

Mid-Continent Railway Historical Society, Inc.
MINUTES of Annual Members Meeting, November 13, 2004
[approved, April 9, 2005]

Meeting was called to order at the North Freedom village hall by president Bloohm at 2:05pm. Roll call was taken. 24 voting members were present. 5 non-voting members and 2 visitors were also present. It was determined that there was a quorum in accordance with the By-Laws.

Secretary Swanson read the minutes from the April 3, 2004 annual members meeting. The minutes were accepted as read with no changes.

Doug Crary on behalf of the Election Committee presented election results. 117 ballots were received. 16 were disqualified (11 because of no return address, 4 members not in good standing, 1 with no ballot in envelope). 96 votes for Mike Smul, 5 votes write. Roger Hugg, Byron Schumacher second to accept the report of the Election Committee and destroy the ballots. Passed unanimously.

Treasurer Steve Brist gave a report on financial condition. Fiscal year was just recently completed. Steve stated that these numbers were not finalized and would yet be subject to audit. Net ordinary income was \$35,667. \$12,965 was the budgeted income, so we were well over our budget on income. \$67,400 was received as restricted contributions (i.e. Copper Range, steam fund). \$123,000 was spent on capital expenditures. Train fares brought in \$275,000 gross revenue (improved by \$26,000 compared to last year). Gift shop revenue was \$100,000. Insurance costs went up 11% compared to last year. Advertising expenditures increased by 6%. Labor costs decreased by 9%. Steve felt that the museum did a good job keeping costs down and complimented the office staff for providing detailed financial reports to better analyze and keep track of financial condition. Judy Gasser moves, Roger Hugg seconds to accept the report given by the treasurer. Passed unanimously.

Sharon Crary asked that volunteers keep turning in their volunteer hours. Annual Banquet is ready for tonight.

Dave Schumacher, Supt. Buildings and Grounds, reports that the LaRue depot roof was replaced. He thanks Larry Tourdot for all his efforts to maintain the grounds.

Bloohm reported that he, Meyer, and Doug Crary have been covering the Operating Dept. Kelly Bauman is keeping the FRA records up to date. Bloohm reported that a rules class will be held in spring 2005. Additional training for locomotive engineers for switching may be offered.

Pete Deets gave an update on the Mechanical Dept. WC&C #1's second course patch has been worked on this weekend with much progress made. A few more days and it should be completed and ready for welding. A contract has been entered into with a firm in Twin Cities to engineer construction of an all-new complete boiler for #1385. This will improve reliability and safety factor. The new boiler will receive an S stamp. Skip Lichter continues work on Polson Timber #2. Rick Peters stated that more machinists are needed to help on the work on the running gear. #988's governor is being rebuilt; electrical diagrams are being developed to re-wire the engine to its Milwaukee Road configuration. Bloohm reports that the #7 and GE diesels are being maintained on a continual basis. The GE's engine room was fully cleaned. Absorbent pads are now used in the engine rooms of both locomotives. Cutting shoes will be used on #7 next spring. #7 has been using 28 gallons of fuel per day.

Car Dept. is working on steam heat car to ready for the winter season.

Dave Bierman reported on Engineering Dept. work. Eight pile caps, 4 pile posts, and 30 deck ties were replaced on the Seeley Creek bridge this spring. The job would have cost \$120,000 if done by a contractor. 425 track ties were replaced this year. Two switches had ties replaced. Dave estimates one or two switches will need to be renewed each year. 700 track feet of surfacing was completed. Employee Dave Lee tightened all joint bolts on the mainline. Vegetation was cut and sprayed. Drain tile was installed

around the extension of Track 3 at the north end of the Coach Shed where Copper Range #29 was unloaded. Jim Busse has hauled one hundred truckloads of rock from the quarry at Rock Springs this year. Erosion control has been performed and grading and drainage installed for a new second camp car track. Materials are being brought in. When completed, there will be an additional four cars of storage space. Dave reported on some sizeable donations of relay rail this year. A 10,000 lb capacity Lull forklift was purchased this year from government surplus. More help is needed to remove rail at Madison.

Roger Hugg Supt. of Dining Car Services thanks all who helped with First Class and Dining service. A new caterer has been hired from Baraboo. Customers feel that the quality of the food has improved. Wollersheim Winery is now supplying bottled wine instead of from boxes. Evaluations are now being filled out by customers to provide input on the level of service. For the future, would like to add more events. Bloohm reported that the office has received several letters complimenting the improvement in service.

Don Meyer emphasized the importance of volunteers to the success of Mid-Continent. The number one financial goal was to pay off the line of credit. This was accomplished this year 2-1/2 months in advance. Line of credit carried over from last year was \$30,000. It peaked at \$75,800 during the season, and was paid off in full by end of August. A lot of people deserve credit for achieving this. In the coming year not much will change. This summer Leah Rosenow was hired as a researcher for the A-22 project. This is a step toward having a paid staff in the Curator Dept. Leah will work part-time as an archivist this winter. A lot of work was accomplished on cosmetic work on static display equipment this year. This was a big morale booster. Track storage space at Badger Ordnance is being negotiated for in exchange for advice and help with track maintenance at the plant. Indoor storage for artifacts is also being sought. The steam program continues to be the number one fund raising project. Next in priority is development of the SW Quadrant expansion. The A-22 has a donor who is paying for research and developing a restoration plan for the car. "TEA21" grant for #1385 was denied.

Judy and Daryl Gasser have been representing Mid-Continent at numerous conventions: NRHS annual meet in Twin Cities, WEAC in Madison, and Trainfest in Milwaukee. Two winning names were drawn for winners for First Class tickets at Snow Train (contestants were from WEAC convention).

Steve Brist thanked Pat Weeden and Paul Swanson for all their work on the website. He also thanked Paul Swanson for the work on the Gazette.

Santa Express for 2004 FY was 1,124. Snow Train: 1,490. Coming into May, we were down 163 from last year at that date. Month of June we were up over 700 people. July was up 325 people from the previous year. August was up 752 from previous year. September was up by 11 people. In October, ridership was down 2,074 from the previous year. Bloohm does not know why ridership was so much lower in October. He and general manager Don Meyer are studying the situation. Total ridership was up 466 from last year, at 30,688 riders. Ridership in years past averaged about 45,000 so we are still down considerably from normal. Good levels of donations are keeping our financial condition in better shape. We have also been spending savings money for specific projects.

Jeff Bloohm personally thanks all volunteers and donors for their generous support over the past year. He also thanks the paid employees who have gone over and above what is expected of them.

Bloohm then offered open floor for discussion of any topics to be brought up by the members. Al Joyce suggested that two train operations be brought back for special events. He also suggested offering a second train ride for an additional \$1 fare. Another member suggested that the Plymouth would make an interesting operation for visitors to watch during a special event. Another member talked about operating a hand pump car for special events. This has been done in the past. Mike Smul would like to see something done with the Milwaukee Road Dodge inspection car.

Next meeting will be in April, time, location to be determined.

Swanson moved, Brist second to adjourn. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:01pm.

Submitted by Paul Swanson, Treasurer