

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at Bishop Auckland Station on Tuesday 17th April 2012

The meeting started at 7:30 PM.

Those present

David Scott - Chair
Dr Mike Wood – Vice Chair
Trevor Hewitt – Treasurer
John Askwith
David Bullows
Brian Cox
Clive Elsdon
Richard Maughan
James Lynn – Company Secretary

1 Apologises for absence

Ruth Carroll, Gerry Mudd, Steve Raine, Michael Wilkinson

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 13th March 2012 meeting were approved (corrections from Trevor Hewitt will be emailed to the Secretary after the meeting)

Proposed: Trevor Hewitt
Seconded: David Bullows

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

Trevor Hewitt reported that the VAT issue pertaining to the Trusts Life Membership has been resolved.

4 Identify other business.

- a) Increasing membership subscription due to the imminent increase in postage costs

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None.

6 Chairman's Report

The Chairman, David Scott commented on his previously emailed out written report. The Chairman discussed the issues raised in his report. The main issue is the amount of volunteer hours being undertaken by a small and diminishing number of volunteers just to keep the railway running. Richard Maughan raised the issue of the new timetable timings on behalf of the steam crews which did not leave enough time for the crews to get a drink, go to the toilet and oil Number 40. The Chairman agreed to write/meet with Graham Isom about this and other volunteer issues. The Directors raised the issue about training volunteers (current and new) so that more volunteers could become available (This program has stopped). John Askwith reported that Jo Brown WRCICs Marketing Manager will attend the next meeting and the train timings will be discussed again.

Proposed: Brain Cox
Seconded: David Bullows

7 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer had previously circulated an emailed report, which was briefly summarised at the meeting. He reported that income last month was £1400 made up of subs £500, donations £300, Number 40 appeal £188 and Easter Draw £190. Expenditure was £200.

Trevor commented that the Easter Draw made a profit of £515 well down from last year. The second loco fund now stands at £175 and this will increase by between £6500 - £7000 after the sale for scrap of the redundant ex Lafarge shunter. Trevor also reported that DCC has extended the discretionary rate relief for this year however this is to be

reviewed by DCC in December and £1200 in Gift Aid from HMRC should be received shortly. Number 40 fund stands at £34000 and the boiler inspector expects the repairs for the 10 year overhaul to come to approx £28000.

Proposed: John Askwith
Seconded: Clive Elsdon

8 Secretary's report

The Secretary reported that the Trustees Annual Report had been completed and was ready for signature by the officers of the Trust. David Scott and Trevor Hewitt duly signed 4 copies of the report.

9 Number 40

Richard Maughan gave a brief verbal report. The combined brake valve has not been fitted due to parts having not been manufactured by WRCIC staff. Richard Campbell will manufacture the parts and the valve will be fitted in July – Trevor has agreed to store the parts until Jul). Richard also commented that the firebars appear to be burning out quicker than normal due to the bars being over sized and causing expansion problems. Richard concluded his report by commenting that Number 40 continues to run well and appears running smoother due to the preventative maintenance now being carried out.

It was reported that WRCIC would like to delay the boiler inspection which will entail a cost of £505. WRCIC have agreed pay this charge and will be invoiced accordingly. The boiler inspection will take place w/c 21st May and if it passes Number 40 will have a fitness to run certificate until the end of October 2012 with a possible extension to early Jan 2013.

10 Restoration activities Carriage & Wagon

Carriage restoration – Mike Wood reported that the BCK should be on its way to Shildon. The 'bubble car' has been delivered to the depot and has been run – needs a ladder and fire extinguisher.

Infrastructure

Sunday Gang – Cleared bulge at Bridge 8.
Frosterley station benches – Trevor has ordered timber for the benches.

11 Projects

No report – Steve Raine will be away on family business for the next few months.

12 Volunteering

Volunteering

No report - Ruth is away having medical treatment.

CRB checks - Nothing to report

Weardale Railways CIC Reports

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

Brian Cox reported the following:

- Conversion of Northern Rails Bishop Auckland Station building by WRCIC – Brian Cox reviewed the possible changes to the building which includes ticket office, meeting room, toilets, kitchen – however no approach has been made by WRCIC to the Trust to see if Trust volunteers can help with the conversion work.
- The Class 31 is due to leave the railway to go out on hire.
- Alan Lee has been appointed the new Safety Director with additional responsibilities for track and rolling stock. He wants to clean up the depot and remove trip hazards.
- Budgets will be handed by WRCIC local management.
- Coal trains numbers may be doubled from 26/month
- The footpath between BA and BA West will be completed in the summer.

- Iowa Pacific has been awarded a franchise to operate the Polar Express themed Christmas trains. Details will be discussed at the next WRT Trust Council meeting.

13c Report from the Marketing Group

John Askwith discussed the marketing issues with the Directors. He reported that we have a good visual product. Passenger numbers over Easter are about 70% of target. Leaflets are available but have been delivered late with 50,000 at the distribution company and 10,000 are available for local delivery. The next marketing is tomorrow (18th April).

14 Other Reports from Trust Directors

14a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

By end of March this had raised £1351.

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

Talks

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

BTL

Contributions by 19th April
Dispatch 3rd May

John reported that BBC NE will film on the railway as part of their 'From Dale to Sea - A Great British Story.

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

Trevor reported on behalf of Frank that 90 members have not renewed with membership standing at 693. He has received complaints via the Trust website about the community rail service timetable and difficulties booking seats on the Santa Specials.

15 Any other business.

Increase in subscription rates – Trevor Hewitt proposed that all subscriptions be increased by £1 to cover the increase in postage (amounting to £350/year). The Directors approved the increase.

Proposed: Mike Wood
Seconded: Clive Elsdon.

The Meeting closed at 21.30

16 Date/time of the next meeting is 15th May 2012 at 7:30PM Bishop Auckland Station.