

Minnesota Streetcar Museum
Operations Committee – February 8, 2020
MEETING MINUTES

Bill Arends
Rod Eaton
Dave Higgins
Jim Kertzman

Todd Bender
Barb Gacek
Aaron Isaacs
Jim Vaitkunas

John Dillery
Bruce Gustafson
Karen Kertzman
Dick Zawacki

AGENDA:

Schedule

- Como-Harriet Streetcar Line (CHSL) Schedule. After a discussion led by **Rod Eaton**, the Committee decided on the following changes to the CHSL regular schedule:
 - The museum will NOT operate Monday evenings. The decision was based on several factors, most notable:
 - 1) Monday has the lowest patronage of all regular shifts;
 - 2) an evening had been requested by **Chris Heck** (overhead Foreman) to be used by his crew for ongoing maintenance, and
 - 3) Monday evening provides a reliable option for training.
 - Based on the success of the June, July and August Wednesday afternoon operations, the Committee agreed (as a test) to add Friday afternoon operations from 1 to 4 PM.
 - The Committee also agreed to extend regular operations in the fall as follows:
 - In October, shifts will be extended from ending at 4:00 PM to 4:30 PM.
 - The regular season schedule will be extended to the third weekend in October (Oct 17 & 18).
 - Given the availability of only 1 standard car (discussed further in the Mechanical section), the Committee agreed to prohibit charters requesting the standard car during normal operations involving the standard car. As a follow-up Ops Superintendent **Bruce Gustafson** and **Aaron Isaacs** will discuss with Charter Manager **Jerry Olsen**.
- Excelsior Streetcar Line (ESL) Schedule.
 - After a discussion led by **Karen Kertzman**, the Committee decided on the following:
 - ESL will add operations on the Minnesota Education Association meeting day, which is scheduled for Thursday, October 15, 2020.
 - Farmers Market. The City of Excelsior is no longer sponsoring the Tuesday Farmer's Market after Labor Day, so Tuesday operations will end the week before Labor Day and not run into September.

- Loading of the Schedule on Humanity/Shift Planning.
 - As in prior years, when the schedule is loaded into Humanity/ShiftPlanning all operators, with some exceptions (i.e., Operation Committee members) will be deactivated from the system until they are recertified.

Special Events

- CHSL
 - **Rod Eaton** discussed several changes or potential changes to the special events calendar. While many of the special events have not been finalized, a couple of changes were decided:
 - With the help of **Leah Harp**, the Committee agreed with the concept of implementing the “Kid’s Club.”
 - Revamp Halloween events.
 - Open Door Minneapolis (May 16 & 17). CHSL is planning to participate in the Open-Door Minneapolis event, which gives participants an opportunity to visit and experience the behind the scenes activities of venues. CHSL’s normal weekend schedule will be adjusted and the Isaacs carbarn will be open, with docents ensuring a safe environment and providing information into the maintenance of MSM’s streetcars. **Aaron Isaacs**, **Bruce Gustafson** and **Dick Zawacki** will plan for this event.
 - **Aaron** mentioned MSM’s possible involvement with some scheduled historical presentations given on Monday night in Linden Hills.
- ESL
 - As with CHSL, many of the special events continue to evolve. **Karen Kertzman** noted that the bookstore, which has sponsored ESL’s “Story Time” event, is not interested in continuing the partnership. ESL plans to continue with the current schedule (3 events over the summer), but with a different theme.
 - “Art on the Lake” is moving back to Water Street, but as the event is a block away from the streetcar, the ESL team is exploring options to effectively advertise the streetcar during the event. In 2019, there were 176 riders during the event.
 - Other planned ESL special event changes:
 - Eliminate the Sleepy Time Trolley.
 - “Trolleyween” will replace “Trick ‘r Trolley” and will be operated exclusively by ESL staff.
 - Looking for other events or groups (day care, senior centers) for Tuesday operations.
 - Create a “Gandy Dancer” event in August similar to CHSL’s Streetcar camp experience. Activities might include riding a speeder and learning about track and overhead maintenance.
 - Options for future exploration:
 - Teddy Bear picnic
 - Schedule a special event to coincide with the Minnesota State Fair, e.g., a petting zoo, carnival games, etc.

Fares

- The Committee agreed to raise some of the special event fares
 - Vinternatt will increase from \$5 to \$6
 - CHSL Holly Trolley will increase from \$4 to \$5
 - For Halloween **Rod Eaton** is considering a “Fright” pass at \$10, which would allow unlimited rides during the event
 - ESL will continue to price their Halloween and Christmas events at \$4 to grow volume

Mechanical.

Chief Mechanical Officer **Dick Zawacki** gave a summary of streetcar availability

- CHSL
 - TCRT No. 1300. Will be fully operational (4 motors) for start of training (April 1).
 - TCRT No. 1239. Out for the season for truck work.
 - TCRT No. 322. Available. Currently undergoing routine maintenance.
- ESL
 - Duluth No. 265. Available. Maintenance will be complete by 4/1.
 - Duluth No. 78. Controller rehab nearly complete. Planning to be ready by 4/1.
 - Winona No. 10. Rewinding of motors proving to be very challenging. CMO **Zawacki** has a few options that look promising. If motors cannot be rewound, the trucks (which were built in the 1890s) will require major modifications to allow different motors. Car is planned to be unavailable for the 2020 season.

Charter Operations

- As noted in the Schedule discussion, the Committee is supportive of two car operations (including a charter during regular operations) but **given car availability, only a PCC can be chartered during regular operations.**
- The Ops Committee wants to explore removing the phone option for booking a charter (too many incomplete or bad call back numbers) and move to online booking and purchases. **Rod Eaton** pointed out that when the phone line was added fifteen years ago people did not use our website the way they do today. For a variety of reasons, it looks like this is the time to change.

Training.

Dave Higgins has volunteered to lead training for one more year, but has asked for a replacement and would like to use 2020 training as a transition.

- **Dave** outlined the training plan
 - Recruitment – mid February
 - March 27 – last day for enrollment
 - March 28 & 29 – orientation
 - Training plan (phases)
 - Classroom (April 4 or 5)
 - Basic @CHSL
 - Advanced @CHSL or @ESL.
 - Revenue @CHSL or @ESL.

- **Higgins** also discussed using an Instructor/Inspector position to help with later advanced training phases. This position is within the current Operations Department policies. **Dave** suggested some updates/ changes to the role. The Committee agreed pending any specific issues identified by Committee members upon further review of Dave's written proposal.
- PCC Training
 - **Chris Heck** has agreed to lead PCC training for 2020.
 - The Committee agreed that PCC proficiency should be strongly encouraged for all foreman. **Bruce Gustafson** will take the lead in addressing this task

Training – Recertification

- Quiz.
 - **Rod Eaton** will author the quiz.
 - Quiz will be available online.
 - **Bruce** will assist **Rod** in grading and follow-up issues.
- Cash register training
 - Will be required at both CHSL and ESL
 - **Rose Arends** and **Karen Kertzman** will establish training plans.
- Check Rides. Requirements will be the same as the past several years.
 - All 2nd year operators.
 - Anyone with less than 10 hours of operations in 2019 (by location).
- Kick-off calendar
 - Foremen meetings (late March/early April).
 - Operator meetings.
 - Check rides targeted to end by late May.

Merchandise/Station Ops -- Bill Arends (CHSL), Karen Kertzman (ESL)

- **Bill** discussed the desire to design and sell a new adult t-shirt.
- **Karen** discussed potential changes in where some of the children's books are purchased.

Safety. The Committee asked MSM's Safety Manager **John Dillery** to identify a safety theme every month focusing on some of the safety issues/problems identified in 2019. The message will be conveyed to all operating personnel and reinforced in the monthly MSM Operations Newsletter, Foremen briefings before each shift, and other methods.