

The Minnesota Streetcar Museum

MINUTES

**Board of Directors meeting and
Winter Planning Retreat
9:00 a.m., Saturday, February 24, 2007**

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Attendance:

Present:

Keith Anderson, Chief Engineering Officer
Bill Arends, Director
John DeWitt
John Diers
Rod Eaton, General Superintendent
Bill Graham
Scott Heiderich, Director and Treasurer
Chris Heck
Louis Hoffman, Director and Secretary
Neil Howes
Aaron Isaacs
Bob Johnson, Director
Bruce Kobs
Jim Vaitkunas, Director, Chair, and Superintendent of Transportation

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Jim Vaitkunas at 9:00 a.m.

Approval of Agenda. The agenda was discussed.

Approval of minutes. Approval of the minutes of the December 9, 2006 Board of Directors meeting was not discussed.

Winter Planning Retreat:

Membership.

Mike Helde and Kathy Kullberg volunteered to act as membership coordinators to develop and implement a system to better welcome and incorporate new members that would include recognition. This could include mentoring and training of new volunteers and training should be flexible to incorporate this concept. All non-volunteer membership should be called and encouraged to volunteer and surveyed on their interests and skills in lieu of the printed survey. Aaron Isaacs will coordinate this effort.

New member recruitment.

Members should be recruited through other rail-related organizations on a reciprocal basis. Streetcar history and operations community education programs should be offered. John Diers and Rod Eaton have volunteered to work on this. Book signings and other events for the new book should be used to promote the Museum, including placing MSM brochures in the new books. Find ways to promote membership to women and to interest women in membership and volunteerism. Create PowerPoint presentations on various aspects of the Museum for promotional purposes. Don't focus recruitment solely on operators.

Ridership.

Reinstitute the Holly Trolley with more buy-in and a better plan starting with a less ambitious schedule. Rod Eaton and Louis Hoffman volunteered to work on this. Actively market charters to appropriate target groups, including middle schools reading "Until They Bring The Streetcars Back." Permit charters during regular operations. Sell tokens to Linden Hills merchants to use as giveaways. Send coupons to performers at the Bandshell. Have themed days with costumed actors, night rides with sparkling cider, and a midsummer event. Set a goal to increase ridership by 2,000 per year.

Merchandise.

Find someone to head up an effort to sell surplus artifacts and photographs on e-Bay and sell these items at our on-line store.

Statistics. Neil Howes presented an overview of revenue and ridership statistics over most of the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line's history that indicated that ridership is lower than it once was but that revenue remains strong.

Other business. The Board discussed the status of the joint publication of the *Minnegazette* with the Minnesota Transportation Museum. Shortly after the separation of MSM from MTM, MSM proposed a memorandum of understanding to govern the relationship between the two museums relative to the continued publication of the *Minnegazette*. MTM failed to respond. After Nick Modders replaced Scott Reid as MTM Chair, the issue arose in the form of discussions between Aaron Isaacs on behalf of MSM and as *Minnegazette* editor and Larry Schrenk on behalf of MTM. This resulted in a ten-page proposed contract. Ultimately, MTM agreed to return to the shorter memorandum of understanding but inserted several provisions that were unacceptable to the editor and to MSM. In addition, the editor expressed concern about maintaining an appropriate balance between railroad and streetcar coverage and a desire to publish more in depth coverage of streetcar topics. Finally, the MSM share of the cost has increased as MTM membership has declined.

The Board approved a motion that MSM will publish a streetcar-oriented publication edited by Aaron Isaacs that would include some boat, bus, and railroad content as well as a summary of important museum news four times per year, that costs above budget would be covered by profits from the sale of the Diers-Isaacs book *Twin Cities by Trolley*, and that the Museum would endeavor to increase membership income to cover the cost of four issues (in response to the suggestion that the new magazine be published three times per year to reduce the cost).

Chair Vaitkunas will respond to Nick Modders and Aaron Isaacs will resign as *Minnegazette* editor.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Next meeting:

9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 12, 2007
Location to be announced.