

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held in Bishop Auckland Station on Tuesday 13th May 2008

The meeting started at 7:20 PM.

Those present

Ian Gardner - Chairman
Mike Wood – Vice Chairman
John Askwith
Dave Foxtton
Kevin Hillary
Frank Holmes
Graham Lord
Dave Million
Gerry Mudd
Steve Raine
Graham Richardson
Dave Scott
Julian Shepherd
James Lynn – Secretary

1 Apologies for absence

Brian Cox, Kevin Garthwaite, Trevor Hewitt, Arthur Temple

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the 8th April 2008 meetings were accepted as a true record and signed by the Vice Chairman

Proposed by Kevin Hillary

Seconded by Dave Million

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

None

4 Identify other business.

- Police checks on Bishop Auckland Station building

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman (Ian Gardner) had previously emailed his report. Mike Wood asked about access to the depot – it was reported that there was no change and vehicular was still not possible however foot access via another route is to be used on a trial basis. The Directors approved the Chairman's report.

Proposed: Arthur Temple

Seconded: Graham Richardson

6 Treasurer's report

Gerry Mudd gave a verbal report on behalf of the Treasurer. Number 40 appeal stands at £10,000 and Trust General Funds stands currently at £15,000. In June a bill for £40,000 will have to be paid to Tyseley for the boiler work on Number 40 and this means that the Trust will be in approximately £15,000 in 'debt' – covered by a loan. Another appeal will be placed in BTLs.

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

7 Secretary's report

No report was presented.

The Secretary reviewed the legislative requirements should Weardale Railways CIC be sold to another company which does not have charitable aims. ECT will only sell its 75% holding in Weardale Railways CIC however the assets of WRCIC have to remain asset locked and cannot be placed within another entity. The CIC Regulator will protect the assets however if WRCIC was to be placed in administration the assets could be sold off to pay the creditors (similar to any limited company being liquidated by its creditors to pay off debts). The Regulator has confirmed that the Trust and the local authorities may have minority shareholder rights which the Regulator could enforce.

Steve Raine commented that the grants made to WRCIC amounted to £2.8 million and subject to strict clawback conditions- a liability any purchaser of ECT shares in WRCIC would need to consider.

8 Number 40

Gerry gave a status report – boiler reassembly work under way though there may be a slight delay of a couple of days. Work schedule is as follows

26th May – boiler assembly complete for hydraulic testing

Date?? - hydraulic test

Date?? - returned to WR

July 15th - target completion date

Gerry informed the Directors that Alan Freeberry will be available to provide expert help when reassembling Number 40.

Gerry suggested that as a contingency a reserve locomotive should be located in case Number 40 is not available for the War on the Line event in early August. Ian Gardner asked if the Directors would approve the Trust to cover the hiring costs of a steam locomotive (see 9d)

Weardale Railways CIC Reports

9a Report from the Trusts sub committee (Trust representatives)

No report.

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

Steve Raine updated the Trust Council on his communications with Steve Sears Chairman of ECT.

WRCIC Board meeting – The Trust Council was updated regarding planned WRCIC staffing changes, the appointment of a new MD, the Weardale Castings dispute and on land encroachment along the line. Delays are still occurring in the requesting the change of ownership from Network Rail to WRCIC – the Land Registry is to be urged to expedite this.

After the main board meeting a minority shareholders meeting took place at which the implications of a change of ownership was discussed. Follow up with DfT, ORR and other agencies with regard to the implications of closure and with the funding agencies on changes of use.

Eastgate – Steve updated the Council on the last Task Force meeting. The planning application has been submitted – letters of support are welcome from those who want the railway operating to Eastgate. Frank agreed to email the members on his mailing list.

Management Group – Safety audit has been carried out documentation needs to be completed and collated. No formal report has been issued however there have been no reportable incidents.

Witton-le-Wear – good publicity was achieved with the trolley working past Witton-le-Wear crossing gates and track clearing gang working their way to Bishop Auckland.

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

The Marketing Group is focusing on special events notably Teddy Bears Picnic, Big Boys Toys, Classic Car, and War on the line. The Directors discussed the need for a steam engine if Number 40 is not available. Ian Gardner asked if the Trust Directors would approve funding the expenses if WRCIC/ECT were unable to pay. Steve Raine agreed to approach Steve Sears to see if costs would be met – costs and numbers would be needed.

Leaflet distribution - need locations copies of timetables has been sent out with BTL.

Julian has found a source of display boxes at competitive prices (100 @ £1.20/500 @ £1.10/1000 @ £0.99 each – boxes of 80). Steve Raine/Graham Lord to ask WRCIC to purchase display boxes.

10 Volunteering (Dave Million)

Dave Million presented a written report and updated the Directors on volunteering issues and the Junior Club.

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)

New ideas are under development.

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

The next talk will take place on July 2nd at Locomotion Shildon for the Friends of NRM. Next round of talks will start in September. The railway will host a school visit from Cockerton School on 18th & 25th June 2008.

Publications – No report

BTL Contributions 25th July
Despatch 8th August

The Directors agreed to set the AGM on Saturday 15th November 2008 at St Thomas Hall Stanhope. The Secretary is to book St Thomas Hall and prepare AGM documentation for the next BTL.

11d Membership Secretary's Report (Frank Holmes)

Frank reported that renewal reminders sent out with BTL - renewal deadline set at July. Life membership forms are now available as a downloadable form from our website.

11e New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner

Christmas draw will go ahead this year.

Musical evening is being worked on.

12 Restoration Activities

12a Locomotives

Wickham trolley on test and trailer now operational
Number 40 – see section 8.

12b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities

No report

12c Infrastructure

No report

13 Any other business.

John Askwith asked if we should inform the Police that meetings are taking place in the Bishop Auckland Station building. The Directors thought that the Police checking the building was a good idea even if it interrupts our meetings.

Meeting closed at 9:20 PM

13 Date/time of the next meeting is 10th June 2008 7:30PM at Bishop Auckland Station.