

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the RAFA Club Crook on Tuesday 11th July 2006

The meeting started at 7:30 PM

Those present

Kevin Hillary – Chairman
Mike Wood – Vice Chairman
Trevor Hewitt – Treasurer
John Askwith
Dave Butler
Brian Cox
Ian Gardner
Tim Hall
Frank Holmes
Trevor Horner
Graham Lord
Gerry Mudd
Norma Richardson
Julian Shepherd
James Lynn – Secretary

John Hummel attended the meeting at the request of the Trust Directors

1 Apologies for absence

Dave Foxton, Steve Raine, Arthur Temple

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the 13th June 2006 meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman Kevin Hillary

Proposed by Brian Cox
Seconded by Tim Hall

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

Mail shot - It was reported that the mail shot would cost more than originally reported as 480 letters would have to be sent.

4 Identify other business.

- Trust Office
- Sweat shirts
- Access to Bishop Auckland Station

5 Shop Operations

Trevor Hewitt summarised his email

- Treasurers views had changed
- Shop needed dynamic management (promotional/advertising /commercial skills keeping the shop tidy)
- Unless the Trust Directors had any strong reasons the Treasurer recommended that the shop be sold to WRC.

Tim Hall reminded the Directors that we would be sub-letting the shop (in breach of our lease agreement and WRC would lose the community charge reduction due to the Charitable status of the Trust. However the Shop lease has not been completed by the legal department of WVDC. When this lease has been completed changes may be possible – this needs to be discussed with Ian Philips (WVDC and a WRC Director).

Proposal: The Trust should sell the stock and hand over management of the Shop to the Weardale Railway Company (WRL) assuming that no costs accrue to the Trust and subject to the lease benefiting both the Trust and the Weardale Railway Company.

Proposed: Brain Cox
Seconded: Gerry Mudd

The Directors approved the proposal.

John Hummel expressed the wish that Trust volunteers would still run the Shop.

6 Chairman's Report

The Chairman (Kevin Hillary) gave a brief oral report (based on his report previously emailed to all Directors) The Chairmans report was approved by the Directors.

7 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer reported that the Trusts income last month was £17500 (£2500 is Trust income £15,000 from WRL to cover railway expenses). Trust expenditure was £7,000 which included £6,000 repayment of to Steve Raine to cover loan. General Funds stand at £6875 and it was agreed that £2875 be repaid to Steve Raine (leaving £1225 plus interest to be repaid).

Proposal: The Trust will pay Steve Raine £2875 from General Funds to cover part payment of the loan made between Steve Raine and the Trust..

Proposed: Trevor Hewitt
Seconded: I Gardner

The Directors approved the proposal.

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

8 Secretarys report

No report was presented

AGM – The Secretary discussed his revised AGM timetable. It was agreed that the AGM should be held on 18th November at St Thomas's Hall Stanhope. The AGM should start at 11:00 AM registration starting at 10:30 AM with a pie and peas lunch and a special train run after the conclusion of the AGM – tickets for the special train would only be available at the AGM.

Trust Directors Register of Interests – The Secretary discussed the requirements for Directors to register their any interests (which may have any financial connection to the Trust, WRL and ECT). This register would help avoid any conflicts of interest when the Trust had to make contentious decisions and would be a matter of public record ensuring transparency. The Directors were asked to review this proposal and the associated forms. The Directors agreed that a decision on this matter would be taken at a future meeting.

9 Other Reports from Trust Directors

9a Update of WRL Administration (John Hummel WRL/ECT)

John Hummel reported that the Weardale Railway Company (WRL) was now out of administration and a new board of directors had taken control of the Company as elected members. The old M&As are still in force until a legal change can be made from a not for profit company to community interest company (CIC) status. Conveyancing of the track bed from Network Rail is continuing but is still 6-8 weeks away from completion however a draft sale contract has been prepared. The land transfer between Les Graham and the WRL is still ongoing and access to the depot is still not confirmed. This will be resolved after the land swap/conveyancing has been completed. The transfer of road bridges to

DCC is still on-going again no completion date was reported. The licence to run the Wickham trolley will run out on 17 July and it will take 2 weeks to change the licence (from Network Rail) to run trains.

John Hummel reported that the Transport and Works Order was not in effect (as the line had not been transferred from Network Rail to WRL) and the HMRI has to carry out 2 inspections which will be under Network Rail regulations covering physical infrastructure and operating systems/processes (similar to Train Operating Companies – TOCs).

In the meantime the priority is to get a presence at Stanhope Station and carry out crew training by running trains. The other priorities consisted turning the short form business plan into a full 5 year plan to help with future funders and obtaining the lease for Bishop Auckland Station and possibly have a formal handover during the Rail Fest.

John also commented that a safety induction would be required for all volunteers. Working volunteers will get their induction first. Longer courses will be run for team leaders/supervisors and managers.

Norma Richardson asked if volunteers would be required to run the shop. John Hummel expressed the wish that Trust volunteers would still help to run the shop.

9b Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

No report was presented as Arthur was attending another meeting
Lottery had raised £1000 with the roll over stood at £400

9c Marketing sub group report (Tim Hall)

Next marketing sub group meeting will be held on the 19th July. Frank agreed to add a link from the Trusts website to the Rail Fest web site.

9d Management Group – (John Askwith)

Meeting minutes No 1 are to be issued after editing/approval by Steve Raine. Next meeting will be held on 25th July at the RAFA Club Crook.

9e Major Projects and Funding Sub Group – (Gerry Mudd/Arthur Temple)

Gerry reported that there had been no progress on obtaining loan locomotives due to there being no official opening date for the line.

Locomotive purchase – awaiting formal reply before making an offer – this will be subject to approval by the Trust Directors.

Gerry reported that he will purchase a coach on behalf of the Trust (subject to inspection)

Small grants (£500 - £5,000)

4 projects have been identified the Directors discussed 4 new possible projects:

- PAT testing equipment.
- Resurfacing Stanhope Station platform.
- Repair of the water tank at Stanhope.
- Support materials for educational activities.

Any large projects £5000+ will need the revised business plan as discussed earlier.

Gerry handed out a fund raising proposal from the Major Projects and Funding Sub Group. This involved raising money directly from a more wealthy individuals and organisations through direct appeals. The benefits to the individuals/organisations would be free railway tickets and the donor names would be displayed on a plaque at a suitable location (possibly Stanhope Station). John Askwith questioned whether this funding appeal would conflict with The Yard of Track Appeal. Mike Wood asked whether the money raised would be targeted at a new project each year (ring fenced) or placed in general funds.

Proposal: Gerry to work up this idea into a full proposal for review by the Directors at a later date.

Proposed: Mike Wood
Seconded: Dave Butler

The Directors approved the proposal.

9f Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine– (John Askwith)

Events – Bishop Auckland Food Festival Easter Saturday 2007 – Invitation accepted by the Directors.

Educational Activities – No report.

Talks – Brian Cox talks to schools will restart after the summer holidays

Publications – No report.

Magazine – Contributions by 20th July despatch by 4th August.

John commented that the Trust needs to find a secure home for its archive.

9g Membership Secretarys Report (Frank Holmes)

No report.

9h Volunteer Training

Discussed earlier in the meeting (see 9a)

9j New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner

Ian asked if the Trust would like to run a Christmas raffle – the Directors agreed to the proposal..

10 Restoration Activities

10a Locomotives

No report was presented.

10b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities

3rd carriage work is still on going.

10c Infrastructure

The following infrastructure issues were identified/ or are under going maintenance work:

- Frosterley level crossing.
- Patching work at 7.75 mile post.
- Depot
- Canopy train clearance (passed OK)
- 250 sleepers have been graded.

Any other business.

Trust Office

Trevor Hewitt asked if the Trust would be willing to give up its office at Stanhope Station to allow it to become a mess area for train crews. The Secretary reminded the Directors that the Trusts registered office is Stanhope Station and it was agreed to ask WRL for a desk in the Portacabin for Trust work/administration.

Proposal: The Trust Directors agreed to move the Trust Office to the portacabin at Stanhope Station.

Proposed: Trevor Hewitt

Seconded: ?????

The Directors approved the proposal

Sweat Shirts

The Directors reviewed Paul Davies letter. Trevor Hewitt agreed to respond on behalf of the Directors

Access to Bishop Auckland Station

(See John Hummel's comments - 9a)

The meeting closed at 21:55 PM.

12 Date/time of the next meeting is 8th August 2006 7:30PM at the RAFA Club Crook.