



## *Havin' Fun Runnin' Trains*

### **Big Train Operator Club, Inc. 2017 General Membership Meeting**

**Date: June 22, 2017**

**Location: Buffalo, New York**

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

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Harryman at 7:30 AM EST.

Roll Call indicated present: Jon Molesworth (Vice-President), Rich Dulski (Vice-President), Scott Fowler (Vice-President), John Groot (Treasurer), Bob Somogyi (BTO Editor), Ralph E. Wilcox (Director-Emeritus), Ralph S. Wilcox (Director), Ulrich Fassbender (Director), Dave Wierowski (Director), Marshall Adams (Convention Chairman) Charles Bartel (Secretary)

There were a total of 28 people in attendance at the start of the general meeting.

#### **Secretary Report**

Minutes from the June, 2016 general meeting were approved as posted on the Club's website.

Motion to accept made by Skip (Neil MacEwen) and seconded by Teya Caple-Woods, motion approved.

#### **Treasurer Report**

We are incorporated in state of Georgia where we file our tax papers as required. We have filed a 501C7 listing with the US Government. We can sell merchandise, but we are not to make a long term profit. Our income is derived from our membership fees and a from the club merchandise. We do use a PayPal account for payment of dues and purchasing of club merchandise. Funds from the PayPal account are transferred once a month to reduce the handling fees charged by PayPal. Our total income for the past year was \$ 53,000. We have approximately \$ 9,000 earnings. Convention expenses are estimated to be \$ 44,000.

One of our expenses is the liability insurance that we carry to cover our convention activities. This insurance only covers members, which is why a person must be a member to sign up for our conventions.

Neil MacEwen made a motion to accept, John Philips seconded, motion approved.

#### **Membership Report**

BTO has gone from 377 to 387 over the last year. Membership is stable with new members exceeding the loss of members for various reasons. We feel that this increase is due to our use of the internet with our web site, a Facebook page, our participation at the York show in the Spring and the Recruit-a-Buddy program. We have 9 foreign members. A chart will be in the next BTO showing our membership distribution.

Motion to accept made by Skip (Neil MacEwen) and seconded by Teya Caple-Woods, motion approved.

#### **BTO Editor Report** (Bob Somogyi)

Next issue will be convention plus election with ballots. Need input from members who have taken pictures at the various events during the convention as well as any articles that anyone might want to right about the convention, your layout(s) or train trips you have taken. Photos are a great assets to any article. Helps to fill the magazine with member related interest that can only come from the members contributing to the magazine. We have two columns in the magazine, How you got started and Questions to Ralph (a founding member) on the history of the club. We need your story and your questions to make these successful columns.

Report accepted by general consensus of the members.

#### **Convention Report** (Marshall Adams)

"Having fun in Buffalo." It's been a great week with 65 members registered for 110 attendees. For the various events, we have had a high of 95 participating, with a low of 61. The discrete selection of various events versus signing up for all of the events is a change in convention attendance. We could use feedback from members as to why. Are we not setting up events of general interest? Are there to many events? Our biggest expense is transportation which continues to grow each year. This is why preplanning is important and getting as many people as possible to spread transport expenses over many people to lower the total cost per person.

Next year (2018) we are going back to the birth place of the club. We have prepared a brochure for June 18-23 at Bird-in-Hand Family Inn in the Strasburg PA area for our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There would be one free day and one day at the hotel for events such as build your own layout. We are trying to put a train to go around the lake. Our track master, Ulrich Fassbender, has calculated that we need



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1600 feet of track. There is an Amish tour provided by the hotel. Lots of activity in the hopper. Look for final details in the BTO and register early.

Plymouth, Ma will be the site for 2019. The first hotel selected was sold to a developer. Working with a second hotel that is across from the ocean. Cost will be similar to North Conway. 10 or more restaurants within a 5 minute walk. Mayflower is currently out, but should be back by our convention. The facility is Hotel 1620. Should be able to park your car in the hotel lot and walk the rest of the week. Potential party at Charles Ro's USA trains.

Inside your program is a thank you to our vendors and individual sponsors... Please thanks these dealers, individuals for their support for the BTOC. They provide either donations or at minimum cost the prizes and goody bag materials that are used for the raffles and the banquet gifts.

Skip made motion to approve, John Philips seconded. Motion was approved.

### Old Business

1. York was a great event. A couple of articles in the BTO on the activity. We will be doing it again. It is Easter weekend just as it was two years ago. Members urged to attend and share in the fun.
2. Facebook use is growing. BTO page is having multiple people being approved each week. We also have a web page. Lou and Bob have been maintaining it very well.
3. Club rolling stock - Last two offerings were very successful. Pre-Buffalo car was sold out. We have two convention red cars left and expect that these will be gone by the end of the convention. The PIKO engine was also sold out very quickly. We were very concerned that they would not sell. The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary car is currently half sold out. There will not be a second run.

### New Business

1. Election submittals. If interested in running for an office, please submitted your application consisting of a biography and picture to Larry Cromwell by the 20<sup>th</sup> of July.
1. Shanty - this is the first building that we have offered in several years. To do a gauge of acceptance, we are doing a show special price during the convention. It is a great model. Lots of detail. Anniversary car sets to ship end of September. Being printed now (picture of first printing on display at general meeting.) Shanty will be later in the fall but well before Christmas.
2. Investigate attending with the BTO booth the National Garden Railway Conventions based on the success of the York show.
3. Looking at many future items, including additional items from Hartland for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

By laws are posted on the web (in response to a question by Skip).

Due to term limitations, Bill will not be running for president for the next term. Thanks to Bill for his work as president, to Marshall his coordination and implementation of the convention activities.

### Adjournment

Skip made a motion to adjourn. Was accepted and approved without a second.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 am EST

Minutes prepared by Charles Bartel, Secretary

Minute's submittal for approval by William R. Harryman Date: July 19, 2017  
Bill Harryman, President