

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the RAFA Club Crook on Tuesday 14th March 2006

The meeting started at 7:35 PM

Those present

Kevin Hillary – Chairman
Mike Wood – Vice Chairman
Trevor Hewitt - Treasurer
John Askwith
Dave Butler
Brian Cox
Ian Gardner
Tim Hall
Frank Holmes
Trevor Horner
Graham Lord
Gerry Mudd
Steve Raine
Norma Richardson
Julian Shepherd
Arthur Temple
James Lynn - Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Dave Foxton

The Secretary was delayed and John Askwith took the minutes for items 1, 2 & 3)

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the 14th February 2005 meeting were accepted as a true record (after corrections to items 4, 6, & items 8a) and signed by the Chairman Kevin Hillary

Proposed by
Seconded by

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
- Transport Festival status report – John Askwith/Dave Foxton
- Trust shop (see item 3)

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman (Kevin Hillary) gave a brief oral report (based on his report previously emailed to all Directors). The CVA creditor's meeting has been held and no objections have been raised over the final settlement. The Chairman thanked the volunteers for their work on the canopy and reminded the Directors that they should continue filling in their time sheets which can be used for matching funding by the Trust. The Directors agreed that a small article should go into the magazine to remind the volunteers about filling in time sheets. The Chairman reminded the Directors that any communications with the press should be run past John Hobbs the Trusts Press Officer. It was pointed out that work is to be started on Bishop Auckland Station and the Chairman wondered if the Trust could be involved in this project.

The Directors approved the Chairmans report

6 Treasurers report

The Treasurer reported that Februarys income was £25,987 (includes loan from Steve Raine) and the expenditure was £31,944 (£30,000 - Trusts payment to the CVA). Canopy project income totalled £27,500 (includes £7,500 loan from Gerry Mudd) approx £18,000 balance will be used to pay back Gerry Mudds loan and £10,000 will be held in restricted funds to fund the settlement with Wolsingham Castings. Any further surplus will be used to pay off loan from Steve Raine. The Treasurer reminded the Directors that £3,500 may need to be put aside to cover staff costs for February/March 2006 (though invoices will not be sent to the Trust for payment for some time). Other projects were discussed and it was agreed to produce a Company and a Trust project list.

Steve Raine informed the Directors that the Trust payment to cover the CVA should be regarded as a loan to the Company for the furtherance of the Trust objectives (Weardale Railway Trust M&As Clause 3purchasing, restoring and preserving buildings, land of the railway to restore the rail link between signal number S36 Cockerton Hill Bishop Auckland and Wearhead.....).

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

7 Secretarys report

The Secretary reported that the Trust could now file its returns to Companies House via the internet (which can also save £10 in fees).

The Secretary commented on an email query from Gerry Mudd concerning the Trust ability to employ staff. The Secretary commented that the Trusts M&As did not explicitly give the Directors the powers to employ any staff (unlike the Charity Commissions Model M&As for a Charitable Company – Clause 4j) and suggested that if this power was required the Trust should change its M&As at an AGM (incorporating Clause 4j)

8 Other Reports from Trust Directors

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

Steve Raine reported on a meeting between the funders, ECT and the Administrators which discussed the exit strategy to complete the railway CVA. The Directors discussed commercially confidential information however agreements on creditors claims is still on-going. Steve also reported that the lawyers are finalising the agreement with Weardale Steel. A proper site survey is still needed. The new railway company is to change its constitution from a not for profit company to a Community Interest Company but M&As still have to be complied by ECTs lawyers after clarification over the new membership (which will be based on the proportion of shares assigned to each organisation ECT/WRT/DCC/WVDC). Resignation letters from the old directors have been signed and the new directors will be appointed shortly. DCC have agreed to take over responsibility for 3 bridges from Network Rail.

Other ongoing items of work discussed included the new volunteering agreement and a code of conduct for depot users/visitors.

8b Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

Lottery has been running for 3 weeks and has taken £270 (£210 profit). The Directors reviewed the operation of the Lottery. The Trusts website will record the winning Lotto numbers and the names of the winners.

8c Marketing sub group report

Tim Hall reported that the next meeting is yet to be arranged. It was agreed to attend the Weardale Food Festival (Kevin Hillary and Brian Cox volunteered to attend). More Yard of Track, membership forms and flyers will be printed for this event.

8d Management Group – John Askwith

Meeting minutes 0000 have been issued. Next Management Group meeting will be held on 21st March at Spennymoor.

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

Gerry Mudd reviewed the progress to date.

Lafarge – Draft licences for Eastgate site have been reviewed. Lafarge lawyers (Clarks) are to simplify these licences.

Gun Barrel Shed – Signed lease still required before any work can be started.

Office of the Rail Regulator – need finalised documentation (M&As) on new railway company. Gerry noted that ORR has started to cut funding (and by implication services) to Community Railway Partnerships.

New Railway company business plan – Updated railway business plans are needed top show to funders.

Identified Projects/Other issues

Community Rail Partnership – A meeting has been arranged between the Partnership and Helen Goodman. A 5 minute presentation is to be given on the Trust. Northern Railways would like to include our timetable in their summer timetable for the Darlington – Shildon – Bishop Auckland line.

Rail Fest 23/24 September 2006 – The organisers have been asked the Trust to publise this event to our members.

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

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

Talks – 6 April Croxdale, 9th June Bishop Auckland, talk locations/organisations needed for September.

Publications – Articles by 27th April, 5th May dispatch.

Magazine – Steve Raine asked if an insert on the new railway company and its structure could be added to the magazine.

Free magazines are to be sent to Helen Goodman and Derek Foster. Frank Holmes to provide contact addresses.

8f Membership Secretarys Report (Frank Holmes)

Frank Holmes reported that 65% of the members had renewed their membership. The cost to contact members who have not renewed their membership (covering March 05 to Nov 05) would cost £55. Dave Butler suggested that we ask why they did not renew.

Proposal – The Membership Secretary to send out a letter to former members asking them to renew.

Proposed – Trevor Horner

Seconded – Trevor Hewitt

The proposal was approved (15 votes for 1 against)

Website – Frank requested more news items that could be placed on the web site for public consumption.

Weardale 2000 – Frank asked if ECT have any use for this Company name. It was agreed that this company should be closed/put into abeyance.

8g Volunteer Training

Norma Richardson reported that 12 completed volunteer forms have been received. Norma will get together with Dave Butler to finalise training for these people.

141 training – permission is needed for training to be undertaken on the 'main line'.

Food hygiene/First Aid courses costs have been obtained.

Risk assessment training courses and costs are to be investigated.

9 Restoration Activities

9a Locomotives

Negotiations are still on-going on the purchase of a steam locomotive (**THIS IS STILL COMMERCIALY CONFIDENTIAL**)

Arthur Temple reported that Lafarge have been approached by Bristol Railway Society (?) to inspect the 2 locomotives on the Eastgate site. Need to check on status of these locomotives.

9b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities

2 coaches have been completed. Work on the SK is ongoing. Restaurant coach has been purchased.

9c Infrastructure

Arthur Temple reported that 20 sleepers are now available to complete a crossing. Track clearance work still ongoing at weekends.

10 Any other business

Opening over Easter

Tim reminded the Directors that we did not have a signed lease for the station. Tim to obtain licences (as a temporary measure).

Open Meeting

4 members and 7 Directors turned up. It was agreed to review the location in order to reduce costs improve accessibility.

Transport Festival

Dave Foxton had expressed concerns about lack of sponsors to cover associated costs (£1000 for the marquee, £250/ steam engine) plus the event is being organised a 'bit late in the day'.

Proposal – The Transport Festival should be cancelled this year.

Proposed – Trevor Horner

Seconded – Brian Cox

The motion was unanimously approved

New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner

Ian Gardner reviewed fund raising ideas to see if any similar events are held in Weardale. Directors were asked to comment/investigate.

Arthur Temple volunteered his brother Bruce (who is a Trust member) to help with fund raising ideas. The Directors approved his involvement.

The meeting closed at 22:15 PM.

12 Date/time of the next meeting is 11th April 2006 7:30PM at the RAFA Club Crook.