

WEARDALE RAILWAY TRUST

Minutes of the management committee meeting held at the RAFA Club Crook on Tuesday 13th December 2005

The meeting started at 7:35

Those present

Kevin Hillary - Chairman
John Askwith
Dave Butler
Dave Foxtton
Ian Gardner
Tim Hall
Frank Holmes
Trevor Horner
Graham Lord
Norma Richardson
Steve Raine
Arthur Temple
Mike Wood
James Lynn (Secretary)

1 Apologies for absence

Brian Cox, Steve Race, Trevor Hewitt

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes from the 8th November 2005 meeting were accepted as a true record (after corrections addition of apologies from Dave Foxtton) and signed by the Chairman Kevin Hillary

Proposed by Mike Wood
Seconded by Dave Foxtton

3 Matter actions not covered on the agenda

BASF locomotive – Dave Foxtton agreed to supply the Secretary with a copy of the confirmation letter from BASF. It was reported that the Trust had been thanked by the Bowes Railway for work carried out by WRT volunteers.

4 Identify other business.

There were 3 items:

- a Election of Chair/Vice Chair and Treasurer
- b Eastgate site update report (Arthur Temple)
- c Fundraising (Arthur Temple)
- d Cycleway (Mike Wood)

4a Election of Chair/Vice Chair and Treasurer

As the Treasurer had withdrawn his resignation the Directors unanimously re-elected Trevor Hewitt as the Trusts Treasurer.

Chair

Kevin Hillary

Proposed Trevor Horner
Seconded Dave Foxtton

Kevin Hillary was unanimously elected as the Trust Chairman

Vice Chair

Ian Gardner

Proposed Arthur Temple
Seconded Trevor Horner

Mike Wood

Proposed Dave Foxton
Seconded Graham Lord

There being 2 candidates a poll of Directors present was held. Both candidates received 5 votes and based on the Trusts M&As the Chair cast his deciding vote for Mike Wood.

Mike Wood was therefore elected as Vice Chair.

4b Eastgate site update report (Arthur Temple)

The demolition work will be finished early Jan 2006. A meeting was held (Steve Raine, Arthur Temple, Dave Butler, Lloyd McNally and John Hummel and Lafarge personnel attended) and it Larfarges intention to have the Trust take over the site as quickly as possible (on a 'licence' basis probably for 2 years). Arthur suggested that the Trust form a sub committee of Trust Directors and local community representatives to administer the site. It was suggested that John Shuttleworth, Diane Sutcliffe (Eastgate PC), John Hayes and Peter Bowes (Weardale Gazette) be contacted to see if they would become members of this sub-committee.

Dave Foxton reported that if the Steam Festival moved to this site it would save £1400 in marquee and toilet costs. However under the new 'Licensing Act' the Trust may need to obtain a new license – Dave Foxton to investigate.

Proposal - The Trust Directors approve the setting up of a sub-committee to manage the Eastgate site.

Proposed Ian Gardner
Seconded Mike Wood

Then Directors approved this proposal unanimously.

4c Fundraising (Arthur Temple)

Numbers draw software ready to start Jan 2006 so far £90/week pledged.
5 reports are to be completed for funders and Gerry Mudd has completed the Leader+ report.

Bottle draw will start in the New Year – John Chatfield has £150 pledged per draw. There will be 3 draws/year.

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a brief oral report. He welcomed the 3 new Directors and thanked Julian Shepherd fro all his efforts as a Trust Director. He went on to thank the volunteers for all their hard work over the past year in very difficult circumstances and that the Trust must now get back the 'old' volunteers who have fallen by the wayside.

The Chairmans report was approved by the Directors.

6 Treasurers report

The Treasurer had previously emailed his financial report. This report was accepted by the Directors. The Secretary reported to the Directors some additional comments on behalf of the Treasurer for review.

Steve Raine commented that £7,500 (Yard of Track Appeal) is part of the £40,000 (including loans) that the Trust will use to support the railway coming out of Administration. Steve will ask the Treasurer how this money will be defined in the Trusts accounts.

Steve Raine further commented that any new capital expenditure on the railway (The worst case scenario of no European money) may require the development of new ideas to generate large amounts of income.

Proposal – It was proposed that the £40,000 be re-designated as funds for use to get the railway back into operation (Secretarys proviso – subject to this being acceptable under the relevant Charity/Company Acts and accounting practices).

Proposed - Trevor Horner
Seconded - Ian Gardner

11 Directors approved the proposal 1 abstained.

The Treasurer proposed a vote of thanks to the Loco Group and Mike Wood for their donations for the purchase of a generator. The Directors unanimously agreed and expressed their thanks on behalf of the Trust.

Café – Contract finishes on 6th January 2006. It was reported that the middle door key is missing and the water supply needs to be turned off. The Secretary read out the Treasurers comments that the Café is now a railway company matter.

Shop – Secretary read out the Treasurers comments. Tim Hall has agreed to look after the shop operations and he commented that the shop is a good income generator and agreed with the Treasurers comments about possible revenue sharing with the railway company. Mike Wood floated the idea of having a separate Trust shop. It was agreed to move shop operations to the Marketing sub-group for more detailed discussions.

7 Secretarys report

The Secretary reviewed the AGM process and it was agreed that the current Directors introduce themselves at the start of the AGM. Frank Holmes commented that there had been some complaints that the AGM is held on Remembrance Weekend. The Directors agreed to review the date of the next AGM (possibly end of November/early December).

Proposal – The Secretary asked the Directors to ratify the Trust Director election results

Proposed – John Askwith
Seconded – Arthur Temple

The Directors approved the proposed unanimously.

The Directors discussed co-option of members to the Council. The Secretary outlined the Trust Director results and the requirements of the M&As. The Directors agreed that Julian Shepherd should be invited to become a Trust Director and the Secretary send a letter giving Julian 21 days notice of his co-option and ascertain whether he wishes to become a Director. It was agreed to invite Gerry Mudd to Trust meetings as an adviser.

Proposal – It was proposed that Julian Shepherd be co-opted onto the Trust as a Director and that Gerry Mudd be invited to the Trust meetings as an adviser.

Proposed – Graham Lord
Seconded – Arthur Temple
The Directors approved the proposal unanimously.

The Directors accepted with regret John Chatfield's resignation.

The Secretary asked the Directors to re-state their policy on CRB checks for volunteers. The Directors agreed that every volunteer who comes into contact with the public must be CRB checked. It was reported that Wear Valley District Council can do CRB checks.

8 Other Reports from Trust Directors

8a Update of WRT Administration (Steve Rained)

Steve Raine reviewed the current situation over the administration of the railway company. He had met with PWC and they were still trying to reform the railway company so that it could not be asset stripped – a concern of the creditors. Steve Rained has written a new set of M&As for the new railway company however a CIC (Community Interest Company) may be a 'better' legal structure. Steve commented that if the railway goes bankrupt for a second time the assets including the line would have to be sold off. Steve reminded the Directors of the old railway structure (pre WRL) in which the 'old Trust' held the track bed as a asset. Steve reported that a creditors meeting was still to be held - the CVA would ten be finalised by early 2006.

Steve also reported that the safety case exemption had been completed by Don Heath. This will be reviewed by Trevor Horner and Steve Raine.

8b Weekly Lottery/Fund raising (Arthur Temple)

See item 4

8c Marketing sub group report

No report was presented. Next meeting will be to be arranged when the relevant railway company marketing person has been appointed. Steve Raine reported that Company sub-group meetings would be sent to Trust Directors.

8d Management Group – John Askwith

Minutes of the zero meeting are to distributed (after review by Steve Raine).

8f Educational Activities – John Askwith

No report (awaiting Frank Holmes nominees to form an educational sub-group).
Talks - dates in magazine.

8e Magazine

The Directors were reminded that magazine content needs to be with John by 16th January for publication by 1st week of February. John also asked for photographs for the magazine.

Norma Richardson asked if a new volunteer form needs to be sent out (within the magazine). Kevin Hillary asked if there was a better way of doing this such as phoning around. It was suggested that this be a subject of an article in the magazine.

Publications – No sales of paintings or other Trust publications/books – need help form the Trust Directors to sell. Ian Gardner commented that if no trains are running we have no contact with the public in order to sell Trust publications. Arthur Temple commented that the Trust should be selling itself to the public in a more proactive way – he cited the lack of railway books at the Prisoner of War Camp.

8f Membership Secretarys Report (Frank Holmes)

Frank reported that we may need to find more volunteers for the magazine mail shots. He had received 4 emails about non-delivery of magazines (2 were sent without stamps). Frank asked if there were any news updates which were suitable for the website.

8g Volunteer Training

Training certificate had been received for chain saw use (Mike Wood?) had been received.
PTS training at Wensleydale has been stopped due to illness of the trainer. The Directors agreed that Dave Butler would undertake PTS training for members. Estimates of the cost of training materials are to be sent to the Treasurer.

9 Reopening the railway by supporting Weardale Railway Ltd

Removed from the agenda

10 Restoration Activities

10a Locomotives

It was reported that the Trust are in negotiations for a steam locomotive – details will be advised shortly.

10b Carriage and Wagon restoration activities

It was reported that 30572 is now in blood and custard livery.

10c Infrastructure

Track – Total of 510 sleepers have been obtained from BOC Birtley. Directors expressed their thanks to Sherburn Stone, BOC and the volunteers.

Canopy – No report was presented.

11 Any other business

11a John Askwiths List

John reported that he had no letters to the magazine editor (or any criticism of the magazine at the AGM)

He suggested that reports from Directors be circulated before the meeting.

Trust Council Director duties – Secretary to write a paper on this subject.

Stock control of books/magazines – it was reported by Norma Richardson that she had returned these items to the shop after the AGM meeting.

11b Cycleway

Mike Wood asked about the implications of the cycleway. It was reported that a grant of £60,000 would be available. Steve Raine commented that this project cannot be completed by the end of March 2006 but could be a future project if the funding was still available.

11c Scrap

Trevor Horner asked for clarification about the lineside scrap. After discussions the Directors decided to leave the decision on scrap disposal until the railway company administration had been resolved.

11d Keylist

The Chairman reported that he had still to get (station/depot) keys cut (as per last minutes). John Askwith will complete key list after disposition of additional keys has been decided.

The meeting closed at 22:15 PM

12 Date/time of the next meeting is 10th January 2006 7:30PM at the RAFA Club Crook.