

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST COUNCIL (WRT)

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre, Bishop Auckland on Tuesday 7th January 2014.

The meeting started at 19:35PM.

Those present

Richard Maughan – Chair
Mike Wood –Vice Chair from 20:35
Ruth Carroll John Askwith
John Hargreaves
Kevin Richardson
Tony Slack –Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Peter Baker, Kevin Hillary, Gerry Mudd, Graham Isom

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 26th November 2013 meeting were approved by the Directors with the following corrections:

The title should include Council after the word TRUST
Section 2 spelling – Ralway should read Railway
There are two Item 4s' the second one to be changed to Item 5
Section 12 first sentence companies to be changed to company's'
Section 17b the actual date of the 3rd December for the presentation should be included.

Proposed: - Kevin Richardson
Seconded: - Ruth Carroll

3 Matters arising from the last meeting not covered in the agenda

Weardale Visitor Network – Application for membership has been submitted.
Polar express/Trust Board
Examination of Trust coach "Nina" has been undertaken by Graham Richardson and Richard Maughan and appears to be sound. Regular inspections are to be carried out and reported at Council meetings. Add to Agenda

Action: Richard Maughan/Tony Slack

4 Identify other business to be discussed in Item 18

The prospect of hiring Nina out to raise funds to be considered
Decision on Easter Draw.
WRT plans for 2014+. Include as an item to report on monthly?
WRT plans to commemorate 10 years since opening.
WRT Open meeting/day.
Adverts in BTL.
Freebee list update.
Education Room re-instatement. Update required please.
VHS Tape. Update required please. I still think S Raine has it.
Bishop Line C.R.P. meeting.

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Two Directors were requested to submit new up to date conflict of interest documents.

Action: Mike Wood/Kevin Hillary

6 Chairman's Report

Polar has been and gone and hopefully we all had fun! Everyone seemed to be happy with the roster that Alison spent many hours toiling over.

Our shop made very nearly £3000 profit out of it; thanks to Mike Rapp for his sterling efforts there.

Efforts must now be concentrated in getting number 40 sorted (many thanks to Gerry for loaning us the money to achieve this) and towards sorting out how we are going to run a Heritage Service this year. Hopefully at the end of tonight's meeting we will have formulated a positive action plan towards this end?

Our attention must not be diverted from the fact that we continue to need to raise money though, as both of the items in the paragraph above need a lot of it!!

The Chairman's report was accepted by the Directors.

Proposed: Ruth Carroll

Seconded: John Askwith

7 Treasurer's report

In Treasurers absence the Chairman gave a summary of the current financial position.

Start balance at bank £3500 (Treasurers' last report)

Taking from Trust shop £959 + £486

Membership renewal £21

Loan from GC Mudd £10000

Total £14966

No monies have been paid out since the treasurer went on holiday.

The Trust shop made just short of £3000 profit over the duration of the Polar Express event.

The Secretary reminded the Directors that the Trust must comply with the accepted definition for solvency means that the trust must be able to cover its liabilities either in cash at the bank or a combination of cash and asset values. Every effort must be made by all Council members to replenish the Trusts reserves.

A loan agreement was drawn up by the Treasurer and Secretary and signed off by the 22nd December. The meeting was also reminded that within the terms of the loan the WRT Purchasing Policy must be adhered to.

January and February are months where subscriptions are due and we should see an influx of money.

A regular savings scheme should be considered to ensure funds are available to fulfil the loan repayment schedule.

The Treasurers report was approved by the Directors

Proposed: John Hargreaves

Seconded: Kevin Richardson

8 Shop

See Treasurers Report.

A letter of thanks from the Board is to be sent to Mike Rapp.

Action: Tony Slack

9 Secretary's Report

As noted in Item 5 Trust Director paperwork is still outstanding preventing the Secretary from submitting the appropriate paperwork to Companies House/Charities Commission.

A letter was sent to Kevin Busath with the Boards nominees for the Weardale Railway CIC board of Directors. The nominees are Richard Maughan, Gerry Mudd and John Hargreaves.

There is a need to reclaim the Trust office at Stanhope Station following its use during the Polar Express event. The Trusts documentation is stored there and it is not secure. Graham Isom and Bill Warriner are to be approached to clarify the situation.

Action: Richard Maughan.

The procurement of secure filing cabinets is to be considered.
The Secretary's report was approved by the Directors

Proposed: John Askwith

Seconded: Ruth Carroll

10 Heritage Services 2014

The performance of the WRCIC 141 unit during the early Polar Express runs has demonstrated that it is completely unreliable and should not be considered as a viable option for the proposed 2014 Heritage Services to be run by the trust subsidiary. Mike Wood offered the use of his "Bubble" 122 unit at a daily rental of £ plus fuel and lubricants. However, the cost of transport from its current location to the Weardale Railway would be in the order of £1000. Gerry Mudd had circulated his thoughts prior to the meeting stating that a management team should be put in place to include:

- Commercial manager
- Technical/operations manager
- Publicity/Marketing manager

The involvement of appropriate candidates, within the trust membership, is to be sought.

A separate meeting is to be called to discuss the proposals in more detail to include potential candidates for the above

Action: Tony Slack

11 Number 40

There has been no further progress with No40.

Two lubrication mops have been ordered.

12 Restoration Activities

12a Carriage and Wagon

The condition of the Mk 1 coach "Nina" was checked see Item 3. With the unlikely prospect of locomotive hauled Heritage services in 2014 the hiring out of Nina was discussed. Any possible hirers to be contacted.

Action: Richard Maughan, Mike Wood

12b Infrastructure

Mike Wood asked if the possibility of people adopting stations should be explored as means of maintaining the appearance and integrity of WR stations.

Action: All

13 Volunteering

The Trust volunteers have contributed in the order of 3000 man hour to the operation of the Polar Express trains. Everyone is to be encouraged to submit their timesheets to Ruth for collation of the volunteer hours.

It is proposed to introduce Identity cards, to be discussed at the next CIC meeting.

Action: Richard Maughan, John Hargreaves

PTS and Rules training is to continue. An amended Rule Book is being prepared

The Sunday Gang continues their efforts to maintain the trackside environment.

14 Projects

Nothing to report

15 Weardale Railways CIC Reports.

15a/15b Report from the Company Board meetings/ Report from Management Group meetings (Trust representatives)

There have been no WRCIC Board meetings since the last Council meeting.

The WRCIC General Manager sent the following:

- In regards to the Weardale Railways CIC, thanks to everyone involved with the running of the 'Polar Express' which received more good than bad comments as can be seen on 'Trip Advisor'. A total of approximately 42,000 tickets were sold at the Weardale Railway CIC and about 11,000 at the Dartmoor Railway. Once again many thanks for all your support and assistance from the 'Operations' side of the event.
- What plans are there for 2014, talks of 'Dining/Theme Trains' but nothing as yet confirmed by the US.
- We need to carry on with training on 'PTS' and 'Rules' in readiness for any service that you as the 'Weardale Railway Trust' may be running in 2014.
- Anything else that you may require my assistance with, please do not hesitate to contact me.
- Lastly an extreme thank you to both John Hargreaves and Kevin Richardson for all your electrical skills that enabled the 'Polar Express' to see the light.

15c Report from the Marketing Group/Events Group

The "Work your Xmas Pud" off day event took place on the 28th and five Trust members took part working at Stanhope Station and Frosterley Station. Soup and roll were kindly provided by the Company.

The opportunity for Trust volunteers to assist in the A4 Great Goodbye event to be held at Locomotion in Shildon on the 15th to the 23rd February 2014 is now less likely due to the Bishop Line CRP Chairman now indicating that their stand is covered..

Action: John Askwith, Tony Slack

16 Other Reports from Trust Directors

16a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

Arthur Temple is to be contacted with respect to current status of the lottery. No Report, winners' names are required for the next issue of BTL

Action: Peter Baker

Approximately 6000 of the No40 fund raising leaflets were included in the ticket envelopes for the Polar Express customers. As yet the response has been disappointing.

16b Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine – (John Askwith)

Talks

Talks on the WR are to be given on the 12th March to Darlington RATG and 1st May to DNRM.

Publications

BTL 82 Contributions by 23rd January 2014
Dispatch – 7th February 2014

The editor has requested that photographs of the Trust volunteers operating on the Polar Express services be forwarded to him for inclusion in a feature in BTL 82.

It was questioned if all advertisers in BTL actually pay for their adverts.

Action: Peter Baker

The BTL complimentary copy list is still to be reviewed

Action: All

The Trusts' educational display boards were on display throughout the majority of the Polar Express. The boards' were located in the refreshment marquee and included a container with Trust Membership Application forms.

16c Membership Secretary's Report (Frank Holmes)

No report

17 Any other business.

The Secretary is still to contact an individual to determine if he has the copy of the Weardale Railway VHS tape.

Action: Tony Slack

An update of the status of the Education Room is to be determined. Negotiations are to be instigated with the CIC management for the handover of the down platform waiting room.

Action: Richard Maughan

The Board should consider plans to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Railway. Could include a Trust open day and a 60th Birthday Party for No40.

Action: All

The Easter Draw was approved and raffle tickets are due for distribution with BTL 82. The current licence holder is believed to be Trevor Hewitt. DCC to be contacted and the licensee amended accordingly.

Action: Richard Maughan

The Trust membership Application Form that can be download from the website shows a Corporate Level of membership. To what benefits does this entitle the holder? The Membership secretary is to asked to clarify.

Action: Tony Slack

The meeting closed at 10:15PM

18 Date/time of the next meeting will be on 28th January 2014 at 7:30PM at the SDRYT Coach at Stanhope Station.