



## *Havin' Fun Runnin' Trains*

### **Big Train Operator Club, Inc. 2017 First Quarter Board of Directors Meeting**

**Date: March 6, 2017 @ 8:00 PM EST**

#### **Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Harryman at 8: pm EST.

Roll Call indicated the following were present: Bill Harryman (President), Jon Molesworth (Vice-President), Rich Dulski (Vice-President), Scott Fowler (Vice-President), John Groot (Treasurer), Dave Snow (Membership Chair), Bob Somogyi (BTO Editor), Ralph E. Wilcox (Director-Emeritus), Dave Wierowski (Director), Marshall Adams (Convention Chairman), and Charles Bartel, Secretary.

#### **Secretary Report**

Minutes from the fourth quarter, December 13 board meeting, were presented as approved and posted on the Club website. Approval done via email following the December meeting.

#### **Treasurer Report**

1. 2016 yearend report was given by John Groot.

Two major events at the close of 2016. One, we have filed our income tax forms for 2016 and two we found a lower insurance program that will save us about a \$ 1000 over three years. Our year end is showing the result of our cash flow with the sales of the Buffalo hoppers and the 40th anniversary engine. Have about 30 registrations for the Buffalo convention with about 40 people. Have some LaPorte expenses to be finished off in 2017.

Motion to accept made by Rich Dulski, seconded by Dave Wierowski, approved.

2. 2017 Budget presentation by Jon Molesworth for Board approval

That assumption was that a certain number of members with dues @ \$ 35 would renew and or join. The anniversary engine is sold out as are the dual hoppers for Buffalo. It is assumed that the third Buffalo car would also sell out at the convention. The Convention is about half of the income. Other than the expenses associated with the convention activity, the expenses are the cost of running the BTO. It was increased slightly from 2016 reflecting the general cost increases we are seeing. The expenses included the calendar publication. An estimate was made on the 2017 club and convention cars. Convention expenses are for the Buffalo convention and initial expenses for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. This budget showed a slight loss for the year. A question was asked on the advertising line. General consensus was to lower the advertising line item. However, before lowering this, it was asked if there any relating to the York show in March? Would there be additional copies of the BTO to hand out? Would there be a cost associated with these copies. We will have some copies that are in Bob's possession that we can give out without any cost (except for shipping).

Jon Molesworth will rework the budget and resubmit to the Board via email. The board will then vote on its acceptance by email.

Dues increase was addressed by Bill Harryman. This lead to a lively and spirited discussion that centered on the additional money a des increase would bring to the budget and the worry that an increase in dues would hurt renewables. The Board is concerned about our older members living on a fixed income may not be able to meet an increase. However, Dave Snow commented that with the renewable dues that he receives, he also gets notes about the BTO publication that people enjoy. For some, they are no longer able to participate in running trains and have sold off, or are displaying their collections. When comparing our dues to other clubs that also offer magazines to their members, they are almost three times our dues. Dave Snow was going to review the records to determine when the dues were raised the last time. The older members on the board thought that it was 12 or more years ago. If we raise the dues, we don't want to be back in the position of having to raise the dues in a couple of years. We would like to be in the same position as now where most of the board does not remember when we made the increase.

After discussion, Charles Bartel made motion to raise the dues to \$ 50, second by John Groot. The majority of the board voted to approve this raise in the dues, but it was not unanimous. There were two who voted no. The raise in dues will be effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. Overseas membership will be \$ 60. A letter will be placed on the web site, Facebook and in the next addition of the BTO. It will be presented at the General meeting in Buffalo.

Action item – Bill and Charles to draft a letter for publication.

#### **Membership Report**

Membership Status was provided by Dave Snow. At the end of December, we had 377 members, added 7 new members and 3 reinstated members for a total of 387. In October, November and December, we deleted 9 members who had failed to renew. We ended the year with a net gain of one. Of the 378 total membership, 9 are honorary members. We had 368 paying members in 2016. We do get checks for donations above the standard dues. In our members, we have 9 foreign members, 1 in Australia and 8 in Germany. Notes received with the dues indicate that they enjoy the magazine, etc. Notes submitted would indicated we have



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a lot of older members who have had to reduce their active molding, but look for the magazine. We have 10 new members from the 2015 York show with dues due in June, 6 new members from LaPorte, dues due in August /September.

Membership Drive has produced 11 new members to day with one new one as recent as the day of the board meeting.

Members are using the website for renewal and for new member sign up.

Motion to accept made by John Groot, seconded by Ralph E Wilcox, motion approved.

### **BTO Editor Report**

Spring issue is running a bite late. Will go into the mail tomorrow. Will have the convention form. Early bird is still available. Also order form for the anniversary engine. Summer issues needs help. Pictures, stories, etc. That was one of the reasons the Spring issue was a bit late, as it was hard to get articles. Will look into the cost of mailing, envelopes, etc. to lower cost. Digital cost is pretty steady. Editor's fee proposed to the board to be eliminated. York show material is about done and will be shipped shortly. Discussion on his proposal to eliminate the editor's fee. After discussion on the work that our editor does above and beyond just publishing the BTO, the Board dropped Bob's proposal to eliminate the editor's fee with appreciation for the offer to so do.

Motion to accept made by Jon Molesworth and seconded by John Groot, motion approved.

### **Convention Report**

2017 Buffalo Update: Mixed bag. 30 registration, ok, not bad, not good. 16 regulars not yet registered. Hope for some additional locals, as well as some other non-regulars. Participation in events is very low. This is not good as we had planned on higher numbers and have signed up for two coaches. Currently we have 27 for the Botanical Gardens and A&A train ride, 31 for the Finger Lakes Live Steamers, 32 for layout tours, and 33 for Median. Even the welcome event has only 39 and only a few more for the banquet. Hotel has book 28 rooms. Pre-convention cars completely sold out. All have been shipped with no problems reported. Please review the event activity and if you have any questions on the schedule contact Marshall. Still have \$ 15,000 expenses to come in. With the lower numbers, some of the expenses may come down. However, the hotel and coaches are fixed fees, others are still open. It is mixed bag on attendance at events, as both local and out of town members are not attending events. It looks like in some cases that spouses are opting not to attend some events and in other cases, neither are attending.

2018 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Status Bird-in-Hand update: Working on this event, to set up events to publish, etc. Our volunteer that was to be our boots on the ground for this event has had some health issues and is currently laid up. Marshall may have to make a trip into the area to work on events. There are three railroads that the club has not looked at before as well as potentially a Harley Davison factory tour. Christmas Store would welcome us back. Given the history of the area, a Battlefield tour would be a unique event. Steam into History is another event to be looked into. Question was asked if a trip to Steam Town would be an option. Marshall considers it to be too far (three hours each way.) If there are any thoughts, shoot them to Marshall. Need a four page handout for Buffalo.

Cape Code, Plymouth, MA, was presented as a potential 2019 location. Have to start work on a hotel. Several railroads in the area including a Narrow gauge railroad that is new. USA would welcome us back with an outside lunch. Replica of the Mayflower in the harbor is another tour as well as a Potato Chip factory tour.

One of the board questions was "Are we thinking about an open day for these two conventions?" For the 40<sup>th</sup> (2018), we would need to extend it a day, for the 2019, it would work fairly well. There was an interest to reduce convention cost and this is a way to do it.

For the 2019 location, Motion to accept made by Marshall Adams, seconded by Ralph E. Wilcox. It was approved with two no votes to not approve.

Under conversation regarding why the two no votes were cast, the comment was we seem to concentrate on the East Coast. Several spouses have made the comment that they will not attend these venues a second and in some cases a third time. Discussion of moving future conventions to central area of the country or out to the West Coast. Our membership is primarily located in the East and Central states. Having a convention in a location where the majority of our members can drive rather than fly seems to be an advantage to convention attendance.

The 2017 and 2018 report accepted as submitted by Marshall.

### **Old Business**



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Facebook is seeing posting activity by our members. Bill will post a letter there for our dues increase as a way to reach our members in advance of the dues increase in July.

Dave Wierowski is heading up the York Spring Show activity. Dave has sent a personal check for \$ 225 to get table. A motion was made by Charles Bartel to have this cost covered and a check sent to Dave for the \$ 225. Motion seconded by Rick Dulski and passed. John asked that Dave submit a paper receipt for his records. We have multiple people coming to man the booth over the two days of the show. With the table, we only get two passes. The rest who are coming will be paying their own way. Because of the O gauge people coming, the question was asked if it will be participating in this show in the future. The new show sponsors claim that the show is filling up. Both vendors and layouts rooms are full. For this show, we will use it as a filler to see where it goes to. Past copies of the BTO will be shipped to Dave to take to the show to hand out to potential members. Possibility of taking a club engine and run it off batteries (we are not paying the electric utility fee for the table). Have a new table skirt coming to be added to the banner that we put together last year. (Dave did a nice job of making a knock down frame for the banner which is seeing multiple usage by taking it to the conventions.)

### Club Cars

- a. The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary Club Car Set (two cars) artwork is done. They will be available in September. The artwork tells the club history and its sponsors well.
- b. The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Engine order has been delivered to Piko in San Diego. They will install the factory sound before shipping any. The majority of these engines were order with sound. Should be shipped next Friday. Currently, all have been sold with the exception of two being held back until all others have been shipped and received with no reports of damage. Same sales cost of \$180 or \$ 280 with sound.

We are going to jump of the Red book committee tonight due to the length of the meeting. We need to get the red book up to date as it is our support for any legal activity requiring historical support.

### **New Business**

Marshall had a preliminary list 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Merchandise that we could potentially offer to club members. Following this discussion, the topic was tabled until the next board meeting. The anniversary car set discussed above will be available for \$ 175 per set. It was agreed to order 60 of these car sets.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 pm EST.

Minutes prepared by Charles Bartel, Secretary

Minutes approved by William R. Harryman Date:  
Bill Harryman, President

### Addendum to March 6 Meeting notes

On March 7, a revised proposed budget was prepared and submitted to the board by Jon Molesworth. Board members were asked to review and vote via email. AS of March 8, 10 board members had submitted emails to Bill Harryman that they approved the revised budget. The budget is therefore approved for 2017.