

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at Bishop Auckland Station on Tuesday 14th February 2012

The meeting started at 7:30 PM.

Those present

David Scott-Chair
Dr Mike Wood
Trevor Hewitt – Treasurer & Acting Secretary
John Askwith
David Bullows
Brian Cox
Richard Maughan
Steve Raine

1 Apologises for absence

Gerry Mudd, Ruth Carroll, Clive Elsdon, Michael Wilkinson, James Lynn

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 10th January 2012 meeting were approved with minor corrections.

Proposed Richard Maughan
Seconded Brian Cox

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

Stanhope Station Shop- Trevor Hewitt reported that there had been no written response to the message sent to K. Busath, G. Hanson, M. Fairburn and Graham Isom on the 13th January. Verbal reaction from GI however, indicated he supported the idea but it would need the approval, he thought, of the BARS/WRC Board before a final decision could be made.

To speed things up, Steve Raine said he would contact MF.

TH also reported that he was disappointed to hear that a Trustee had been heard to say that the WRT **would** be taking over the shop and he reminded all Trustees that matters discussed at our meetings were confidential and should not be disclosed to non-Trustees without prior authority. This particular project was only at the initial discussion stage and further negotiations were likely to be necessary, e.g. stock valuation. Leaked, premature and inaccurate information did not therefore make discussions with BARS/WRC any easier.

4 Identify other business.

- a) Chairman's Member's open day-MW
- b) Bishop Auckland Station Meeting Room cleanliness-JA
- c) Disposal of a Signal Gantry-TEH
- d) No.40 10 year overhaul-TEH

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None.

6 Chairman's Report

The Chairman, David Scott submitted a brief written report in which he expressed his thanks for the support of all the Trustees and in particular Mike Wood during his prolonged absence from meetings and other activities because of Carol's prolonged and on-going illness.

He asked all Trustees to note James' comment re. over-talking which is bad mannered, unfair and not helpful to the preparation of accurate minutes.

He also said he supported Steve Raine's proposal for the Trust to acquire a second locomotive.

Proposed: Brian Cox
Seconded: Trevor Hewitt

7 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer had previously circulated a written report, which was briefly summarised at the meeting. He reported that income last month was £420 and expenditure just under £1100 which included approx. £600 being spent on tube expanders and gland packing material for No.40.

He also reported that the amount in the No.40 designated fund was now circa £28k.

One area of concern was the low level of donations being received from members during the current Seasonal round of subscription renewal. He suspected this reflected the current National Financial situation and support from all Trustees, particularly with the Easter Draw would be very welcome.

Brian Cox enquired as to whether WRC were up to date with their invoice payments and TH reported that although two invoices were now overdue, Kevin Busath had promised these would be paid on Friday 17th February. The Treasurers report was approved by the Directors.

Proposed: David Bullows

Seconded: Mike Wood

8 Secretary's report

The Secretary had sent a brief written report prior to the meeting in which he explained that his planned report on CRB checks had been delayed pending the receipt of information from 2D.

He also referred to the Chairman's Open Day and asked who would be providing refreshments, decisions listed below: -

Biscuits-Mike Wood

Tea, Coffee, Sugar-Trevor Hewitt

Milk-Brian Cox

Agendas, signing-in sheet and any related paperwork-Mike Wood

Raffle-YES, Trustees to provide prizes, ticket books TEH/JL

Volunteer Activity Table Name boards-John Askwith

It was also agreed that Graham Isom would be invited and that in addition to him Mike Wood and Steve Raine would give brief presentations together with John Askwith who would make a brief appeal for a Station Action Group.

The Secretary's report was approved by the Directors.

Proposed: Trevor Hewitt

Seconded: Mike Wood.

9 Number 40

Richard Maughan gave a brief verbal report that most of the Winter maintenance and improvements outlined in last month's meeting had now been completed and test steamings were planned to take place next week, starting on the 21st February.

10 Restoration activities

Carriage & Wagon

MW expressed concern about WRC meeting their contractual obligations to refurbish the coaching stock he had hired to them with the November 2012 deadline looming, he was not confident that they had adequate resources to conduct this work. Alternative arrangements may have to be discussed and agreed, maybe involving the use of NE Rail Restorations.

Infrastructure

Recent work in the Frosterley station area in co-operation with local residents had been an outstanding success. MW particularly thanked the work by the Youth Team, which had been particularly instrumental in getting the work completed within the time available.

11 Projects

The Trustees discussed the 3 proposals made by Steve Raine at last month's meeting, with the following outcome:

1. **SECOND LOCOMOTIVE**-it was agreed that SR could proceed to research the market for a suitable diesel locomotive.
It was also agreed that SR could approach Lafarge to gain their official approval for the disposal of the non-operational Sentinel locomotive which could potentially raise several thousand pounds by virtue of its scrap value.
SR also proposed that we seek a more direct involvement from the NE Heritage Diesel Group and it was agreed that he would approach Chris Wilson and David Butler with this in mind.
2. **TRUST MAINTENANCE SHED**-SR to prepare a written proposal for possible sites and costs with grant funding the expected route of financing this project.
3. **STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY FORMATION**-SR to speak to Charlie Walton who is believed to be the Chair of the Bishop Line Community Rail Partnership about implications and processes regarding this proposal.

12 Volunteering

Volunteering – No report

CRB checks- no report, pending expected input from the Secretary, see his report, Item 8.

Weardale Railways CIC Reports

13a/13b Report from the Company Board meetings/ Report from Management Group meetings (Trust representatives)

Steve Raine/Brian Cox reported the following:

- ⤴ New Rule Book briefing, which is imminent will include an item on PTS
- ⤴ Operational plans for 2012 were discussed including Santa Specials, which would run from BA. With 2 trains per day, Santa on the train and total of 8 Santa Days
- ⤴ Jo(anne) Brown has been appointed the permanent Marketing Manager of WRCIC.
- ⤴ Concern has been expressed by WRC about the lack of a fire exit and extinguishers on the Youth Team Coach. TH commented that he had made an offer to David Million that the Trust would pay for the extinguishers out of grant-funded monies, but he has yet to receive a response from him. BC to speak to DM to progress this.

13c Report from the Marketing Group

John Askwith circulated a draft 2012 leaflet which will shortly, it is hoped, go to print.

The Stanhope Station Café is now called the "Whistlestop Buffet".

JA commented that the Marketing Team were now acting as a team under the leadership of Jo Brown and the outlook for 2012 and beyond now looked far more positive than it did in 2011.

SR would be interviewed on Radio Tees on Wednesday 15th February.

A complaint has been received from Duncan Davies (Black Bull, Frosterley) about the cessation of the "Community Service" which he felt had an adverse effect on his business activities. However there was a possibility that he may charter a train during 2012.

14 Other Reports from Trust Directors

14a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

£900 year to date.

14b Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine – (John Askwith)

John commented that the Down Side waiting room was stuffed full with office furniture and equipment and that the Grant rec'd in 2004 specifically indicated that this facility was to be used for educational purposes.

It was agreed that TH would draft a letter for the Chairman to send to WRC expressing our concern about the threat of Grant "clawback" and request that this room be emptied of non-educational equipment.

JA will be hiring a stall on behalf of WRT at the Richmond Station Railwayana event on 7th July.

Talks

12th June-Sedgefield
16th July-South Hetton
November-Stephenson Locomotive Society

Publications

“Railways of Weardale” book text has been sent to the RCTS for final approval/editing and it is hoped will shortly go into print.

BTL- JA complained that the WRC report was always late, causing a great deal of inconvenience for himself, the printers and others. TH suggested that for the May magazine WRC be informed of the deadline and if they didn't meet it go into print without their report.

Finally John announced that he would be making a donation of £275.34 following the winding up of The Friends of The Heritage Line account. John has asked that this money be placed in Restricted Funds and only be spent with his agreement on a worthwhile project. The Trustees agreed to accept John's condition and expressed their thanks for this donation.

14c Membership Secretary's Report (Frank Holmes/Trevor Hewitt)

A written report via email was received prior to the meeting raising the following points: -

WRT WEBSITE

- a) Wilf Hume has had a fall at his home and is now in a Stanhope Nursing Home. It was agreed that we would send him a “Get Well Soon” card from the Trustees-TH to action.
- b) Trust website feedback indicates disappointment of scrapping of Community Service and that there is as yet no timetable for 2012.

WRC WEBSITE

Frank comments that this is displaying incorrect and out of date information e.g.

- a) It states that “Weardale Railway CIC is owned by British and American Railway Services” ignoring the 12.5% share each of DCC and WRT.
- b) Santa Specials are still advertised as the coming Weardale event and invites bookings.

It was agreed that as Jo Brown is, we understand going to be the UK influence into the WRC/BARS website that she be asked work with her USA colleague and get this corrected. TH to action.

Finally Frank went on to say that someone had entered the WRT into a competition and we had won £250 of vouchers to be spent in either Argos or Homebase. A discussion then took place as to what we could use this windfall for and suggestions included Hi-Viz clothing, torches, loppers, paint, steps, scaffolding and a carpet shampooer.

TH to obtain the voucher from Frank and research what is available at both suppliers.

One additional item, a letter has been received from a member in South Africa thanking the Trust for it's good work over many years and enclosing a cheque for membership renewal until 2020.

15 Any other business.

Item 1-already discussed see item 8

Item 2-JA expressed concern that the office used as a meeting room by both WRC and WRT at BA station was often grubby and left in an untidy state. A general discussion took place, all agreeing that this was unsatisfactory and that we all have a duty of care relating to any property or equipment belong to, or hired by the Project. However, SR pointed out that a change of use for the building may take place later this year which would combine usage between the general public, DCC, WRC and WRT and we may find it necessary to find an alternative venue for our meetings at least during the period of building modification and maybe more permanently.

Item 3-TH raised the subject of disposing of a signal gantry, which Trevor Horner has requested we use as an exchange item with the Kirkby Stephen Railway for other needed S & T equipment. The Trustees agreed that they had no objection to T. Horner's proposal because the gantry was unlikely to be needed on the WR. T.He. to inform T.Ho.

Item 4-A firm quotation for replacing No.40's boiler tube plates associated crane, transport, testing and other work has been received from Locomotive Maintenance Services who are based on the Great Central Railway, Loughborough. The price quoted is very competitive in comparison with that paid to Tysley works in 2008 for similar

work and also the quotation then rec'd from LNER. After a discussion as to how much in-house work we should undertake it was unanimously agreed that it would be prudent to spend the extra £3k or so and get LMS to complete all of the required boiler work. LMS are prepared to be flexible with regard to timing and could accept our boiler for the work in either June or November dependent on our next annual inspection, which is due by 23rd May.

The Meeting closed at 22.00

16 Date/time of the next meeting is 13th March 2012 at 7:30PM Bishop Auckland Station.