

Railway Preservation Society of Ireland

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

North Star Hotel, Dublin, Saturday 11th March 2000

Norman Foster opened the meeting and Dr. Garret FitzGerald presided. 81 members were present.

Apologies

Lord O'Neill, H.Beaumont, E.Booth, W.Brazier, D.Carse, T.Casterton, B.Garrioch, E.Gilmore, I.Gilmore, J.Harcourt, C.Holliday, P.Lockett, D.McNamara, T.Mounstephen, P.Newell, M.O'Bolgéir, E.Pamely, B.Rozand, B.Spurle, S.Spurle, A.Thompson, P.Tyler-Sugden, A.Wickham.

Minutes of the 1999 AGM

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of J.McKeown, seconded by P.Booth.

Chairman's Report

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of C.McDonnell, seconded by D.Houston.

Secretary's Report

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of P.Bowen-Walsh, seconded by B.Mullally.

Treasurer's Report

B.Gillen said he believed that the surplus reported for the Dublin buffet car was lower than in previous years due to income from the annual railtour and Christmas operations being wrongly credited to Operations rather than Catering. The Treasurer replied that no anomaly had been found and further investigation would be needed. J.Richardson recommended apportioning the NIO compensation money to various departments and/or projects but placing it in long term investment. Careful stewarding of the funds was required before bringing the matter to the members for a final decision. The Treasurer said that had been his own advice to Council. D.Henderson said that available funds should be concentrated on locomotives. P.Bowen-Walsh noted that an annual loss would have been reported had the NIO money not been received. The Treasurer told I.Pryce that the £39,500 for the Downpatrick locomotive contract had been received in full. D.Dillon said that the contract had been a tremendous advert for

the Society and we should be proud of the excellent job carried out. J.McBride noted that the contract had allowed the engineering sub-contractors to be paid thus retaining their expertise for Society locomotives. P.Rigney stated that fewer passengers had travelled over the past year but he hoped the new internet site would help to remedy the situation.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of B.Hill, seconded by D.Dillon.

Appointment Of Auditors

J.Beaumont reported that the costs had risen due to increased regulations to be met. However, he recommended retention of the present auditors, Dunne & Associates, as they remained very competitive. D.Humphries proposed re-appointment, seconded by E.Lewis. The proposal was agreed by those present.

Reports Of Operations Officers

The report of the Belfast Area Operations Officer, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of S.Glass, seconded by J.Fitzpatrick.

J.McKeown thanked P.Booth for raising over £1,500 from sales on Dublin trips. He also thanked J.Fitzpatrick for his work in organising the Dundalk 150 operation. S.Boomer noted that the Dublin report had been written by a member other than the Dublin Area Operations Officer and asked was this acceptable given that the report was to the AGM, and following criticism about the substance of Operations reports to the previous meeting. B.Gillen pointed out that any criticism had been from one member only. C.McDonnell stated that he was entirely happy to endorse the report written on his behalf by P.Rigney.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of L.Gillen, seconded by B.Mullally.

Reports Of Locomotive And Carriage Officers

P.Scott reported that work on sub-contracts was necessary because of lack of full funding for locomotives. He worked with £1,600 per month whereas sub-contract labour cost £600 per week. Volunteer labour was now unable to respond to urgent requirements, e.g. the re-tubing of No.85 for the Cork 150 operation. While the Downpatrick contract may not have made a lot of money it was wonderful for honing skills. The foundry, which had taken some funds to set up, was now meeting the cast iron requirements for locomotives and carriages for half of the previous costs, plus gaining income from small outside contracts. Work on No.4 was slow, and would take at least another year, because each item removed revealed another underneath in need of attention. Fund-raising needs attention from Council as our main activity, running trains, was insufficient to fund their upkeep. R.Rigney asked if running 300 light

engine miles on the forthcoming railtour was a good idea. P.Scott said it was for the Operations Officer concerned to answer. J.McBride asked the Business Development Officer what he was doing to fund locomotive restoration as he had not submitted a report. D.Humphries replied that raising money was difficult. He had been heavily involved in ensuring the State Coach was fully funded, and was spending time with IÉ and FAS to put in place an endless resource to secure the future of carriages. Any lack of progress in certain areas was largely due to the absence of volunteer help. J.Lockett said fund-raising was too big a job for one officer and should be split, north and south. He further stated that every member who worked for the Society was owed a debt of thanks.

The Locomotive report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of J.McKeown, seconded by D.Mackie.

M.Kennedy told H.Mills that his reference to museum status was to open up an avenue for grants, but there was no progress to report.

The Northern Carriage & Wagon report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of S.Boomer, seconded by J.McBride.

B.Gillen read his report - to be circulated in the next mailing to members. P.Rigney suggested that complaints to the membership regarding lack of volunteers should cease.

The report was adopted on the proposal of C.Boomer, seconded by D.Humphries.

Election Of Council and Office Bearers For 2000

The Secretary, on being questioned by D.Humphries and B.Gillen as to why N.Foster's nomination, and not also B.Gillen's, had been included on the circulated notice to members given that both nominations were submitted on the same form, replied that the form was received after the notice had been printed, and he had prior knowledge of N.Foster's intention to stand for the post of Chairman, and it was not, as was being suggested, due to any attempts on his part to influence the vote. Furthermore, he apologised for his premature notice of N.Foster's intended nomination. B.Gillen questioned the eligibility of a nomination from N.Poots, in opposition to his own, for the post of Treasurer. D.Mackie, when asked, apologised for describing the discussion on the validity of nominations for the post of Treasurer as irrelevant. Following several calls from the Chair for the acceptance of both nominations, unanimity from those present was gained. A nomination for J.Fitzpatrick for the Dublin Operations post failed to gain unanimous approval and was thus rejected. P.Emmett was proposed for Southern Carriage & Wagon by D.McCabe, seconded by P.Cox. No nominations were received for Belfast Operations or Northern Carriage & Wagon.

A secret ballot was held for the post of Treasurer. The result was 46 votes for N.Poots and 31 votes for B.Gillen, with one abstention. All other nominations were accepted and deemed to be elected.

The list of those members elected to serve on Council:-

<i>Chairman:</i>	Norman Foster
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	David Dillon
<i>Secretary:</i>	Paul McCann
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Nelson Poots
<i>Locomotive Officer:</i>	Peter Scott
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Southern):</i>	Peter Emmett
<i>Carriage & Wagon Officer (Whitehead):</i>	
<i>Belfast Area Operations Officer:</i>	
<i>Dublin Area Operations Officer:</i>	Charles McDonnell
<i>Business Development Officer:</i>	David Humphries
<i>General Officer:</i>	David Houston
<i>General Officer:</i>	Bill King-Wood

Any Other Business

Following a recommendation by B.Gillen, it was agreed that railtour participants not paying a fare should be asked to settle their hotel bills separately.

L.Gillen asked what the policy was on the payment of volunteers because as a volunteer she was unhappy at seeing others being paid. P.McCann said there was no official policy and any instances of members being paid were dealt with as the situation arose. Where it had happened, those paid were sub-contractors to the Society and were not simply being paid for work they would otherwise have done voluntarily, and it was always a last resort when volunteer labour was not forthcoming. On the matter of Council members being employed J.Beaumont said that a legal opinion had been sought but no report had as yet been received. D.Humphries said that E.Pamely had resigned as he was unclear as to whether his position as a Carriage & Wagon sub-contractor was compatible with being on Council. Those present endorsed a call from D.Dillon for an early return to Whitehead for E.Pamely. I.Pryce said that Council should have been more pro-active in producing an employment policy.

H.Ritchie proposed a vote of congratulation to D.Dillon for his "Keeping Up Steam" television programme. I.Pryce and P.Bowen-Walsh proposed votes of thanks to the outgoing Chairman, Treasurer, and other Council members.

Dr Fitzgerald closed the meeting with a plea for members not to be discouraged by the proceedings of the meeting and he hoped their enthusiasm for volunteering would not be diminished.

Signed: _____ *Chairman* *Date:* _____