

The Second Section

Minutes of the December 4, 2008 meeting

President Dennis Mead called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., in the conference room of the U.S. Bronze Foundry & Machine, Inc., located at 18649 Brake Shoe Road, Meadville, PA.

The meeting was rescheduled from November 20, 2008 due to weather conditions. Attending the meeting were Dennis Mead, Ed Cronin, Carl Timko, Jack Sheets, Nate Clark, Ed Ferguson, Tom Barratt, Gene Vilkie, Bob Bingham, and John Snyder.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ed Cronin reported the current balance. Revenues included are from t-shirt sales and a donation from Tom Collard for the construction of a viewing stand for the layout.

Old Business - Property & Equipment

Permission was received from the ELHS to paint the interior of the caboose.

Preparations are underway on the track extension project at the

display site. The site was graded by Brett Devore. Old dirt and gravel previously stored near the site was removed recently. Materials gathered so far include four 39-foot lengths of rail. Ties, which were hauled courtesy of Susi Building Supply are onsite, as are fishplates. Ballast has been hauled to the site and deposited. It will need to be backdragged later. Spikes are still needed.

The Lake Shore Railway Historical Society of North East, PA has a signal mast available at their location, for mounting the previously acquired three-light signal target. A concrete base needs to be poured and the mast needs to be bolted down to secure the assembly. A suggestion of referencing George Elwood's website for plans to build the base was made. Currently, the signalhead is stored off-site.

No progress is reported on the preparation of the ALCO S2 #518. Members of the board plan to visit the AC&J Railroad after

the beginning of 2009, to discuss with Mr. Callahan the possibility of getting a crane in to start prepping the locomotive to remove the prime mover, generator and switch the trucks. Also to be discussed concerned sending the hood and cab out to be sandblasted.

Old Business - Special Events & Programs

Santa Claus rode the WNYP special train to Mead Aveune, Meadville, then detrained and took a ride on a Meadville Fire Department fire engine to the Downtown Mall. The Erie Times-News was commended for their coverage. Thanks are extended to the Downtown Mall management, Meadville Fire Department, the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad, and Santa Claus himself.

Old Business - Museum

The engineering study was completed with the licensing and preliminary drawings of the layout of the museum. Half of the grant money is in the bank.

The grant has a two-year window in which it is to be used.

Recently, 84 Lumber has closed and the property is now up for sale. The contract for the museum is to be put on hold until it is determined that the 84 Lumber property is or is not a better site for the museum, before spending any money on the current museum site. If the 84 Lumber property is purchased, payment in lieu of taxes may be made to the city for annual property taxes. The main building has 60,000 square feet, while the smaller building has 6,000 square feet of space. There is also a covered storage area. The smaller building could be used for the tooling museum. It was discussed that it would be possible to bring the trackage from north of MEAD (also known as MD) from the WNYP Railroad.

Old Business - Membership

It was reported that two new members have joined the organization. Signing on were Elmore "Cootie" Harris and John Snyder.

Welcome aboard Cootie and John !

Old Business - Public Relations/Education

The sales from the Rainbow Gardens show in November netted the organization \$8.25. A decision will be made as to whether to participate in the March train show.

Old Business - Model Railroad

The layout was moved November 19, and opened November 22 at the Downtown Mall. It may be opened through December and into January.

Ed Cronin was commended by Nate Clark on his work on the layout. The attending member concurred.

A permit for a raffle of a train set was received. The drawing will be Saturday, December 13.

New Business - Public Relations/Education

A need to order new t-shirts was discussed. More discussions will be made at the next meeting of whether to continue with the caboose design or

order t-shirts with the artwork of #518. Tom Barratt agreed to contact Mr. Gene Rumsey and Mr. Frank Smith to inquire if they are still in the business of producing t-shirts.

It was proposed to have a profile of one of the junior members, Sam Livingston in an upcoming "Valley Express" newsletter.

The Erie Railroad "Matt Shay" prints are now selling for \$20.00. If the purchaser wishes to have the print mounted on a foamboard, an additional \$5.00 fee is required. Prints are currently on sale at the layout in the Downtown Mall.

A letter was received from Diane Turner, widow of the late Harry Turner, regarding the sale of his once renowned mobile layout. The layout, equipment, truck and trailer are for sale. The price is negotiable.

New Business - Special Events/Programs

A motion was made to supplement the proceeds from the train set raffle, if the goal of \$200 is not reached. The proceeds are

to go to Toys for Tots after the drawing on December 13, 2008. The motion was seconded and carried.

It was noted that planning for the next Railroad Roundhouse should be started. Suggestions of activities included an excursion train, affordable speakers of various railroad related subjects, a model railroad layout tour, a flea market, how-to clinics. Bringing in Crawford County Historical Society members to the event should be considered. A tour of the Meadville Yard or of a locomotive was proposed. An open format discussion by retired railroaders reminiscing about their experiences on the railroads was proposed.

Another suggestion was to start a "Railroad Day", in place of the Railroad Roundhouse. This would involve the Meadville Chamber of Commerce and area merchants in promoting this event. Other activities proposed are railroad shows and movies, welcoming area museums to display and promote their organizations. Also , to

help bring in the non-railroad visitors, motorcycle and car shows.

Locations would be at area hotels, with one possible date being the same as the Thurston Classic balloon race. It was decided that if food vendors are needed, a one year advanced notice would be required.

It was agreed by the attending board and membership that it would be best to plan for 2010, and not have the event in 2009.

Next year's Santa Claus arrival will need to be planned, with booking Santa in advance a necessary task. The arrival of the jolly old elf should coincide with Meadville's "Light Up the Trees" event, was discussed.

New Business – Membership

A review of current committees status is underway. The Historical /Archives committee chairman position is considered open. The last chairman was Pete Gifford. The Public Relations/ Education committee is chaired by Dennis Mead. The

publication of the newsletter, "*The Valley Express*" is considered part of this committee. The Property / Equipment committee is currently chaired by Al Reibel. Jack Sheets is considered for replacing Al , if needed.

The Special Events/Program chairman is Dan Higham. It is not known if Dan will retain his seat.

The Model Railroad committee chairman is Tom Collard. It also is not known if Tom will retain his position.

Ed Cronin is the current chairman of the Budget/Finance committee.

Carl Timko was named as the new chairman of the Membership committee.

The Museum committee was or is chaired by Larry Smith, with Larry and Ed Cronin as trustees and Dennis Mead and Pete Gifford as alternates.

Message from the President

I would like to send out special thanks to all those that worked on the layout to prepare it for the display at the Downtown Mall in Meadville. These

people took time out from their busy days to put this fabulous looking layout in a minimal amount of time. My thanks go to Ed Cronin, Ed Ferguson, Jack Sheets, Bill McComas, and Joe and Gene Vilkie.

Also, thank you to all who have come down to help show the layout to the public. Without the help, the layout could not be displayed, and we would not receive the publicity, donations, and funds from merchandise sales. Our organization is growing due to events like this that put us into the public's eye. We hope to have your help when we start laying the track for the #518.

Also, I would like to thank Dan Higham for his work on the layout, for letting us store the layout at the U.S. Bronze, and for letting us use the conference room there. - Dennis Mead.

Next Meeting

The next board and general membership meeting of the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society will be Thursday January 15, 2009, at 6 p.m., in the conference room of the

U.S. Bronze Foundry & Machine, Inc., located at 18649 Brake Shoe Rd., Meadville, PA.

