



Havin' Fun Runnin' Trains

Big Train Operator Club, 2016 membership Meeting

Date: June 25, 2016

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by President Bill Harryman at 8:30m EST.

Roll call of Board members and Convention Chair 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), Ralph S. Wilcox (Director), Ulrich Fassbender (Director), Dave Wierowski (Director), Marshall Adams (Convention Chairman), Charles Bartel (Secretary)

A clip board was passed around at the meeting to collect signatures of members present. Members who signed this list are found at the end of this report.

Secretary Report

Minutes from the March 21, 2016 board meeting were posted on the Club's website and published in the BTO. Motion made and seconded to accept last year's meetings notes as published in the BTO. Passed unanimously.

Treasurer Report made by John Groot

Not all convention cost are accounted as of this meeting, as late registrations are still coming in, as well as raffle ticket income and there are still events to be paid for.

A profit and loss balance sheet was available at the meeting that showed total Liabilities and Equity of \$ 32,991.80 as of the meeting. We are about \$ 5,000 ahead of last year at the same time. We had a loss last year for the convention. We have additional funds currently in PayPal that will be transferred at the end of the month. Also available to those in attendance was a copy of the IRS filing. Motion made to accept report. Seconded and passed.

Please note that in the treasury report are also cost associated with prizes for next year's convention.

Membership Report made by Dave Snow

Positive membership report. New memberships have come in through on line applications and through our attendance at the East Coast Large Scale Train Show in York, PA this past March. There were 7 new members from the show with two more that came in on membership application forms that indicated they were picked up at the York show. We had 362 members and we now have 377. PayPal is working out very well. Dave Snow and John Groot are coordinating both renewals and new members very well. Renewal notices can be paid via web site or through PayPal. Recruit a buddy program also seems to be working well. For the year there were 13 members recruited through this program since January, 2015. Our member gets a certificate when the new members' dues for next are paid. There have been 5 members this year from this program. A summary report with various graphs showing location by region, table of members per state, and a growth graph that showed the large decline from the membership numbers in 2006 to a low in 2015 and the uptick that we are currently seeing.

Question from the floor – 1) Why do we pay use PayPal? John Groot indicate that our fee is about 3%. There were discussion of other web sites for paying, such as Square.com. John indicated he would look into these but is very comfortable with PayPal for now. Their record keeping has proven very good over the years. It is easy to check back on prior payments if and when there is a question from a member about what he paid or did not pay. 2) Would it be better to pay by check? Could we put a note in BTO requesting dues payment through a check? A reminder that it would be better for the club. Board comment was that many people see events/activities on the web and sign up right then, thus completing the transaction in one step. The check would make it a two-step process which could delay the activity, or possibly even lose the activity/event.

Motion made to accept the report, seconded and approved.

BTO Editor Report made by Bob Somogyi

Fall issue will be in the mail by September 1st. If you took pictures and would like to share, please send them to the BTO editor address as listed in the BTO. Also calendar entries for the 2017 calendar are being accepted. Always looking for holiday pictures. Need articles of interest also for insertion. The BTO reflects our member interest, so articles on train trips, show visits, etc. with pictures are always a



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welcome contribution to the BTO. Bob enjoys doing the BTO. (Bill Harryman inserted the following comments into the BTO report—Bob was recognized for his work with HLW in art work for cars, etc. At Board meeting, looking for new articles or columns were explored. One is a page discussing “How I got started in G Scale trains.” Bill has listened to stories all week. They were all fascinating. Bill’s own experience was that he got fed up with his job, retired, and 30 days later was into trains. Need input from other membership. Second issue discussed was putting together club history through a column titled ask Ralph. As an original member, Ralph has a treasure trove of memories to answer questions on the early years of the club. We will be relying on our membership to flesh out these two topics.) (Secretary’s comment - Bob was presented with a special car at the Saturday night banquet by HLW for his work with them on the artwork for our cars.)

Motion made to accept the report, seconded and passed.

From the floor, a Good Newsletter was discussed. The club tried this a few years ago and seemed to have died. This discussion lead to the question of a membership list available to club members to locate club members in their area? The membership list is on a member’s only web page gotten to through the BTO home page. The BTO mailing label has your membership number and right after that a password to get into the closed web site and see a list of our membership. Following question was “Could it be dispensed with the renewal notice?” Maybe put the password on the membership card? Dave Snow will put the password number on our membership card but not identify it as a password. We will try to make it more user friendly.

Convention Report made by Marshall Adams

La Porte Update – Prior to the convention, we had 59 registrations but it has continue to grow throughout the convention. We had a high event participation of 102 and a low of 59. We need to understand this wide swing where we had more people picking a choosing rather than just sign up for all events. If this swing continues, the club may not be able to do charter events which require fixed payments. The Hartland Locomotive Works (HLW) visit was great. Becky Coates, general manager of HLW did a wonderful job in setting this up. (Secretary note: HLW’s contribution to a great show continue through to the very end with the presentation to every member present with a very special car lettered for her family’s railroad name, Paradise Railroad)

Buffalo 2017 – working to get it together for next year. Tentatively, on Monday afternoon there will be general registration, followed by a tour to Hamburg Brewery that has a brewery tour and train layout of the Hamburg – Colorado Railroad, a G scale layout that sprawls over roughly 2500 Square feet. Tuesday to the Erie County Botanical Gardens. This is unique in its construction of which we are one of only three in the country. The Western New York Garden Railway Society (WNYGRS) will have a 57 foot by 6 foot railroad display running in one of the houses. A buffet lunch will be served at the Gardens and then on to the Medina train museum. It is in an old Erie freight ware house that is still located next to active tracks. On Wednesday, we will be going out to Fingers Lake life steam. Have 1 and 1.5 inch scale layouts with both diesel and live steam, plus a G scale. Bring favorite engine (battery powered) to run. Thursday will be open day. On Friday, there will be a tour of WNYGRS member layouts (currently 12 are asking to be part of that tour. We are looking to do 6 to 8. For those not on the final tour list (limited by bus travel and associated time) arrangements may be made to view these layouts before or after the convention. Going to East Aurora, Riley station for lunch. A possible side trip here would be a walk to Vidlers 5 & 10 store down the street from Riley’s. On Saturday, bus trip to Arcade & Attica is planned, with some free time in Arcade to roam this small WNY town and then back to the hotel for the closing banquet. We will have a special guest, William Fargo, speak to us. He was among other things, mayor of Buffalo a couple of hundred years ago. Piko is going to do a two car convention set with a third car available only at the convention. Order form will be in the next BTO. Please order early. They will ship early. The club last visited Buffalo 25 years ago.

Convention 2018 - is a very important convention for us as it is the club’s 40th anniversary. Going back to a “home” venue. It will be the 10th time we have been in this area. We are making arrangements for the Bird in Hand family resort. One of the largest in the area for outdoor layout. The club tried to circle the pond in 2009 and fell a bit short. Want to achieve that this year.

Comment made from membership on the recognized amount of work that is put into the convention. No matter what happens, we overcome and keep it going. Marsh has a great committee that puts this all together made up both Board members general members.

Motion made and seconded to approve the membership report.

From the floor: Would it would be possible to drop our convention down to two days and combine it with the National garden railway? This would give our members access to a larger vendor hall, cut down on overall expenses if a member were to attend both conventions. Consider this after 2018. Board will take it under consideration.



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Old Business

Facebook is out there and is being used. One of us has been posting a lot of pictures. Check it out from time to time, and post it if you can.

York spring show – We had Diane and Dave Wierowski, Ulrich and others manning the BTO booth. See membership report for new members from the show. Changing the location within the show floor to be better position to attract visitors. We were given one table by show management with Dave an Ulrich purchasing a second table to provide more room. We will have a couple of prizes. Dave made the frame that the banner was mounted to in such a way that it can be broken down and packed for moving in a car. Banner is outside the meeting room for the convention. Goes together without tools!

Rolling Stock Status - The derrick car is completely sold out. The convention loco from Hartland did well. We have 5 convention 2015 (woody and single car) sets left. We would like to clear these out by end of convention if we could. The work train has been brought to its end. It was a six year run. We sold the last work train diesel on Tuesday night in the vendor hall.

40th anniversary car set - There will be two sets of two cars, all USA reefers. Each car will depict 10 years of the club. Some commonality on each car, but conventions for each 10 year period will be listed on each car. Will research the club history. There will be different car numbers.

From the floor: Additional discussion on work the train. If membership people paid in advance, would board consider asking membership if they would support a limited run engine? In response, we don't know what it would cost and even if USA would do that. The engine itself was not a custom engine, it was a stock USA engine painted for with our logo, etc. If there was enough interest, it might be possible for the club to get decals and you paint your own engine.

New Business

The name tags that the BOD wears are magnetic that do not require putting a pin through your shirt. We have been asked by members if they could get name tags like this for themselves. Can these be made available to members? For these name tags, we can refer members to Scott Fowler or to his supplier depending on how Scott wants to handle these inquiries. Currently, the club does not want to get into the supplying of name tags.

Marshall asked if members could take pen and pencil to paper and drop a note to Becky Coates thanking her for a ***great convention***.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 am EST

Members who sang in: Marge Groot, William White, Skip MacEwen, Diane Wierowski, Margaret Cruise, Rick Cruise, Bruce Watkins, William Lewis, Teya Caple-Woods, Dave Graff, Allan Sagert, Bill Schwartz, Wayne Zoeteman, Edward Peters, Laird Holliday, Bernie Brownstein,

Respectively submitted: Charles Bartel, Secretary, June 29th.

Approved by Bill Harryman, President, June 29th.