

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held in Bishop Auckland Station on Tuesday 12th February 2008

The meeting started at 7:30 PM.

Those present

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

1 Apologies for absence

Dave Foxtton, Kevin Garthwaite, Frank Holmes, Dave Million

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the 8th January 2008 meetings were accepted as a true records (with corrections to 8c – change Trust to Company) and signed by the Chairman

Proposed by Brian Cox
Seconded by Graham Lord

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

None

4 Identify other business.

2 items were identified

- Transport of Welltrols (see 9a/9b)
- Lafarge Sentinel Locomotives

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman (Ian Gardner) gave an oral report about the re-organisation of ECT Rail which is yet to be finalised. The Directors discussed confidential information and agreed that the Chairman Ian Gardner would be the only Trust Director to make statements to the press on this matter. A press release written by Gerry Mudd has be prepared in the event ECT goes public

Proposal: The Chairman Ian Gardner is authorised as the only official of Weardale Railway Trust to make statements to the Press on the re-organisation of ECT Rail.

Proposed: Steve Raine
Seconded: Gerry Mudd

The Directors approved this proposal.

The Directors also discussed what actions that the Trust Council should undertake to become the main shareholder or operator of the railway in the event that ECT divests itself of its heritage railway assets.

Proposal: The Trust should form a sub committee to undertake a full analysis to see if the Trust can become the main shareholder or operator of the Weardale Railway.

Proposed: Arthur Temple
Seconded: Dave Scott

The Directors approved this proposal.

The Directors agreed the following actions:

- Obtain up to date ECT Group accounts and management accounts for Weardale Railways CIC.
Action: Gerry Mudd/Steve Raine
- Review railway operations and costs to establish if the railway can be made viable.
Action: Sub Group
- Analyse fixed asset costs and look at ways to reduce operating costs.
Action: Trevor Hewitt/Steve Raine
- Develop proposals, finance and scenarios for the successful operation of the railway (with either paid staff or wholly volunteer operations or combinations of paid staff/volunteers).
Action: Sub Group
- Undertake any appraisal, meet with or seek help from any third parties to enable this review to be undertaken as expeditiously as possible.
Action: Sub Group
- Report to the Trust Council on a regular basis with updates and obtain formal approval for any actions that the Trust should undertake.
Action: Sub Group/Trust Council

The Chairman's report was approved by the Directors

Proposed: Arthur Temple
Seconded: Gerry Mudd

6 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer gave an oral presentation of his previously emailed report. Income for the month was £1800 including book sale £450, numbers draw £352, bequest £260. Expenditure for the month £4460 including Wolsingham station project £3200 and costs associated with insurance and road fund tax for the pickup.

Bequests - Trevor commented on the level of bequests the Trust receives every year - £700 from Ray Goldie and £260 from John Cadman estates. Trevor asked if we should make a sensitive statement in BTL asking members to consider making bequests in favour of the Trust. Gerry Mudd commented he had some pertinent information on this subject.

Life Membership subscription level – The Directors discussed various pros and cons and levels of life membership subscription.

Proposal: Life membership to be set at £150 for over 60s and £225 below 60 and that these levels should be reviewed annually at the Trusts AGM.

Proposed: Gerry Mudd
Seconded: Trevor Hewitt

The Directors approved this proposal.

It was agreed that an announcement on life membership be made in the BTL.

Wolsingham Station – The roofing work is to start Wednesday (13th February) subject to the weather. The brick cladding is due to be delivered and the whole project should be completed by the end of March 2008. The Directors agreed to have a formal opening ceremony and a representative from Banks is to be invited.

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

Proposed by Brian Cox
Seconded by Arthur Temple

7 Secretary's report

No report was presented.

Correspondence

The Secretary reported that he had circulated the latest Charity Commissions newsletter which covered changes to Charity Law and the rules on payment of Trustees/Directors for supplying services – copies of CC11 were also circulated.

Conflicts of interest – Employment of Directors

The Secretary reminded the Directors that any Director employed by WRCIC would be expected to declare a conflict of interest if this employment impinged on the Trusts business. He reminded the Directors that have signed Trust documents which publicly state any interest in commercial activities which may affect the Trust or WRCIC.

8 Number 40

Trevor Hewitt reported that on the repair work on Number 40:

Work on the boiler/firebox will be completed before the May deadline.

Connecting rod bushings are ready and in store at Wolsingham.

Eccentric bearings are being made a NRM York.

Tyres – independent expert David Wright had inspected Number 40s wheels and had provided a written report.

The tyres are within normal operating tolerances however during the next 4 years these tyres would need re-profiling – however it would be cheaper to fit new tyres at a cost of £3000 (including transport). Work will be completed by Monday 18th February.

Trevor commented that David Wright would make a suitable candidate to look after the maintenance of Number 40 on behalf of the Trust – Trevor to approach David Wright.

It was also found that the crosshead bearings need replacing – 10 bearings at a cost of £5000.

Trevor pointed out that other consumables would be needed to rebuild Number 40 such as insulation, sealants etc. Kevin/John Askwith to investigate competitive costs for the insulation materials.

Trevor reported that the running total for repairs and materials comes to £57000 with £5000 in Number 40 fund and £10000 in general funds there would be a shortfall of £45000. Taking into account Trust subscriptions and other donations the Trust would have £20000 shortfall. The Treasurer commented that the Trust still had £7500 in reserve to cover the settlement with Weardale Castings. The Directors agreed that this money could be used if required. Kevin Hillary suggested that Martin Ashworth may purchase the Trusts point motor – Mike Wood to contact. It was commented that the point motors may need stripping down to maximise the scrap value otherwise the complete point motor would be classified as mixed scrap and have a lower value. The mine loco sorted at Broadwood is to be scrapped – Arthur Temple to arrange.

A Council Director agreed to temporary cover the shortfall of funds for the repair of Number 40.

9. Weardale Railways CIC Reports

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

Gerry Mudd reported the following:

- 2008 budget and November/December revenues not yet available.
- 2008 timetable at printers – delays due to ECT. Delivery scheduled for next week and timetables will be stored at Bishop Auckland Station. Commercial enquiry number is in Wakefield and may need diverting.
- First Aid Training – Have a cheaper quote from East Durham College. Graham Lord has names and details.
- CCTV – cabling installed.
- Way leaves – Awaiting billing details from Network Rail.
- Registering railway land – Steve Raine to follow up with Andrew Tweddle.
- Leaflet distribution – To be co-ordinated by Julian Shepherd.
- Rolling stock agreements ECT to send details to Ian Gardner in reference to the Trusts rolling stock.
- Stanhope Station café – Possibly use a coach in the bay platform or use the lower port-a-cabin.
- Wolsingham Café – The Directors agreed to extend café by knocking through into the next room.
- Depot duty manager – 1 volunteer has been identified.
- Credit Card facility – no progress could use Trusts account – Trevor to investigate.

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

- 3809 – At Wakefield for lifting of boiler and inspection.
- Wolsingham Loop – Track at Berwick and Scarborough to be inspected by Don Heath and Martin Sargent. Gerry to investigate funding based on project costs.
- Flyal – Repaired and operational – awaiting safety inspection.
- Diesel Days – Dates to be advised.
- Secondman qualification procedure – to be set up.
- Rostering arrangements – needs co-ordination with the Kevin Garthwaites volunteer list.
- Volunteer time – 20000 hours of volunteer time has been logged. Directors need to remind volunteers/themselves(!) to fill out time sheets.
- Welltols – Currently in store – needs funds to move to railway plus a long term operating agreement.
- Eastgate – Special trains to operate through to Eastgate probably early and late trains.

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

John reported that the Marketing group met on 6th February which reviewed the 2008 leaflet – now at the printers. John reported that a list for events up to mid April including Diesel Days and Mothers Day events had been produced and that these events need to be supported by the Trust Council and all members. Ian Gardner commented that these events are important to generate revenue to get the railway to break even as soon as possible – we need more volunteers.

Price changes – no communication on prices increases was given to the train/platform operating staff.

10 Volunteering (Kevin Garthwaite)

No report

11 Other Reports from Trust Directors

11a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

Arthur commented that a cricket club draw will make £600 - £700

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

Covered in 9a/9b

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

Talks - Additional known dates are shown in BTL

Magazine BTL to be despatched 13th February 2008
 BTL was delayed due to a problem at Lintons.
 Competition flyer to repaint Number 40 was included.

11d Membership Secretary's Report (Frank Holmes)

No report.

11e New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner

Camping weekend still be checked out with WVDC.

12 Restoration Activities

12a Locomotives

The Wickham trolley is almost ready for painting. Repairs to Class 73 and 25 ongoing.

12b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities

No report

12c Infrastructure

Kevin Hillary asked if the Trust could purchase another chain saw to help with track clearing. Trevor Hewitt responded that these items should be purchased by WRCIC. Graham Lord agreed to raise purchase of a chain saw with Martin Sargent.

13 Any other business.

Lafarge Sentinel Locomotives

Trevor raised the matter of the letter from Lafarge about the Sentinel locomotives. Gerry commented that the Trust has other priorities. Martin Sargent (ECT) has suggested that one could be restored and the other used for spares/scrap.

Proposal: It was proposed that the two Sentinels be moved from Eastgate to the depot with WRCIC to manage the movement of these items.

Proposed: Brian Cox
Seconded: Arthur Temple

The Directors approved this proposal.

Graham Lord agreed to liaise between the Trusts volunteers and WRCIC to arrange the movement of the Lafarge locomotives.

Trustees working on other railways

Trevor Hewitt described a situation and asked if the Trust Directors had any views about Council members working on other heritage railways as a volunteer. The Directors expressed no reservations.

Meeting closed at 10:20 PM

13 Date/time of the next meeting is 11th March 2008 7:30PM at Bishop Auckland Station.