

**BRITAIN’S GREAT LITTLE RAILWAYS**

**Minutes of 2023 Annual General Meeting held at the Thompson Park Railway, Thompson Park, Burnley, BB11 2AA on Wednesday 22nd March 2023**

**Railways represented**

East Herts Miniature Railway, Eastleigh Lakeside Miniature Railway, Evesham Vale Light Railway, Hambleton Valley Miniature Railway, Miniature Railway Workshop, Moors Valley Railway, Riverside Miniature Railway, Thompson Park Railway and the Whitfield Light Railway.

**Apologies**

Brickworks Miniature Railway (David Hubbard), Cleethorpes Coast light Railway (John Kerr), Exbury Gardens Steam Railway (Tony Davies), Hastings Miniature Railway (Dan Ratcliffe), NBR Engineering (David Humphreys), Rileys Miniature Railway (Graham Lelliott), Scarborough North Bay Railway (John Kerr), South Devon Miniature Railway (Kelvin Stapleton), South Downs Light Railway (Julian Chivers), Swanley New Barn Railway (Peter Jackson), The Lizard Light Railway & Tramway (Gloria Aldridge) and Watford Miniature Railway (Charles O’Mahoney)

**Welcome by the Chairman, Iain Dinnes**

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Mike Bailey and his team for hosting the meeting and welcomed all those railways that were able to attend.

**Leavers**

**Great Cockcrow Railway - Resigned**

**Mortocombe Railway Society - Resigned**

**Strawberry Line Miniature Railway – Never paid so presume they resigned**

**There & Back Railway – Never paid so presume they resigned**

**Weston Park Railway - Resigned**

**Joiners**

The Lizard Light Railway & Tramway – Portable Track based in the Helston area of Cornwall

Museum of Power – Based at Langford, Near Maldon Essex

Echills Wood Railway – Based in Kingsbury Water Park

Membership is now 53 with 45 railways on the brochure.

**Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting**

The acceptance of minutes of the last AGM was proposed by Jim Haylock and seconded by Rob Hart and the resolution was carried unanimously

**Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**Director’s Report and Accounts for year ended 31st January 2023**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  **Year 2022/23** | **Year 2021/22** |
| **INCOME** |  |  |
| Subscriptions | £2,425.00 | £2,815.00 |
| HRA Passes | £4,450.00 | £2,205.00 |
| Interest on Deposit Account | £5.19 | £0.48 |
| **Total Income** | **£6,880.19** | **£5,020.48** |
|  |  |  |
| **EXPENDITURE** |  |  |
| HRA Subscription | £0.00 | £1,020.00 |
| HRA Passes | £4,450.00 | £2,205.00 |
| Production and distribution of Leaflets | £2,681.00 | £0.00 |
| Administration | £111.53 | £65.23 |
| Web site costs | £0.00 | £301.00 |
| Companies House Fee | £13.00 | £26.00 |
| **Total Expenditure** | **£7,255.53** | **£3,617.23** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR** | **-£440.34** | **£1,403.25** |

The meeting was asked to approve the Financial Report, proposed by Jim Haylock and seconded by Mike Bailey and the meeting voted unanimously for its approval.

Roger informed the meeting that we had made a small loss for the year ended 31st December 2023 and this had been partially caused by an increase in the printing costs of the brochures and a slight reduction in the number of members who were on the leaflet. Roger explained that in view of the loss we would need to consider increasing the cost for members who were on the leaflet, but it was down to the members to decide how much that should be. There was a general discussion and Rob Hart proposed that we should put the cost of a brochure member up to £70 for the 2024/2025 year with a proviso that we review the 2025/2026 subscriptions to see if we needed to increase it to £75. This was seconded by Richard Walker and the proposal was agreed by all those present.

Roger asked if members thought it would be a good idea if we sent out the membership renewals with the Autumn General meeting notification with a note that all subscriptions should be paid by 31st December. The reason for this was that it might assist with financial planning for each of the railways especially those that did not all year round and also in the production of the leaflets as we hopefully know a lot sooner who needed to be included on the brochure. This was thought to be a good idea and agreed by all present.

**BGLR not re-applying for HRA membership 2023/2024**

Iain gave a brief summary of the discussions that the Directors had with Stephen Oates who is the CEO of HRA and who had suggested that BGLR was not paying anywhere enough money to be a member of the HRA considering the number of members we had and the joint turnover and income that we received and that basically it was not fair on all of the railways who were members in their own rights.

When we joined the HRA we had been put into category 3 which cost around £560 per annum to join, however Stephen’s reasoning was that actually we should be in the top classification which would put us on par with the likes of the Seven Valley Railway, Great Central Railway or North York Moors Railway and a potential place on the board of the HRA. However this would have meant a huge increase in all of our subscriptions along with having to provide copies of each of our members accounts along with associated companies, such as catering and engineering along with details of any bequests, donations and membership fees. Plus HRA also wanted to backdate the amount to the start of the year despite the fact that we had paid the amount due as requested on time and that the conditions and the new category introduced by the HRA had been agreed after this date. In view of this the Directors considered that the benefit offered by being members of the HRA was not worth anywhere near the cost as every time we had approached them for assistance they had not responded. The only benefit they offered was the HRA passes which we paid a total of over £4000 for.

In view of the above discussions, it was agreed that we would not apply for membership of the HRA.

**AOB**

Rob Hart suggested that we should seriously consider offering a “BGLR” pass on similar lines of the HRA pass that enables any active member from any of our member railways free travel on each other’s railways. There should be as little as possible central administration on the production of the passes and no charge for the passes either as it was envisaged as a way of saying thank to all of our active volunteers. Rob went on to say that he was happy to provide a template that could be shared and administered locally. There followed a discussion by all those present and it was thought to be a good idea as long as the railways could have the opportunity to not accept them under certain conditions such as special events very much in the same way as the conditions that apply to HRA passes. Rob was asked is this a formal proposal and he responded as yes and the proposal was seconded by Richard Walker.

Rob Hart said currently BGLR have very little presence on social media and this is something that we could use at very little cost, to up our presence with the wider public who after all are our future customers. Rob also offered to take this forward with his social media team and also investigate to see if we could improve and tidy up a few loose ends on the website. This was thought to be a great idea by all present especially as they would not have to do anything.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12:15

Certified that this a true record of proceedings

A.J.Davies Secretary BGLR

Mr R.J.M. Brown, Treasurer, BGLR