

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held in Bishop Auckland Station on Tuesday 11th March 2008

The meeting started at 7:34 PM.

Those present

Ian Gardner - Chairman
Mike Wood – Vice Chairman
Trevor Hewitt – Treasurer
Kevin Garthwaite
Kevin Hillary
Frank Holmes
Graham Lord
Dave Million
Gerry Mudd
Steve Raine
Graham Richardson
Dave Scott
Arthur Temple
James Lynn – Secretary

1 Apologies for absence

John Askwith, Brian Cox, Dave Foxton, Julian Shepherd

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the 12th February 2008 meetings were accepted as a true records (with corrections to items 8 to May deadline, item 9 to Stanhope Café, item 9b to Flayal) and signed by the Chairman

Proposed by Trevor Hewitt
Seconded by Kevin Hillary

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

None

4 Identify other business.

2 items were identified

- John Askwiths email (see reports)
- Diesel Gala.

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman (Ian Gardner) gave an oral report on the latest details covering the re-organisation of ECT Rail. The Chairman has met with Bill Donaldson (interim MD of ECT Rail) and received positive comments about the future of Weardale Railways (see also 9a/9b).

The Chairman thanked the volunteers who helped out on the Mothers Day event. Steve Raine reported that the Mothers Days event made £500 in tickets sales £300 in cream teas plus food/beverage sales taken in the guards van and griddle car. 90 tickets were sold with 200 passengers however the last train had disappointing passenger numbers. It was noted that the 12:30 PM train proved popular.

The Directors approved the Chairmans report.

6 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer gave an oral presentation of his previously emailed report. Income for the month was £8300 (including subscription, donations, Donations for Number 40 and VAT refund). Expenditure for this month was £222 including Wolsingham station project costs of £162.

Wolsingham Station – The roof structure is complete and painting should be completed by next Monday. The Directors commented positively about the work completed so far. Trevor reported that cladding work would start next week and the forecasted total cost for this project is now £6620.

Credit card facilities – on hold until ECT situation is resolved.

Number 40 livery competition - £249 raised so far.

A 2 lever ground frame from EDF Energy has been donated to the Trust - Trust volunteers to collect.

Bequests – Gerry Mudd commented that he has come up with a form of words which will be published in the next BTL (subsequent issues of BLT and the website).

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

Proposed by Dave Scott
Seconded by Arthur Temple

7 Secretary's report

No report was presented.

8 Number 40

Trevor Hewitt reported on the repair work on Number 40.

Work on the boiler/firebox is still on track to be completed by May.

Number 40 fund stands at £5767 plus Gift Aid which is still to be reclaimed. Additional funds include £1928 donation plus £10,000 from general funds and £7500 from the Wolsingham Castings settlement fund. This leaves a shortfall of £30,000 to cover the predicted costs of Number 40s rebuild.

9. Weardale Railways CIC Reports

9a/9b Report from the Company Board meetings/ Report from Management Group meetings (Trust representatives)

Steve Raine reported on the meeting with Bill Donaldson. Bill Donaldson went through the financial numbers and the draft budget. It was pointed out that the gap between expenditure and income would need to be reduced with more income generating events organised. ECT is considering changes to their business activities and is in the process of shutting down or selling the Rail businesses which consists of RMS, Dartmoor and Weardale. There will be a visit from a possible buyer on 17/18th March. The Directors discussed the issue of the loan made by the Trust to WRCIC and the position the Trust should take. The Directors discussed commercially confidential information – no formal decisions were taken.

The Management Group met with Dave Payne and Martin Sargent and discussed the railway operating budget based on a partial year operating data – Income was £93,000 and expenditure was £238,000 on 10,000 passengers (Gerry full year forecast is £128,000 income (including £10,500 on catering) with £276,000 expenditure (notable items included fuel at £28,000 depreciation £12,000 salaries £120,000). Breakeven has been estimated at 35,000 passengers with railway operating steam locomotives.

- CCTV – still awaiting contractor to finish work cameras not yet installed.
- Network Rail – Way leave money to be reclaimed from Network Rail – estimated £3000/year.
- Rolling stock agreements – ongoing.
- Brown signs – Martin Sargent to speak to WVDC.
- Stanhope Station – Former Trust shop office will be used as an overflow room for café.
- HMRI inspection went well. Documentation is needed for a complete safety file and the Company needs to find a volunteer to help organise paperwork and maintain the safety file.
- Banking - obtained 2 extra banking pouches (2 used for Saturday and Sunday with 2 as spares)
- 3809 – still at Wakefield awaiting sale or repair.

- Wolsingham Loop – Berwick track has been cut up, Don Heath to look at track located in Scarborough’.
- Flayal going back to Dartmoor shortly.
- Operating documentation – Don Heath has produced new documentation for operating staff.
- Eastgate Specials – HMRI has agreed that occasional specials can be run to Eastgate but works will need to be completed before regular services could take place – this will need to be funded as part of the Eastgate Project.
- Holbeck 3 – to be converted to an open crossing with a 5mph line speed.
- Easter services – Don Heath to arrange training for drivers to operate Class 73. The Directors expressed the need to train up more drivers from the Trusts volunteers.

9c Report from the Marketing Group meeting (John Askwith)

Military vehicles as part of a ‘Pre war on the line’ event will take place next Sunday. Over Easter events include Easter Bunny hunt and a car rally – volunteers needed.

Leaflet distribution – Julian to distribute list of suitable locations. Directors were asked to start distributing leaflets.

10 Volunteering (Kevin Garthwaite)

3 new volunteers have come forward - Kevin commented that volunteer moral is very low and depot access is still an issue – occasional access would help improve moral.

11 Other Reports from Trust Directors

11a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

No report.

11b Major Projects and Funding Sub Group – (Gerry Mudd/Arthur Temple)

No activity to report. Banks have visited and photographed progress on Wolsingham station building. It was commented that Banks may fund other projects.

11c Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine – (John Askwith)

See Johns email.

11d Membership Secretary’s Report (Frank Holmes)

Frank reported that 470 reminders have gone out with the last magazine.

Website – Photo gallery to be re-organised.

Gerry asked how many members add a donation to their membership subscription. Trevor commented that 60% of members add donations to Number 40 fund or Number 40 livery.

Frank commented on email queries from the public/members. Correct email address for queries related to the railway and WRCIC were published in last months BTL.

Dave Million has the access codes for WRCICs websites and will add links to the Trusts website.

11e New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner

None.

12 Restoration Activities

12a Locomotives

Work on the Wickham trolley is almost complete.

Number 40 – chassis painting work ongoing and the steam generator is to be cleaned and repaired.

12b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities

Trust rolling stock agreement – Document still to be signed.

12c Infrastructure

No report.

13 Any other business.

Diesel Gala – Kevin Garthwaite asked about the plans for a diesel gala. It was commented that the Class 73 will be operating along with the 141 DMU and the Sentiel operating a goods train. The Class 25 may not be a runner and it may be possible to run 3 industrial shunters. Kevin suggested that the Diesel Gala should be removed from the events list or renamed. It was noted that Locomotion has an event on the same day and the railway could run a small diesel event and have a depot open day. It was agreed that a co-ordinator would be needed for this event.

Meeting closed at 10:10 PM

13 Date/time of the next meeting is 8th April 2008 7:30PM at Bishop Auckland Station.