



Fraser Valley Heritage Railway Society 1045 165 St, Surrey, B.C., Canada, V4A 9A2

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Minutes of Annual General Meeting held April 24th, 2010
1.00pm. to 3.00pm.

Location: Hampton Inn, 19500 Langley By-Pass. Surrey, B.C.

Present:

Executive

John Sprung, Chair
Bob Ashton, Vice Chair
Allen Aubert, Secretary
Stephen Plant, Treasurer

Board members

Roy Mufford
Jerry Gosling
Peter Holt
Rene Doyharcabal.

Keynote speakers:

Councillor Marvin Hunt
Dr. Doug Parker, Edmonton Radial Railway Society
Robert Ashton 1225 rehabilitation presentation update

Regrets: Councillor Barbara Steele, Surrey City Council Liaison

Society Members

Liz Aubert
Tom Allam
Wayne Abbot
Doreen Anderson
Thomas and Francina Carr
Sten Christiansen
Henry Ewert
James Foulkes
Roy Griffith
Gordon Hall
Frank Horne
Doug Hunt
Vincent Holmes
Ron Jones
Bruce & Phyllis Kerfoot
Barrie Lloyd
William Marr
Pio Mason
Neil McLeod
Bill Meeks

Brendan Read
Stan Rutter
Vic Sharman
Ken Silen
Richard Sutcliffe
Stewart Walker
Bill Watson
Doug Watkins
Total attendance 38

Call to order by John Sprung, Chair @ 1.00pm

1 Approval of Agenda

Moved by Doug Watkins, 2nd by Peter Holt. Carried

2. Approval of minutes of 2008 AGM

Moved by Bob Ashton, 2nd by Henery Ewert. Carried

2.1 Address by Councillor Marvin Hunt

Councillor Hunt brought greetings from Mayor Watts and Surrey Council and sated how pleased he was with the progress that the volunteers of the FVHRS have made to rehabilitate BCER 1225 to the stage where that car is almost operational. Councillor Hunt commented that he was grateful to everyone involved and assured the meeting that he and Council think about the FVHRS and its work frequently.

2.2 Letter from Life member Judy Higginbotham

The Chair read a letter received yesterday from Judy Higginbotham who for many years was a Surrey Councillor and the FVHRS Council Liaison. Judy wrote that she had every intention to attend the AGM but family duty called and she had to be away with her new grandchild on Vancouver Island. Judy sent her very best wishes for a successful AGM and offered to help in anyway possible to make the 100th anniversary celebrations a success.

3. Annual and Committee Reports

3.1 Chair's report

John Sprung reported on the past year. A complete report follows:

Chair's report

AGM 2010

From static to operation

Last year we met here to look at impending change. During this past year we have experienced more change.

One of the most dramatic changes was filling the car barn! The arrival of 1304 included media coverage and 'flying an Interurban' by crane into the Sullivan compound as we welcomed BCER 1304 back to Canada. While most of the work in the past year has been on BCER 1225, there have been some cleaning and cosmetic touches made to 1304. The sight of 1304 outside at the Sullivan Station platform is now a local landmark to say we are open to visit.

Change is most obvious with 1225. A new roof covering, the coat of red paint, glowing brass & varnished woodwork and doors show the efforts of many, many hours spent on the car in fact approaching 15,000 hours at last count.

A major milestone of ‘turning on the lights’, or re-awaking ‘the old girl’, occurred a few weeks ago. Now the new seats upholstered with new rattan are being placed back on the refurbished bases. I understand lots of passengers can walk on the floor before it needs a new coat of paint.

In the barn, 1225 remains ‘up in the air’ on supports, while the trucks are still out for refurbishment work. Just this week the rewind motors were being inspected and new (to us) wheels arrived from Squamish delivered by a corporate donor. The trucks will be refurbished soon and then returned to be reconnected with the rest of the car when the testing will commence on electrical systems.

In anticipation of the completed car being ready to move soon and become operational, Superintendent Ron Powers has started classes for those who want to work on, and operate, 1225 on the rails. There will be more classes this year with future advanced courses being prepared. If you are interested in knowing more, or wish to sign up for the next class, please see Ron.

The startup of these classes is part of the change from rehabilitation to operation. Soon, car 1225 will be ready to roll again. We are starting to get the crew ready and we need to turn towards how we will operate.

Our plans are to conduct a one-year demonstration project of regular operation on summer weekends between Sullivan Station and Cloverdale. This demonstration has been called the Heritage Rail Demonstration Project, or HRDP, with major cooperation from the City of Surrey and SRY Raillink – the new name for Southern Rail of BC. This HRDP will probably commence in 2012.

To operate we still need two things: a power source and a connection from the car barn to the main line. We are working towards a source for our power – a trailer with a generator, called a “donkey” is our interim solution until we can build, order, or create a replica baggage car with a generator. Our options for the donkey are varied. One option is a heritage diesel engine and generator – which would most likely not be considered a real “green” solution. Another option is a new “clean” diesel, which is somewhat “greener” solution. There are also options that include hybrid choices: Natural Gas, natural gas mixed with hydrogen or even gas hydrogen only engines. A final choice could include hydrogen fuel cell generation – especially as the City of Surrey is now working with BC Hydro’s Powertech for an energy-hub in Surrey. We will continue to explore these options to provide power for BCER 1225. The original line was considered, by today’s standards, a very green system being electrically powered. As we cannot put back the overhead wire, we should ensure we find a suitable solution that complements the City of Surrey’s Sustainable charter.

The other missing piece is a connection to the line. We did take action last summer and fall to start the connection investigations to the main line at Sullivan. In the process we discovered that the ground just across from the front of the barn is in good shape to support a rail bed. We also discovered however that farther east, next to the Sullivan Park’s ball diamonds, there is a peat bog. The method of this discovery was by almost losing a backhoe that was attempting soils tests as it sank into the bog. The quick action of the operator stopped the machine from being sucked completely into the mire, but did require a tracked vehicle to retrieve the machine the next day.

This discovery has set back our construction plans of a spur line from the barn. While meeting with Mayor Watts about this setback she requested we address just where we need to place our centre of operations. There may be an option to return the city land we are leasing back to the City and move to Cloverdale where there is an existing spur and property, being part of the old interurban route through Cloverdale. We have spent some time looking at the right of way near the original Cloverdale station location behind the Clydesdale Inn as a location for a new car barn, workshop and lunchroom as well as a station and platform. The City has a portion of a road right of way south of the old rail bed that is now land-locked with no connection to any road that could be incorporated with the existing rail spur lands.

We have now arrived at a point where we need to make a decision, in consultation with the City, on where we should have our car-barn for the long term: Sullivan or Cloverdale. Both sites have advantages, and each also has some downsides. We had hoped to bring a decision to this meeting in the way of an announcement on direction; however the decision process is still underway. Meetings are planned next week and into May to make a choice and move forward with the rail connection and HRDP. A decision should be made by the end of June.

There are many things we do know: We will have another year of Open House events, the first on Sunday May 16th to start the visitor season at Sullivan Station. We are running the speeder for another year – with many requests for rides already received this will be welcome news to many of our future members, those whose birthday ages can be counted on one hand. We will again be present in the Cloverdale Rodeo Parade and maybe again receive an award like last year's top ribbon.

A highlight last year was hosting a trip of the American Railway Museums (ARM) convention, complete with antique car road trip prizes, we renewed contacts with many other electric interurban and streetcar museums and operators.

We entertained our volunteers here again last Fall with a most enjoyable 4th annual volunteers recognition dinner and excellent presentation by Brian Croft. Brian brought us Christmas cards that fit the occasion, and has generously donated a print of the Christmas reunion for our meeting today.

This year we have already made some new friends and gained members with visits to the Marpole Museum and a most pleasant time spent at the Bradner Flower show our third attendance at this annual event. We need to get them on our planning committee as they always have great weather for their show.

This year marks a special time for the BCER. One hundred years ago, at this time the final ties and rail were being placed to complete the Fraser Valley line from New Westminster to Chilliwack. Freight service had already arrived to places like Kennedy, Sullivan, Cloverdale and Milner. In just 10 days, on May 4th the milk train would start between New Westminster out to Cloverdale and Langley. The official opening of the Fraser Valley line was planned for Monday, October 3rd 1910. The last spike was driven by Premier Richard McBride at Chilliwack, the end – or start depending on your point of view – of the 63.8 mile “Chilliwack” line, the longest interurban electric railway to be built in Canada.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Fraser Valley line, we are working with our partner SRY Raillink to have a special heritage run from New Westminster to Chilliwack that will include a bright SRY locomotive, heritage cars from the West Coast Railway in Squamish – the cars that arrived with the Royal Hudson last year – and as an historic “caboose” our own BCER 1225. Some details are yet to be worked out, but this major fundraiser will take place this October. We plan on one run up the valley with stops at a few locations on a Saturday, with bus trip back to New Westminster. On Sunday, the train will run down the valley ending at New Westminster after a few stops to show the heritage cars and the return of BCER 1225 to the rails. Exact dates and tickets will be available soon. Many thanks to both SRY Raillink and West Coast Rail Association for their help in getting this on track. Our appreciation also to Bill Watson who is heading the planning of this trip. For those who want to order tickets, please see Bill or any of the Board of Directors to get on the notification list.

This will be another great summer of activity at Sullivan Station and around the valley. I especially look forward to capping the season with this special trip and at least two chances to say those eagerly awaited words,

“All Aboard!”

Thank You.

3.2 Treasurer's Report:

Stephen Plant, treasurer, distributed copies of the financial position as of February 28 2010, the FVHRS year-end.

- Total assets are \$823,585 as compared with \$820,701 in the previous year
- Total liabilities are nil.

- Held in trust for the Cloverdale Street Car 30 Society (yet to be formed) \$13,847 as compared with \$13,560 (the increase due to interest on the GIC) from the previous year.
 - Revenue of \$42,098 compared with \$103,849 from the previous year
 - Expenses of \$39,501 compared with \$37,502 the previous year
 - Fund balance end of year \$823,585 compared with \$820,710 for the previous year
- Insurance and Community Outreach are the largest expenses.

3.3 Fundraising Chair's Report:

Fundraising takes the form of cash...nice to have...gifts in kind, such as paint, window glass, brass parts, nuts and bolts, wire and many other parts whose name I don't know...the biggest 'part' though is the value of volunteer labour...we have passed the 15,000 hour mile stone on 1225's rehabilitation and that = \$450,000 based on \$30/hour...the value of labour and gifts in kind don't show up on our financial statements...accounting practice seems to deal with cold hard cash.

The city of Surrey our largest single cash sponsor with \$550,000 so far, likes to see matching value of one sort or another when looking at new grants...which we will be needing very soon as we become operational.

By the time the dust settles on the work to rehabilitate 1225 to operating condition about \$800,000 will have been donated one way or another.

Thanks to the city of Surrey we have adequate funds to complete the trucks and motor refurbishment and we are told by August we will have those components returned in as new condition. When we pay those invoices the financial cupboard will look quite empty...and then the 'fun stuff' begins.... fund raising for connecting the barn to the main line and acquiring an electric generator both will require a new infusion of cash. I have noticed recently that when I approach certain people about our cash needs they seem quite excited that we are about to become operational. I should also report that the one passenger at a time campaign is still alive and well with donation arriving by mail and on line...we have reached the 153 mark....over 29,000 more to go!

2009 was a challenging year for obtaining grants... the global recession impacted us all. BC Gaming, as most know stopped making grants last year and this year is not much improved. For several years BC Gaming were very helpful and provided the money we required to build the workshop and to make our community outreach and public education programme a success. In fact last year we received only one grant of \$10,000 from the provincial tourism programme to assist with arrival of BCER 1304 .

Thanks to you, our faithful and supportive members and your generosity you provided \$2,000/month in membership renewals and donations...this is roughly what we need to operate the FVHRS. We have no paid staff...we do have high insurance costs, security alarm monitoring for the barn and station, hydro for light and heat, and of course printing costs for newsletters, postage and the like. Thank you all.

We have several donors that 'keep giving' ...three I will mentionUnited Protection Services who patrol the site 3 time each night checking for potential intruders, their gift is \$1,000/month and over the 5 years we have been on site their gift is now \$60,000. Cloverdale Paint who have provided everything we have needed to a value of at least \$10,000 and that gift is available to us any time...finally Supersave who do the 'dirty work' for us...removing our waste container and keeping the port a potty in pristine condition.... And fully operational....why do these companies do this? They share our dream.

3.4 Membership Chair's Report:

How did we do in 2009?

We set a goal at last year's AGM to reach 300 by to day....we needed 50 new members...we have reached 297...3 short of our target..

Membership retention is running at 98% which by any measure is excellent and demonstrates a commitment by our members to see the heritage rail project become operational.

Do we need more members...Yes. We need a new target by the next AGM of 350.
Last year was financially challenging for us all...yet not only did our members renew and new members join but most provided a donation too....I was kept busy writing tax receipts.

4. Receipt of Reports

Moved Rene Doyharcabal 2nd by Doug Hunt. Carried

5 Election of 2008 Board of Directors

The board of directors was elected by acclamation. (Executive positions for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be decided by the Board at the May board meeting)

The board for 2010 will be.

Robert Ashton,

Allen Aubert

Stephen Plant

John Sprung

Roy Mufford

Peter Holt

Jerry Gosling

Ray Hudson

Ron Powers

Rene Doyharcabal

Councillor Barbara Steele-council liaison

6 Other Business

100th anniversary of Fraser Valley line

John Sprung reported that plans are underway to celebrate the 2010 100th anniversary of the Fraser Valley line. Plans are being created to have a 'run up the valley' from New West to Chilliwack that would include 4 passenger coaches leased from West Coast Railway Association to be pulled by a SRY locomotive with BCER 1225 to be added as an end car.

The plan is to have a two-day event with passengers leaving New West day one and arriving in Chilliwack late in the afternoon having made stops along the route. Passengers would have the option of returning that day to New West by bus or staying over in Chilliwack and returning the next day. The event is a major fundraiser for the FVHRS and tickets will be limited to about 400 with FVHRS members having the first opportunity to reserve a seat. The cost for each day is \$200. So a round trip up by train and back by bus day one is \$200. The trip back from Chilliwack to New West with coach back to Chilliwack is \$200. Those who choose to stay overnight in Chilliwack and return by train the two day event is \$400 plus the cost of overnight accommodation.

7. Adjournment of Business

Moved by Doug Watkins 2nd by Bill Watson that the 2010 AGM be adjourned.

Carried

8. Keynote speaker:

Dr.Doug Parker, Edmonton Radial Railway Society

Doug's address was on the topic of becoming operational, a timely subject as the FVHRS works towards becoming operational over the next 18 months.

Doug shared many tips and provided several stories from events that he had experienced at the Edmonton operation. One key theme emerged. Becoming an operational railway that carries passengers is a very serious matter. The Society has to realize it is responsible for the safety for every one on board every time rides are offered. One accident could end the heritage rail operations, as liability insurance thereafter would be too expensive to afford. Another gem of advice was that most derailments seem to take place in the Society's compound. The advice is to check the rail and switch conditions very carefully every time.

Another piece of excellent advice was to check the track route every time as the track conditions that are suitable for the freight operator who own the track may be different than that for the interurban. Do not

assume anything ever, and always be very careful...the public has a bad habit of wandering on to rail tracks and frequently ignore road crossings. Defensive driving of the interurban is another critical point and the need for the Society to have an inspector responsible for ongoing review of the operators is most important. Human nature being what it is operators can slide into bad habits that if left unchecked can lead to accidents.

Doug complimented the FVHRS on the progress it has made and offered to help where possible.

Guest speaker

FVHRS Vice Chair presented a power point slide presentation update with a music background showing the BCER 1225 rehabilitation process to date. The presentation carried on from where it left off last year. The presentation then took the viewer through past year of rehabilitation activity to date. The presentation was well received and everyone was looking forward to completion of the rehabilitation of BCER 1225 by the end of 2010 and back on the track in 2012, to operate as a demonstration project between Sullivan and Cloverdale on summer weekends.

END.