

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held in Bishop Auckland Station on Tuesday 13th November 2007

The meeting started at 7:29 PM.

Those present

Ian Gardner - Chairman
Mike Wood – Vice Chairman
Trevor Hewitt – Treasurer
John Askwith
David Butler
Brian Cox
Dave Foxtton
Kevin Garthwaite
Kevin Hillary
Graham Lord
Gerry Mudd
Steve Raine
Norma Richardson
Arthur Temple
James Lynn – Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Frank Holmes, Julian Shepherd

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes will be approved at the 11th December Trust Council meeting

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

None

4 Identify other business.

2 items identified

- Freebie list
- Dave Butlers resignation

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman (Ian Gardner) gave an oral report. He thanked Norma Richardson (retiring at the AGM) for all her efforts and also thanked the Directors for their support. He commented that hopefully under Kevin Garthwaite's the Trust could increase the number of active volunteers.

The Directors approved the Chairman's report.

Proposed: Arthur Temple

Seconded: Steve Raine

The Chairman went on to discuss a letter he had received from a member upset by comments made by a Director and the actions he had undertaken (with the Company Secretary to try to resolve the issues raised). The Trust Directors discussed the letter's content and the actions taken by the Chairman. The Directors accepted that the actions taken were reasonable, in the best interests of both parties and the Trust and the matter should be considered closed.

6 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer reviewed the month's income and expenditure. Income was £4800 (mostly Gift Aid + £550 donation from a member). Expenditure was £2059 (Project donation £840 and £796 payment for the transport coast of Number 40 to Tyseley). The Trust held £13000 in General Funds. Trevor commented that we had received so far £840 from the Christmas Draw but that the Yard of Track receipts had reduced from £3900 (05/06) to £420 (06/07) – need to publicise the Yard of Track better. Mike Wood suggested it be re-branded as 'buy a sleeper' instead of YoT. Kevin Hillary asked if there was a list of donors – Trevor Hewitt has a donors book and roll of honour with the donors names inscribed on it. Trevor also reported that a donation from John Cudners funeral (in lieu of flowers) is to be given to the Trust.

Trevor is commented that 33.3% of the subs are spent on printing and mailing out the Trusts magazine BTL.

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

Proposed by Arthur Temple

Seconded by Mike Wood

The Accounts and Trustees annual report was approved by the Directors for presentation to the Trust members at the AGM.

Don Heath's letter.

The Directors discussed the content of Don Heath's letter and the issues raised by NELPG. Kevin Hillary commented that he can't remember making a decision on any payment to NELPG without referring it to the Trust Council. Steve Raine expressed similar sentiments and explained he could not have agreed any payment without referring the matter to the Company Board. It was also remarked that at a meeting held after the 2004 AGM that Don Heath commented that the P3 would not be available (a Class 20 was used instead). Ian Gardner remarked that at no point was this matter discussed by or approved the Trust Council. Trevor Hewitt also commented that NELPG as creditor of the company had accepted the 22.3% payout made by the Administrator and if the Trust compensated one creditor would the Trust be liable from other creditors. Gerry Mudd commented that he would like to see Don letters dated 30 December 2004 (as mentioned in NELPGs letter). Arthur Temple commented that we should write to NELPG explaining our side of the story. Mike Wood commented that the Trust may want to consider in the future a goodwill payment assuming that any legal entanglements could be over come. The Directors discussed various proposals on how to respond to Don Heath and NELPG.

Proposal: The Secretary is to write to Don Heath explaining the situation that the Trust has never approved a payment to NELPG for the associated costs of the P3 and asking for a copy of his 30 December 2004 letter to NELPG so that the Trust could fully review the situation.

Proposed: Dave Butler

Seconded: Arthur Temple

7 Secretary's report

No report was presented.

Correspondence

The Secretary commented that he had received a phone call from Eric Wales asking for copies of the Trust Council meeting by mail (as he does not have access to email). The Directors agreed that this service can only be provided if the members pay for copies and postage – suggested fee be £1.00/meeting minutes to cover copying and postage.

AGM

The Directors approved the revised agenda and ballot papers for the AGM.

8 Weardale Railways CIC Reports

8a Report from the Company Board meetings (Trust representatives)

Gerry Mudd reported that the next board meeting was to be held on 28th November.

8b Report from Management Group meetings (Trust representatives)

A meeting was held on 6th November

- Durham Police have made a grant to place CCTV at Wolsingham Station. Railway signs have been vandalised and will be mounted on higher up on their poles to prevent further vandalism.
- Brown Sign specification needed to purchase 2 signs (2 found to be missing)
- Steam locomotives for 2007 -2008 season – 3809 was moved by ECT Rail to their Wakefield Depot on November 12th.
- 117 DMU refurbishment – a budget of £40,000 has been agreed.
- Flyal should be on site in January and March 2008. Weed killing will be undertaken by volunteers on 21st November.
- Wolsingham Car Park – Land owner may withdraw car park facilities – Steve Raine to help with negotiations and final resolution may need a land swap and a bridle way rerouted.
- Electricity supply now connected to the depot, ventilation and water supply issues still be resolved.
- Credit card facilities not yet available may use Dartmoor facilities.
- Wolsingham temporary buildings to be made useable for Santa Specials.
- Eastgate development – Planning application due Feb/March 2008 should be approved by September/October 2008.

8c Report from the Marketing Group meeting (John Askwith)

Next marketing meeting will be on 28th November 2007.

Santa Specials – entertainment has been arranged up to 24th December. Based on loadings some revisions to the timetable will be made and loco haulage still to be confirmed. Adverts have been placed in local press and the Northern Echo supplement.

2008 Timetable will be based on the assumption that the loop will be available at Wolsingham for the summer service. Winter time table – timings may need amending.

Use of BR totem – Has been approved by HRA.

Freebie list – Trevor Hewitt commented on number of freebies given to ECT. The Directors reviewed the list and made amendments which were approved. ECT will pay for their own copies of BTL (including copies sent to Upward Curve).

9 Volunteering (Kevin Garthwaite)

Junior club – Kevin handed out the proposed Child Protection policy.

Free travel for Trust members – Kevin Hillary commented that as part of the Trusts contribution to the CVA one free return ticket per year would be available to Trust members – this offer was limited to one year and would need to be reviewed after the AGM by both the Trust and WRCIC. Kevin commented on the proposal for a 100 hour club (volunteering 100 hours/year to the railway and getting extra travel benefits). Steve Raine suggested that membership fees be increased to cover the cost of the free travel and proposed that 3 free journeys /year would be an acceptable arrangement. The Directors reviewed this suggestion and considered other options.

Proposal: The membership fees for 2008 are to be increased to £12.00 and £8.00 per year from 1st January 2008 and that 3 free journeys/year be offered to the members. This facility requires the production of a valid Trust membership card which will be punched for each free journey.

Proposed: Mike Wood

Seconded: Arthur Temple

The Directors approved this proposal.

Proposal: The Trust increases the price of the Trusts magazine BTL to £1.20

Proposed: Brian Cox

Seconded: Trevor Hewitt

The Directors approved this proposal.

Life membership scheme – Gerry Mudd discussed the proposed Trust Life membership scheme and made the following proposal

Proposal: The Trust Life Membership scheme should be set at £250 for single life membership, £350 for double life membership and £100 for senior life membership (60+)

Proposed: Gerry Mudd

Seconded: Mike Wood

The Directors approved the proposal.

The Membership Secretary is to announce these changes to the members at the AGM.

Kevin reported that 3 new volunteers had been recruited 2 for operations and 1 in the shop café. ! volunteer had been lost and Kevin will speak to this person.

The Directors were reminded that on 28th December the Trust would be running a 'work your Christmas pudding off' volunteering day.

10 Other Reports from Trust Directors

10a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

Special draw to be held at the AGM.,

10b Major Projects and Funding Sub Group – (Gerry Mudd/Arthur Temple)

Number 40 funds now stand at £1800.

Number 40 report – CME at Tyseley has reviewed lower firebox which in his opinion is not in a bad state and has proposed 3 options. The inspector from Allianz Cornhill is to inspect Number 40 again on Thursday 15th November.

10c Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine – (John Askwith)

John reported that the Train Trail is to get its funding bid.

Talks - Additional known dates are shown in BTL

Magazine BTL 58 February 2008

Contributions 26th January 2008

Despatch 8th February 2008

Publications

Rebirth book – Some old copies still available.

10d Membership Secretary's Report (Frank Holmes)

No report.

10i New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner

Xmas draw reminder - we must sell as many tickets as possible.

11 Any other business.

Dave Butler announced that due to increasing business commitments he will be withdrawing his name from the ballot paper and will be retiring as a Director at the AGM.

Heritage Community Line (Bishop Auckland to Darlington) – Gerry reported that passenger numbers had increased by 15% - a welcome change which bodes well for passenger numbers for the Weardale Line.

Meeting closed at 9:30 PM

12 Date/time of the next meeting is 11th December 2007 7:30PM at Bishop Auckland Station.