

# MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

## Minutes

Of the

### ANNUAL MEMBER'S MEETING

Saturday, April 3, 2021

Zoom Application Tele-Conference

Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Call to Order:** Chair **Aaron Isaacs** called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM. The Zoom web-based application was used to conduct this annual meeting. This was done because of the Covid-19 restrictions placed on the Museum and its members by the State of Minnesota and state and federal health officials.

**Quorum.** MSM Members in attendance using the Zoom participant count was 33 members at the beginning of the annual meeting and reached a high of 42 members throughout most of the meeting. As of December 31, 2019, active MSM membership was 291. Therefore, a quorum was achieved for this annual meeting.

**Opening Remarks.** Chair Isaacs opened the annual meeting by giving an overview of how the meeting would be presented—he would give his state of the Museum presentation which will then be followed by reports from the Museum's officers and others. Two important actions need to occur at this meeting: (1) the report from the MSM Treasurer; and approval of that report; and, (2) the election of two Directors. After the formal business portion of the meeting, a special report by Dennis Stephens will be presented which will last about 30 minutes. Then, following all of that, a short Board meeting will be held for the Directors to elect the Museum's Officers for 2021-2022 and appoint Class B Directors.

**State of the Museum** presentation was made by MSM Board Chair **Aaron Isaacs** by way of a PowerPoint presentation which is attached to these minutes. Major topics of **Isaacs'** report to the members and presentation are as follows.

#### **The Year in Review for 2020.**

Chair **Aaron Isaacs** began with the comment that it certainly has been an unusual year because we did not operate for the public at all, but we did a lot of stuff behind the scenes during 2020. We made some major improvements to our Museum's streetcars and infrastructure and had other accomplishments in 2020. Here is a list of some of them.

- The truck work on No. 1239 continues in earnest. Since the Covid-19 virus has curtailed the regular travel and work by contractor **Rob Mangels**, he is working almost exclusively on rebuilding the trucks. **Mangels** reports that about 50-percent of the truck parts have been manufactured. While it may very well be that the work could be completed sometime later on in late 2021 it's more likely that the car won't be ready for public service until 2022.

- **Karl Jones** and volunteers in the George Isaacs shop continued their efforts to backdate No. 1239 to its early 1920s configuration.
- The overhead wire work at the Excelsior Streetcar Line was completed and the wire is in much better condition now.
- We contracted with Railroad Specialties to replace over 200 bad ties at the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. This should keep the track in good shape for the next several years.
- Fargo & Moorhead Street Railway No. 28 was moved from the ESL car barn to a storage facility west of the Twin Cities metro. This was done because of the space constraints inherent at ESL's car barn.
- **Ben Franske** and **Karl Jones** have spearheaded the effort to install security video cameras at the Isaacs car barn & shop buildings, in an attempt to deter the graffiti "tagging" and intruders into the area. The video has shown several instances of these activities which were reported to the city and park police.
- The 600-volt traction power controls in the Isaacs car barn were rebuilt and updated by **Ben Franske**.
- The Isaacs shop jib crane was moved from the maintenance barn to the machine shop annex by the shop volunteers. Now, any kind of heavy part can be moved to almost any spot in the machine shop.
- Several painting projects were accomplished. The passenger benches at Como-Harriet and the fence at ESL's Water Street platform were painted.
- We increased public outreach using media such as YouTube and Facebook. **Rod Eaton, Brian Long, Karen Kertzman, Aaron Isaacs** and others have increased the frequency of our Facebook posts to around 3 posts per week. This resulted in a 66-percent increase in our Facebook views. We also posted several videos on YouTube and published newsletters for our junior members.
- Historic interpretive signs have been mounted along the former TCRT 44<sup>th</sup> Street streetcar private right-of-way which is now an alley and walking path. The signs were funded by the Linden Hills Neighborhood Association and the signs have received much favorable comments by the Linden Hills community.

**Looking ahead to 2021-Projects we Plan to Work on.** You never know what will happen in 2021 given the uncertainty of Covid-19, but here are some updates and projects that we hope we can work on and accomplish.

- We plan to re-start public operations on July 3, 2021
- Winona 10's bad motor will be repaired
- No. 1239's trucks completed
- More No. 1239 details completed
- New electric speeder completed
- Solar power for streetcars
- Overhead wire rehab in ESL yard
- Mesaba 10 cosmetic restoration continues
- New tower car for CHSL completed
- All library artifacts catalogued

## Reports by Museum Officers.

**Corporate Secretary's Report.** Corporate Secretary **Jim Vaitkunas** rendered the report using a PowerPoint slide show. He commented that as of this moment, 42 MSM members are logged-on to this annual meeting, which is a good number but not as many as 2020s annual member's meeting.

- MSM Complied with all Federal, State of Minnesota and local statutory/regulatory reporting requirements
- Renewed all Insurance Policies – 2020-2021 premiums are as follows.

\$ 1,177	Liability
3,110	Property – buildings at ESL & CHSL
4,428	Property – streetcars
1,632	Director & Officers coverage
300	Volunteer accident insurance
215	Auto coverage
142	Miscellaneous fees
<b>\$ 11,004</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

**Vaitkunas** noted that each year the premium goes up by about \$500 which seems to be an acceptable increase. It is interesting to note that the Director & Officer's insurance premium seems to increase each year by around \$200.

- Total Membership in good standing. The membership numbers have been steady at around 310 members until 2020. It's likely that Covid-19 has affected our member count.  
 2020 – 291  
 2019 – 310  
 2018 – 312  
 2017 – 313  
 2016 – 318
- Gains and losses for over the last five years (as of December 31)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Expired/Deceased	17	32	36	27	41
Joined	25	32	32	31	12

**Vaitkunas** commented that the lower number of members resulted from the lack of a usual influx of new members we typically see each year representing new members who join to qualify as Operators because our Operator training program was cancelled for 2020.

- Annual Election of Directors
  - ✓ Notices sent to members on or about February 28, 2021.
  - ✓ No nominations were received from the Museum's members.
  - ✓ Two incumbent Directors will be elected at this meeting: **Jim Vaitkunas** and **Ben Franske**. Voting will occur later in the meeting.
- Board Meetings held in 2020
  - ✓ Five Board meetings were held in 2020.
  - ✓ BOD meeting minutes are posted on MSM's website, usually no later than one week after the meeting. Members are encouraged to view the minutes.
  - ✓ All members are invited to attend Board meetings.
- Members are encouraged to renew their memberships through the Museum website.
- Members are also asked to renew for two years. Doing both saves our Museum funds spent on printing and postage of renewal notices, reminders, second notices, etc.

Member **Pat Cosgrove** commented that the drop in membership may have resulted from the transition from the old membership database to the new system. He cited as an example an Operator trainee who failed to get his renewal notice because he apparently was not on the new member database. **Vaitkunas** replied that he and **Barb Gacek**, MSM's Membership Services Manager, became aware of the problem and **Gacek** quickly fixed it. **Vaitkunas** also commented that **Gacek** is doing a review of members who joined MSM in 2020 to ensure that the problem hasn't happened to another member

**Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer **Chris Heck** presented a PowerPoint presentation that depicted key financial data and supplemented that information on the chart with comments. The charts are attached to these minutes.

Using the first cash balances chart, **Heck** stated that he kept the data format from previous annual meetings for consistency and comparison. The cash balances were only slightly below in the past five years and this was because of several factors. Our donors and grant benefactors were a major reason why our cash balance was slightly below 2019. Other factors that contributed includes reduced expenses because MSM did not operate in 2020 and the delay in several capital projects because of Covid-19. He further commented that the estimated cash balance showed on the slide, as well as on subsequent slides, assumes that MSM would begin operations on July 2, 2021 at a reduced operational tempo.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Heck asked if anyone had questions. There were no questions.

Chair **Isaacs** then called for a motion to approve treasurer **Heck's** report.

<p><b>MOTION:</b> Made by Stanley Kasal; Second by Floyd Child That the MSM Treasurer's annual report be approved as to form and content. <b>VOTE:</b> Unanimously approved by all members present.</p>
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**General Superintendent's Report.** General Superintendent **Bruce Gustafson** began his report stating that 2020 was exceptional because of the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. **Gustafson** then rendered his report as described below.

**2021 OPERATING SEASON.** We are planning to operate with an opening day of Friday July 2, 2021. The level of operation will depend on how many of our prior Operators recertify, and the number of new Operators who qualify in 2021.

### **OPERATIONS CALENDAR**

- New Operator orientation zoom meetings occurred in late March. (**Pat Cosgrove** reports approx 12-13 training candidates.)
- Late March – **Rod Eaton** to develop recertification quiz
- TBD – New Operator training begins
- Mid-April – **Bruce Gustafson** to send quiz and survey of interest in operating to existing operators
- May 1 – Recertification check rides begin
- June 1 – Charters can operate (earlier if volunteers available)
- July 2, 2021 (Friday) – Regular schedule operations begin

### **REGULAR DAILY SCHEDULE**

CHSL (Listed in priority of implementation)

- Saturday 1st shift
- Sunday 1st shift
- Friday evening
- Wednesday afternoon
- Saturday 2nd shift
- Friday afternoon
- Sunday 2nd shift

ESL (Listed in priority)

- Saturday
- Sunday
- Farmers Market (if held)

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

CHSL – Summer-fall schedule will be similar to prior years with the following exceptions:

- Murder Mysteries will not be held
- PJ Parties will not be held

ESL. Ghost and North Pole Trolley will be the only special events in 2021

### **TRAINING**

#### **EXISTING OPERATORS – RECERTIFICATION**

Since virtually all our operating personnel did not operate in 2020, all Operators will be required to take a test ride in addition to an extended recertification quiz. With an early

July opening, recertification testing will begin in late April or early May. All volunteers will also be required to complete Point of Sale training.

#### NEW OPERATOR TRAINING.

**Pat Cosgrove** has identified a approximately 12 individuals interested in becoming qualified Operators. The training will be conducted by **Dave Higgins** and **Bill Pekarna**. The preliminary orientation session has been completed using the Zoom application.

#### PCC TRAINING

**Chris Heck** has volunteered to lead PCC training. Dates TBD

MECHANICAL Chief Mechanical Officer **Dick Zawacki** provided the following update/status on availability of our operating streetcars.

CHSL: Both No. 1300 and No. 322 are ready now to support training activities. Currently the front bumper is not installed on 322, but that will not impact training activities. Certainly, the bumper will be put back on the car in time for regular service at the beginning of July.

ESL: No. 265 is ready right now to support training activities. No. 78 might be available for training at the beginning of May, but best to assume that the car will be available is July 1. We are working with Howie Melco to discuss the work still needed to get the rebuilt 78 controller installed, tested and approved for operation. The question of the status of the second controller on 78 has yet to be determined.

**Report from the Chief Mechanical Officer. Dick Zawacki**, MSM's Chief Mechanical Officer prepared a detailed report on the Mechanical Department's projects and activities which is attached to these minutes. Since several of the topics were reviewed and discussed in previous reports at this annual member's meeting, he felt it was unnecessary to repeat them here.

Zawacki then made brief comments on the status of two important projects.

- No. 78's controller, damaged by a fire in 2020, is refurbished and is installed in the car. It has not been wired to the motors and resister yet, but it should be by early summer. However, No. 78 won't be ready to operate until the other controller is also inspected and repairs made as required and all the wiring is inspected. Both controllers need to be mounted better to the car because the cause of the arcing and fire in the damaged controller resulted from excess vibration of the controller causing a 600-volt wire to rub and finally go to a ground fault. Estimated date for No. 78 to enter service is July 1, 2021.
- Winona No. 10s bad motor is still in the AC Electric shop in Bangor, Maine. The work on the motor is being done by AC Electric and Swiger Coil of Cleveland, Ohio. No estimate on when that work will be completed.

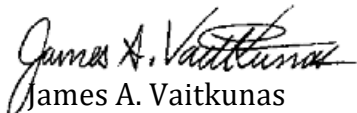
**Election of MSM Directors.** Chair **Aaron Isaacs** then briefed the members on the two Board Director vacancies for this election and the two nominees, **Ben Franske** and **Jim Vaitkunas**. Both members agreed to serve as MSM Directors. Chair **Isaacs** then called for a motion to elect two Directors for a three-year period.

**MOTION:** Made by Luca Gunther; Second by Floyd Child  
That Ben Franske and Jim Vaitkunas are elected to fill Director positions on MSM's governing Board of Directors for a term of three years that expire in March-April 2024.  
**VOTE:** Unanimously approved by all members present.

**Adjournment.** There being no further business, Chair **Isaacs** adjourned the MSM 2021 annual member's meeting at 10:49 AM.

**Post-meeting Program.** After the formal business meeting concluded, Chair **Isaacs** posted several slides showing Twin City Rapid Transit Company drawings and plans for cars that were never constructed. These were streetcars proposed at the beginning of the lightweight streetcar construction period after World War I. The plans/drawings reflected several versions of lightweight cars: a double-truck car with center doors; a lightweight car with a short trailer; a single-truck lightweight car with a squared-off end; and, other proposed lightweight cars. Finally, **Isaacs** showed a cut-away plan for a streetcar operations training simulator, but it's unclear whether this simulator was ever built.

**Isaacs** then introduced a member of MSM's Mechanical Department, **Dennis Stephens** who was one of the managers of the project to rebuild the trucks for TCRT No. 1300. **Stephens** then made a presentation on the two-year project to rebuild the two trucks.

  
James A. Vaitkunas  
Corporate Secretary

**ATTACHMENTS.**

- Board Chair Isaacs' State of the Museum report (PowerPoint presentation).
- Corporate Secretary's Report (PowerPoint presentation)
- Treasurer's Report (PowerPoint presentation)
- Chief Mechanical Officer's Report (MS Word document)