

## WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held in RAFA Club Crook on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2007

The meeting started at 7:35 PM

### **Those present**

Ian Gardner– Chairman  
Mike Wood – Vice Chairman  
Trevor Hewitt - Treasurer  
John Askwith  
Brian Cox  
Kevin Hillary  
Frank Holmes  
Trevor Horner  
Graham Lord  
Steve Raine  
Norma Richardson  
Julian Shepherd  
Arthur Temple  
James Lynn – Secretary

### **1 Apologises for absence**

Dave Foxton, Tim Hall, Kevin Hillary, Gerry Mudd

### **2 Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes from the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2007 and 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2007 meetings were accepted as a true record (after corrections) and signed by the Chairman Ian Gardner

Proposed by Arthur Temple  
Seconded by Trevor Hewitt

### **3 Matters arising from the last meeting**

None

### **4 Identify other business.**

1 item was identified:

- Depot Access

### **5a Chairman's Report**

The Chairman (Ian Gardner) gave a brief oral report. He reported that the volunteers had managed to keep train services operating even though the Class 141 DMU has been suffering mechanical problems. Ian had contacted Steve Sears (Chairman ECT) over the cash shortfall required to complete any agreement with Weardale Castings. Steve Sears commented that ECT would cover any shortfall (with help from the Trust) in-order to complete agreement with Weardale Castings and conclude the CVA. The Chairman concluded by emphasising the need to attract new volunteers and resolving access issues to the depot which is seen as a priority by the Trust members. The Chairman's report was approved by the Directors.

Proposed by Steve Raine  
Seconded by Graham Lord

### **6 Treasurer's report**

The Treasurer reported that January had been a quiet month. A donation of £680 had been received from Mike Wood for coach transportation. A bank account with the Charity Bank (CAF) has been opened to hold funds to cover the repair/maintenance of Number 40. Jim Cornel (National Heritage Railway Awards) has asked if the Trust could organise an unveiling/opening ceremony for the Stanhope Station canopy and make available photographs of this event. The Directors discussed suitable candidates to undertake the official opening. A plaque in memory of Ray Golding (to be attached to a station bench) has been ordered and 2 benches have arrived ready for assembly.

The Treasurer read out a letter from Wilf Hume which accompanied a donation of £1010. The Directors formally thanked Wilf Hume for this donation.

The Directors approved the Treasurers report.

Proposed by Trevor Horner  
Seconded John Askwith

## **7 Secretary's report**

No report was presented.

Trusts Annual Return to the Charity Commission/Trustees Annual Report – The Chairman signed the Annual Return on behalf of the Directors.

Letter of thanks from the Trust to Dave Briggs – The Chairman signed the letter.

Correspondence – The Secretary read out a letter from ECTs solicitors on the issue of proxy votes which confirmed that the Trust is regarded as a Corporate member of Weardale Railways CIC (even if the Trust changes its legal status) and that proxy voting provision would be provided by the new articles of the association of the new railway company.

The Secretary reported to the Directors confidential advice on the Trusts accounts (covering the SORP regulations) and legal advice on the structure of the new railway company.

## **8 Update on negotiations with Weardale Castings**

Steve Raine reported that Andrew Tweddle was requesting £100k and PwC approval to start the legal transfer of the track bed from Network Rail. However this is contingent on the CVA and Weardale Castings compensation being completed. Andrew Tweddle also confirmed that the 3 land swops with the relevant organisations had been agreed, Steve also pointed out that Les Graham had set a deadline of the end of April to complete the compensation deal with Weardale Castings. If no agreement is reached the CVA would fail starting the liquidation process of the Railway Company.

(For further update on Weardale Railways CVA see section 10a)

## **9 Volunteering**

No report from Dave Butler/Ian Gardner

Arthur Temple asked about driver training for volunteers. Mike Wood confirmed that Don Heath had an up to date list of volunteers who wanted driver training. Dave Butler asked if a notice could be displayed on Stanhope Station notice board explaining the procedure for rules approval and depot operation/access. Trevor Hewitt agreed to produce a notice and the relevant Directors dictated the notice content.

## **10 Other Reports from Trust Directors**

### **10a Update of Weardale Railways CIC /Report from the board meetings (Steve Raine/WRT Directors on WRCIC board – see also item 8)**

Steve Raine commented that an extra £15k will have to be found to complete the CVA and PwC needs to move to complete the necessary paperwork and a condition report is needed for the Gun Barrel Shed in order to complete the lease paperwork.

Network Rail – 5 land parcel plans have been produced (3 for land swops, 4<sup>th</sup> showing revised boundaries and 5<sup>th</sup> is an overall plan). The bridge location list is to be altered to show the correct mileage/location for Wear Valley Viaduct. Weardale Railway Company (the old railway company) accounts for 2004 have been sent to Companies House (subject to a fine for late filing) which showed a deficit £984,000. Accounts for part of 2005 are in preparation – PwC are responsible for most of 2005.

Trevor Horner asked if PwC is to finance any part of the CVA, Steve Raine has spoken to Hilary Armstrong but no response has been received from PwCs managing partner. PwCs response may be tempered by the need to restrict Les Grahams right to sue PwC for further damages. This issue may cause PwC to liquidate the company if they perceive any legal difficulties. Both Steve and Ian Gardner have had no formal response from PwC to date. Steve concluded his remarks by commenting that all the parties may have to grim and bear it and complete the CVA ensuring that Weardale Castings receives the minimum amount of agreed compensation.

## **10b Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)**

Arthur reported the lottery is now at £100/week. Rollover draw will be held at Easter.

## **10c Marketing sub group report (Tim Hall)**

Santa Specials –John Askwith reported that a Santa Special debrief had been held and the leaflet for 2007 has been completed however revised times at Wolsingham will be required to help with train turnaround.

A1 posters – Trevor Hewitt has 50 posters (cost £18 each) and will speak to Don Heath about distribution to suitable railway stations. Steve Raine suggested a copy should be given to Dave Milton (GNER) to reduce down in size for other publicity uses. John Askwith to contact Ian Walker about other locations for posters.

Events for 2007 – John Askwith reported that major events were published on BTL.

Brian Cox asked if there were any volunteers who could help out at the food event at Auckland Castle on April 7<sup>th</sup> (Easter weekend).

Ian Gardner reported he will be meeting with Military Vehicle Group to finalise details.

Arthur Temple reported that he may have obtained sponsorship (from Lafarge) for a Steam Festival to be held at Eastgate in September 2007. The Directors agreed that this event should be reviewed by the Marketing Group as there may be issues over resourcing/volunteer numbers to run this event.

## **10d Management Group – (John Askwith)**

John Askwith reported that meeting minutes have been sent to Steve Raine for review. Next meeting will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> March.

## **10e Major Projects and Funding Sub Group – (Gerry Mudd/Arthur Temple)**

Gerrys comments were emailed to the Directors – Target date for Wolsingham Station building has been moved to 31<sup>st</sup> May due to delayed approval by the funder.

## **10f Educational Activities/Talks/Publications/Magazine – (John Askwith)**

A possible contact/volunteer to under take the Trust's educational activities has been identified.

Talks – 12<sup>th</sup> March (need more locations)

Magazine – Need contributions. John reported that 5 members had expressed disquiet about sub-group contributions. Ian Gardner agreed to approach sub-groups to discuss this issue.

## **10g Membership Secretary's Report (Frank Holmes)**

Frank reported that membership stands at 850 (for renewal). The Company Secretary agreed to email addresses for Helen Goodman and Lord Foster. Frank to update the website on the status of the Railway Company CVA.

Website – Frank reported that the current website could be updated to have a members area with passwords and an area for volunteer rostering.

## **10h Volunteer Training**

No report (see item 9)

## **10i New fund raising ideas – Ian Gardner**

No report.

## **11 Restoration Activities**

### **11a Locomotives**

No report.

### **11b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities**

No report.

## **11c Infrastructure**

Trevor Horner discussed the loop project which requires a water course to be piped away from the site of the proposed loop line. Trevor wondered if volunteers could carry out some preliminary work on consolidation of the ground before specialist contractors start work- this would save time and money. The Directors agreed to raise this matter with the Railway board however Steve Raine thought this work may be funded out of ECTs turnover. Gerry Mudd had previously commented that funding this project through grants would take 6 – 12 months just to raise the money. Trevor Hewitt agreed to re-send costing spreadsheet.

It was reported that RMS Locotech are to install 100 sleepers.

## **12 Any other business.**

### **12a Depot access/Class 37 Group**

The Chairman reported that he had contacted the Class 37 Group to discuss depot access. He informed the Class 37 Group that depot building keys will be controlled by the Railway Company and until volunteer DPICs (Depot person in charge) are in place there will be no access. Dave Butler asked that an official (joint Trust/Company) statement be published in the Trust magazine. The Directors agreed that an official statement should be published. Steve Raine reiterated the Company policy that unless DPICs are in place and safe working practises for depot operation in place there will be no access to the depot. Physical access to the depot is technically not possible until Weardale Castings compensation is resolved and the CVA is completed allowing full operation of the railway.

Meeting closed at 9:50 PM

## **13 Date/time of the next meeting is 13<sup>th</sup> March 2007 7:30PM at RAFA Club Crook.**