

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

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

The meeting started at 7:31 PM.

Those present

David Scott – Chair
Dr Mike Wood – Vice Chair
Trevor Hewitt – Treasurer
John Askwith
David Bullows
Ruth Carroll
Brian Cox
Clive Elsdon
Richard Maughan
Gerry Mudd
John Hargreaves

James Lynn - Secretary

1 Apologies for absence

Steve Raine

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the 10th July 2012 meeting were approved with minor corrections and amendments to Items 7 remove Directors expressed their thanks, Item 10 Trevor to get costs of gutter cleaning and approach WRCIC for funding, Item 12 tea and coffee are now available, Item 13a coaches not coach, is about to ramp up its publicity budget, Dean Forest not Dean Valley, Shop remove Kevin Busath add WRCIC, Item 15 remove % and remove 3rd party as a reserve/backup

Proposed: Trevor Hewitt

Seconded: Ruth Carroll

3 Matters arising from the last meeting

No items arising

4 Identify other business.

2 items were previously identified:

- Proposal from Arthur Temple – will be covered by David Scott
- Facebook issues – Clive Elsdon

5 Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None.

6 Chairman's Report

The Chairman, David Scott commented on his previously emailed out report. The Chairman reported that he had signed the agreement for the Trust to take over the shop and from 1st August the Trust have commercial responsibility for shop operations. The Chairman also reported on the lack of volunteers and the reasons for this state of affairs which included no breaks for firemen/drivers, long hours, uncertainty about the timetable, lack of training progression particularly for footplate roles and conflicts between staff and volunteers. The Directors discussed the issues and solutions to these issues are to be put to WRCIC. One positive step announced was that Dawn Gregory has agreed to help Ruth with the recruitment of volunteers. Based on the contents of Michael Wilkinson the Chairman is to ask WRCIC is make changes to its rule book. The Directors discussed the confidential matters regarding the Youth Team – no decisions were taken.

The Chairmans report was approved by the Directors

Proposed: Brian Cox
Seconded: Gerry Mudd

7 Treasurer's report

The Treasurer had previously circulated an emailed report. He reported that income last month was £ 2600 and expenditure £600 (Number 40 expenses). As the Trusts financial year end was 31st July the Treasurer briefly reviewed the past years finances. Number 40 appeal has raised less money than last year and sundry income was boosted by the sale of the Sentinel locomotive. Hire income for Number 40 amounted to £10,000 Trevor reported that on 4 occasions the Trusts confidential bank statements have been opened by WRCIC personnel. The Treasurer asked if David Scott or Gerry Mudd would raise this with WRCIC at the next Management Meeting.

The Treasurers report was approved by the Directors.

Proposed: Clive Elsdon
Seconded: David Bullows

8 Shop

Trevor Hewitt reported that the Trust officially took over the shop on 1st August – so far £600 of Trust money has been spent on stock and £350 has been taken in 2 weeks. The shop locks have been changed to improve security and 4 keys have been issued.

9 Secretary's report

The Secretary reported on the Directors elections for the Trusts November AGM and which Directors have to retire and re-stand to meet the rotation rules of the Trust M&As. The Secretary asked certain Trust Directors to provide reports which will be included in the Trustees Annual Report which is part of the documentation sent to the Charity Commission.

10 Number 40

Trevor Hewitt and Richard Maughan gave a brief verbal report at the meeting. Number 40s boiler will be picked up by LMS during the 1st week of September. Work has already started on fabricating a new firebox – which is the longest lead time item.

11 Restoration activities

11a Carriage & Wagon

BG coach has been worked on and now ready for use. Brake coach repaired awaiting paint however there is an issue of paintwork being scratched by lineside vegetation between Bridge 6 and Bridge 8 – this needs to be trimmed.

Youth Team Coach at Stanhope is awaiting fire safety equipment (to be funded by Weardale LAG) and the building of suitable fire escape 'bridge' across ditch – again using funding from Weardale LAG. Trevor has offered to purchase the equipment

11b Infrastructure

No report

12 Projects

To be removed temporarily from the agenda

13 Volunteering

Ruth Carroll reported that volunteer hours (ytd) amount to 4388 which equates to £48k (down on last year). The Directors discussed the issues of volunteers not being able to sign in or out or not signing in or out – this is to be raised at the Management Meeting.

The Directors discussed the issues over the telephone system in the ticket office and this again will be raised at the Management Meeting.

John Askwith reported that Jo Brown WRCIC's Marketing Manager has requested a Trust displays at Locomotion and Timothy Hackworth Museum – John and Ruth to work with Jo on this.

David Million has asked Ruth to roster the Youth Team members – rostering Youth Team members will be the subject of a meeting between the Trust and Don Heath.

Ruth thanked John Askwith and Kevin Hillary for their hard work in organising 'War on the Line'.

CRB checks – The directors discussed some issues arising from the meetings with the Youth Team – this subject to be added as a formal agenda item.

Weardale Railways CIC Reports

14a/14b Report from the Company Board meetings/ Report from Management Group meetings (Trust representatives)

David Scott, Brian Cox and Gerry Mudd reported the following:

Control Room phone – see Volunteering report item 13

Financial – The Directors discussed confidential data and no decisions were taken.

New tokens are now in operation.

A night shift operator is to be employed to start the warming up process and complete cleaning out work on steam engines.

Dr Mike Woods 'bubble car' is undergoing a major examination before starting operations.

Polar Express – marketing will undertaken by Cube Creative and Jo Brown will handle other WRCIC marketing.

Witton station platform – some finishing work on ramps is needed. WRCIC had asked if the Trust would cash flow this work but after discussing confidential financial matters the Trust Directors declined.

An Events Team is to be formed – though no details are forthcoming from WRCIC marketing team.

BA to BA West footpath – Network Rail have some questions and the ball is back with WRCIC.

Broken Banks – BGS have surveyed and a weight limit may have to be set or the line may need to be moved.

Fence at Witton-le-Wear Station building – will be delayed until funding is available.

Overhanging vegetation will need to be cut down by the frayl.

Santa Special proposal by the Trust to WRCIC – It is proposed that 2 trains per Saturday and Sunday during December will be operated as Santa Specials using the 'Bubble Car' between BA to Witton. Ticket prices are to be £13/adult and £7/child. This operation would require 6 volunteers and a duty manager however parking at BA would be an issue and refreshment/toilet facilities are still to be worked out. The Directors discussed the possible conflicts with WRCIC Polar Express operations and it was agreed that David Scott would take this proposal to the next Management Meeting for review. A project team of Brian Dr Mike and John Askwith are to manage the Santa Specials.

13c Report from the Marketing Group

John Askwith discussed with the Directors issues about marketing of the railway along with feedback from the general public that contacting the railway was very difficult – these issues will be raised at the next Management Meeting.

John also reported that War on the Line entertainers had not been paid yet even though invoices had been submitted.

14 Other Reports from Trust Directors

14a Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

To date this had raised £1777 – prizes £620 and profit £1100.

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

Talks

12th September – Bishop Auckland Probus Club

12th September – Northallerton Advanced Drivers Association

2nd November - Stephenson Locomotive Society

BTL

Contributions by 18th October

Dispatch 1st November

John asked if the Education Room has been put back in order – benches are still missing possibly destroyed.

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

Frank reported by email as follows:

I continue to receive regular grumbles about unanswered phone enquiries to 526203. (Gerry is already aware of this issue). It would appear that there is now also a problem with the email contact form on the CIC website not getting through to Jo promptly.

However of greater concern is the fact that since Bishop Auckland has been promoted as the starting point for Weardale trips we are having an increase in complaints about finding our platform and also finding somewhere to park cars. This latter problem is compounded by the CIC website stating that **"We offer ample car parking at all our stations."** when in fact B A has no parking facilities even for the Northern Rail station. This problem will not go away, though I cannot personally suggest a solution'.

15 Any other business.

Driving Experience – David Scott discussed Arthur Temple's ideas on operating driving experience days – however issues with WRCIC which Mike Wood reviewed with the Directors still remain. David Scott is to report back to Arthur.

Facebook – Clive Elsdon reviewed the issues around the different Facebook pages. The Directors discussed the issues and agreed that Ruth would become an administrator.

The meeting closed at 22.05

Date/time of the next meeting is 11th September 2012 at 7:30PM Bishop Auckland Station.