reports from Trust Directors

8a Update of WRT Administration (Steve Raine/John Hummel ECT)

Steve Raine presented a written report covering issues that have arisen from the Railway Company administration. The following points were discussed in detail:

Steve reported that there had been no response from Wolsingham Steel over the offer made as part of the creditor settlement with PWC. PWC have been asked to expedite with Dickinson Dees the legal agreements between Wolsingham Steel and the administrator.

Steve commented that short term operations will be focused on operations between Wolsingham and Stanhope. Depending on other developments the next phase may take the railway to either Eastgate or Harperley. Arthur Temple updated the Directors on work being carried out at Eastgate which may influence the Railways future development.

Steve reported that the Class 37 Group would still like to bring up 2 Class 37s (one with electric heat) for future operation on the Railway. The Group would also have available 3 drivers and other volunteers (with railway skills) who could help out with other Trust/Railway Company activities. The members of the Class 37 Group would also become members of the Trust. Some issues are still to be resolved such as locomotive transportation costs which could be offset over a deal on operating costs. It was agreed that the Railway Company should not over promise on the number of operation days.

Proposal – The Directors agreed that the Trust would support John Hummel (ECT) with his talks with the Class 37 Group.

Proposed: Arthur Temple

Seconded: Steve Raine

The motion was approved unanimously.

Steve discussed the task list and stated the first priority was to get the Railway Company out of CVA.

The Directors discussed possible Directors nominations for the new Railway Company from Wear Valley District Council and Durham County Council.

Proposal - Steve Raine asked the Trust to approve the concept of a Safety Director. This appointment would increase the number of Directors on the new Railway Company board.

Proposed: Steve Raine

Seconded: Brian Cox

The motion was approved unanimously.

Steve also reviewed the job descriptions of the new Railway Company Board and management team. This structure and job descriptions have yet to be approved by ECT (John Hummel). The

Directors raised concerns over Don Heath's role and Gerry Mudd (expressing his opinion as a member) suggested changing the operations manger title to operations co-ordinator.

Proposal – The Trust Directors welcomed the proposal of an operations co-ordinator and if Don Heath volunteers he should take up this role subject to the creation of a suitable job description.

Proposed: Trevor Hewitt

Seconded: John Askwith

The motion was approved unanimously.

8b Weekly Lottery - Arthur Temple

The Directors reviewed the revised lottery proposal which was accepted by the Directors. The Chairman suggested that a dummy run (without money) be organised to check out the process. It was suggested that the lottery be started 14 days after the next magazine with extra marketing effort be made at the AGM.

The Directors thanked Arthur Temple for his efforts.

8c Marketing sub group report

No report was presented

8d Planning Group – John Askwith

John Askwith reported that the previous meeting minutes are to be sent out shortly.

8e Educational Activities – John Askwith

Talks – Dates are in the magazine.

Magazine – Contributions needed by 13 October

8f Membership Secretary's Report – Frank Holmes

No report was presented – Frank was away

8g Volunteer Training

It was reported that 1 volunteer had been passed out on the Wickham Trolley and 8 volunteers attended Wensleydale Railway for PTS training (PTS modules G1/G2 and P6)

9 Reopening the railway by supporting Weardale Railways Ltd

After a discussion it was agreed that at the next meeting of WRT Management Committee on the 11th October the Trustees who will be sitting on the new WRL Board will give a report on any activities.

9a Operations

This will be discussed at the planning meeting.

9b Finance

No report was presented

9c Marketing

No report was presented

10 Restoration Activities

10a Carriage and Wagon

Good progress has been made with one coach.

Gerry Mudd circulated the latest draft of the Memorandum & Association of the “Carriage & Wagon Group” for comment and any suggested amendments.

Steve Raine said that it was his belief that ECT would be likely to make available steam heated coaches including a dining car.

10b Locomotives

No report was presented

10c Infrastructure

No report was presented

11 AOB

Station Canopy Project

It was reported that the pre-planning was well advanced following work by both David Briggs and Graham Lord but had been partly interrupted because of David Briggs' illness. Trevor Hewitt reported that he had had a written undertaking from John Hummel to reimburse the WRT for any expenditure relating to the purchase of materials. However this could not be made available until the new Company was formed and he has asked if we could initially meet these costs ourselves. Trevor said that the WRT could find around £5k but the total material costs are likely to total £10-12k. However Gerry Mudd has kindly agreed to help with this expenditure on the understanding that he is reimbursed when the funds are made available from ECT. It was unanimously agreed that the sub-committee could proceed on this basis.

Trusts Policy on Smoking

This issue was discussed and it was agreed that the Trust would prefer a no-smoking policy for both public and railway staff only areas. It was proposed that the public ban would allow smoking only on the station platforms, forecourts and car parks. No definite decision was reached regarding the issue of smoking in areas where the public was prohibited but it was unanimously agreed that the Secretary would write to WRL stating our preferences and asking for their support in promoting this policy.

CRB checks for volunteers

This issue was discussed and it was unanimously agreed that the Trust would adopt a strict policy of Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures for all staff who will be in contact “with vulnerable people” (this would include children). It was also agreed that the Secretary would write to WRL informing them that we intend adopting this policy and asking for their support and cooperation.

12 Date/time of the next meeting is 11th October 2005 7:30 PM at the RAFA Club Crook