

Membership Convention Meeting

Tuesday July 15, 2025

Helen, Georgia

Roll Call of Board Members in attendance: Tim, Stump, President, Jon Molesworth, Interim Treasure, Director, Teya Caple-Woods, Vice President, Bill Harryman, Vice President, Scott Fowler, Director, Ralph S. Wilcox, Director, Charles Bartel, Secretary

Members in attendance at the start of the meeting: 38

Meeting called to order by Tim Stump at 9:01 AM.

President's comments: Convention activity is going well with great support from hotel staff. The club is moving forward with several new members. John Groot, Treasurer, became ill and was in the hospital for 4 months earlier this year. Based on prior activity, Jon Molesworth had access to our bank accounts prior to John's illness and has been acting Treasurer while John recovers.

Steve Linn moved to accept, second by Larry Cromewell, motion passed.

Minutes of last year's membership meeting were published in last falls BTO after review and approval by the BOD. No further action was taken regarding these minutes.

Treasurer report by Jon Molesworth: We have \$40,000 in the bank. The club operates on a cash basis. June 30 had about \$ 48,000. Today and after convention cost paid for, we have about \$32,000 which is about where it has been historically during the convention activity. We are doing about \$700 a night in raffles. We sold about \$400 donated club inventory with no cost to us.

Mary Wilcox made a motion to accept, seconded by Larry Cromwell. Motion passed.

Inventory report by Teya Caple-Woods: Main inventory has been set aside for the monthly drawings. We have 12 items ready for the next year. Winner each month is picked by dice roll to get a membership number which is then sent to Dave Snow who identifies the member. Teya has no idea who the member is when she is rolling the dice. After the convention we will review what is left, moving into preparations for next years convention.

Membership report submitted by Dave Snow: From 272 members on March 1, we added 8 members, deleted 4 members for various reasons, leaving a net total of 276 members. Gave 4 away at shows.

Steve Linn motion to accept, Bonny Bartel seconded. Larry Cromwell asked about club costs. About 80% of the dues goes to publishing the BTO. Motion passed.

PayPal, one issue that was impacted by John's illness, is not yet up and working, Tim Stump is working on it.

Steve Linn commented that it would be good to put some BTOC literature in our glove boxes and have it available to pass out when the opportunity arises to advertise the club.

Editor's report: A note from Bob Somogyi was read to the members. Request for photos from the convention. Also asking for any resumes for anyone interested in being on the Board of Directors. Please submit resumes by the end of month. Photos for 2026 calendar are now being accepted. Articles and photos of items, activities, events, that interest you would probably be of interest to other members. Of interest would be new layouts in process of being built or modifications to your current layout are always of interest to our members. Fall issue may be a little later than usual due to the date of the convention. There was applause in appreciation for effort that Bob invests in each BTO issue. There are two board openings due to retirements. Bill Harryman has 20 years of service to the club as a board member. The membership thanked Bill for his support.

David Peters made motion to accept, Steve Daum seconded. Motion passed.

Convention status: Tim Stump noted that the raffle and club item sales are doing well. Remember that this income is the seed money needed for funding the start of next year's convention. There are no issues related to the convention at this time. Mary Wilcox comment that Tim Stump in his capacity as President and Convention Chairman has done a great job.

Tim asked that members make sure to fill out a convention survey. Put in what you would like to see. What do you think we can/could do to bring in the young folks as they are the future of our club.

Question was asked about someone from the public visiting our train layouts during the convention as we had several hotel visitors going by our room who were interested in coming into the vendor room. It is a liability issue for the club and would affect our insurance rates. Comment was made if we could have visitors sign a form where they take on full responsibility for any issues during their visit. The comment was made that if a child is involved, you can't sign away a minor's rights.

An addition to the convention schedule for Mike Setzer, who brought several unique LGB cars that he has collected, to make a presentation on the history of these cars after the wine and cheese party.

2026 convention. In Scranton Pa. Approved by Board. Would again be in July. About \$ 190 per night with parking and breakfast.

Old Business

Facebook report by Jon Molesworth: This page is active with 3,800 members. There have been four new posts as of today. Please continue to share activity at the convention on Facebook. If you share on Facebook, please also share with Bob Somogyi. Remember that not all members have access to the internet. Today, cell phone cameras quality is good enough for Bob to publish in the BTO.

Club cars report by Scott Fowler: Scott made the comment that a delay in getting club cars prior to the convention has happened before. Currently, the cars are on a "slow boat" from China. We were to get

them in January, then in March and now they are somewhere between China and Vietnam. Scott will keep members informed on status. We are working through RLD Hobbies as our middleman with AML. AML has some new offers coming up, but we cannot work with these volatile schedules. For those that prepaid the cost for the current cars they will not go up due to the delay. We have 10 of the 60 that we ordered not yet sold.

Scott Fowler has done the shirts since 1999. We thank Scott for this service to the club.

Board presentations were completed, and the meeting was opened to membership.

From members:

Steve Linn commented about more items from the club such as permanent name tags such as the Board members have with member names and where they are from. We are working on shirts, polo shirts, etc., and will put any information on this subject on the web page. Discussion from Bill Derville on Garden Railroad News. (GRNews.com is the website.) He was part of a group that wanted to put something together to get the news out about our hobby when the paper magazine, Garden Railways, stopped publication. They wanted to support vendors in our hobby as well as about local clubs. They have about 6000 people who open the magazine when posted. The BTO is one of the clubs that have supported this program. Asking local clubs to send out an email advertising this site. If you want a paper copy, that can be arranged but there is a cost for that service. This is a great way to advertise BTO activity. Contents in the publication have about 50 % original, with the rest coming from other club newsletters.

Tim Stump thanked his employer for their support allowing him to do club work during normal business hours by allowing him a flexible workday.

Thanks to Scott for getting the shirts again this year.

Bill Harryman made his final motion as a board member at a membership meeting to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:24 AM/

Respectively submitted,
Charles Bartel, Secretary

Note: After meeting discussion concerning the Train Collectors of America (TCA). The TCA Pittsburgh Garden Railroad Society, Fort Pitt division, meets three times a year. They go in and set up a 12' x16' layout at the entrance to their meeting to get people interested in G scale. They have had some success with this approach to increase their membership.

Minutes approved by email October 28th.