

# MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

## Minutes

Of the

### ANNUAL MEMBER'S MEETING

Thursday, March 23, 2023

Zoom Application Tele-Conference

Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Call to Order.** Chair **Aaron Isaacs** called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Zoom web-based application was used to conduct this annual meeting. This was done because of Covid-19 considerations with respect to several of our members.

**Quorum.** Corporate Secretary **Jim Vaitkunas** reported that thirty-three (33) MSM Members are in attendance using the Zoom application at the call-to-order of the annual meeting. (*Attendance reached a high of 56 members at 7:29 PM and this count remained throughout most of the meeting.*) As of February 24, 2022 active MSM membership was 300 members. Therefore, a quorum was achieved and maintained for this annual meeting.

**Opening Remarks.** Chair **Isaacs** then gave an overview of how the meeting would be presented. First would be the state of the Museum presentation which will then be followed by reports from the Museum's officers and others. Chair **Isaacs** then introduced the museum officers and several other museum superintendents. 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. Following the adjournment of the annual meeting, a short Board of Directors meeting will be held for the Directors to elect the Museum's Officers for 2023-2024 and to appoint Class B Directors. Chair **Isaacs** also stated that there will be no presentation after this annual meeting as had been done in past annual meetings because MSM has created its own YouTube channel that has several video presentations and over twenty PowerPoint presentations with photos on various aspects of the history of Minnesota's and the Twin City's electric railways.

**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 were as follows.

#### **The Year in Review for 2022.**

- The year 2022 was the first year since 2019 that MSM maintained a full operating schedule. It was a pretty good year both in terms of operations and financially.
- MSM received the largest bequest in its history in 2022 in the amount of \$131,000. The bequest was received from the **Gordon Geddes** estate.
- Receiving this bequest set in motion a Board of Directors meeting which approved retaining a financial advisory firm which will advise MSM in investing this money as well as identified surplus funds.
- Chair **Isaacs** reported that **Chris Heck** will be stepping down as MSM Treasurer after five years of excellent service for which **Isaacs** thanked him.

- MSM needs a special events manager to coordinate special events. Each event will have its own manager, but the job needs an overall coordinator. Current Special Events Manager **Rod Eaton** will help with the transition.
- Several physical plant projects at CHSL were completed in 2022 including replacement of ties, painting of the Linden Hills station's benches and railings and approval of the master gardeners to tend the station's gardens.
- At ESL, track #3 was paved with concrete after the track was realigned. The drainage ditch along the south side of the carbarn was improved and the interior of the cold barn was cleaned-up.
- Major improvements were made to the rolling stock and shop equipment at both railways including a new electric speeder and tower car at CHSL.
- Work continues to rebuild the trucks for TCRT No. 1239.
- The Kids' Clubs were formed in 2021 led by **Rod Eaton**, and progress in this area continued in 2022 with several special events conducted for the club's members as well as publication of the Kids' Club newsletters.
- Facebook posts continue to be a major means to educate and for outreach to our members and friends and to the community at large.
- Issuing of various publications continued throughout 2022 including four issues of *Twin City Lines*, publication of the *Streetcar Currents* newsletter and the kids' club newsletters. Posting of videos on YouTube continued as well as weekly Facebook posts.
- Good progress was made with archive work in the Russell Olson library. Several specific achievements are listed on the slide.

**Looking ahead to 2023—Projects we Plan to Work on.** Now that it appears that the Covid-19 situation has subsided for the moment, here are the projects and activities we plan to execute in the year 2023.

- Winona 10's motor is installed in the truck and the car returns to in service
- No. 1239's trucks completed
- George Isaacs carbarn at CHSL fiber optic cable installation completed
- *Minnegazettes* will be made available on-line
- First Open Doors Minneapolis event at CHSL on MAY 13 & 14, 2023
- First American Sign Language event at CHSL
- First passenger reenactment event at CHSL
- Complete scanning of the Russell L. Olson papers
- With the new lease from the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, MSM will now have a single landlord for the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line property.
- ESL special events return including PJ party
- ESL carbarn additional improvements completed
- Install solar panels on ESL carbarn roof—long-term project
- Construction of display barn adjacent to BdeMaKaSka—Long-term proposal

There being no comments or questions from the members present, Chair **Isaacs** then turned the meeting over to the Museum officers who will render their reports, all of which are attached to these minutes.

## Reports by Museum Officers.

**Corporate Secretary's Report.** Corporate Secretary **Jim Vaitkunas** rendered the report using a PowerPoint slide show. He reported that as of this moment, 55 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 – 2022-2023 premiums were as shown on this table.

\$ 1,177	Liability
3,111	Property – buildings at ESL & CHSL
4,428	Property – streetcars
1,607	Director & Officers coverage
300	Volunteer accident insurance
215	Auto coverage
142	Miscellaneous fees
<b>\$ 10,980</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

**Vaitkunas** noted that each year the premium typically increases but for 2023/2024 insurance coverage period (March 9 to March 9) the total premium went up only about \$90. This was because the Director & Officer's insurance premium increased slightly.

- Total Membership in good standing. The membership numbers were down in 2021, not surprisingly because of Covid-19. Our member count had been steady at around 310 members until 2020.

2022 – 300	2020 – 291	2018 – 312
2021 – 278	2019 – 310	2017 – 313

- Gains and losses for over the last five years (as of December 31).

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Expired/Deceased	36	27	41	40	64
Joined	32	31	12	27	40

Secretary **Vaitkunas** commented that it's clear Covid-19 did affect our membership count from 2019 to 2021, but as of the end of 2022 we were back in the 300-plus member range and hopefully will stay there.

- Annual Election of Directors
  - ✓ Notices sent to members on or about February 19, 2023.
  - ✓ No nominations were received from the Museum's members.
  - ✓ Two incumbent Directors will be elected at this meeting: **Karen Kertzman** and **David Downs**. Voting will occur later in the meeting.

- Board Meetings held in 2022
  - ✓ Four Board meetings were held in 2022.
  - ✓ 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. It saves on mailings.
- 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.

**Treasurer's Report.** Treasurer **Chris Heck** reported that the museum has filed on time the federal tax return, IRS Form 990. The annual report to the Minnesota Attorney General was also filed. **Heck** made a point to thank incoming Treasurer **Dave Downs** and MSM bookkeeper **Mona Isaacs** for their help preparing these required and important reports. **Heck** then displayed the cash balances for the last five fiscal years and pointed out the cash balance of \$504,000 for 2022 which required us to file the IRS form 990 rather than the 990EZ form that we filed in previous years. In addition, because of that larger than usual cash balance, the MSM board approved retaining a commercial financial advisory firm that will manage the funds. Reports on how the investments are performing will be included in future annual meeting treasurer reports.

Capital projects for 2023 were displayed on a slide with projected costs for four projects: Fiber Optic cable to the Isaacs carbarn from the Linden Hills station; Winona 10 motor work and window shades; continue the work to rebuild No. 1239's trucks; and installing the concrete apron in front of the ESL carbarn.

The slide showing income history was displayed and **Heck** pointed out several items that are worthy of mention.

- The operational income for 2022 is somewhat misleading because the bequest received put income above \$300k. Even though the bequest might not be considered as "operational income," this amount is included because of our QuickBooks accounting system.
- Donations aside, the information on the chart for 2022 shows that the bulk of MSM's income comes from fares, charters and special events.
- In the projected budget information for 2023, **Heck** pointed out that the income from investments is larger than in past years. This reflects projected investment income from the stocks and bonds managed by the financial advisory firm recently retained by MSM.

On the operational expenses slide, major expenses include maintenance of MSM's streetcars and physical plant. Other major expense areas include insurance premiums and utilities. In the FY 2023 bar graph showing budgeted expenses, input on the categories came from the superintendents, department leaders, and historical data.

**Heck** concluded his report with the last slide, income versus expenses by operational site. This slide compares income versus expenses by year for each railway. While utility

expenses are combined into one CHSL account for accounting purposes, it's clear that the income from CHSL provides the bulk of MSM's overall annual income. The Excelsior Streetcar Line is basically a break-even operation to perhaps running a small deficit annually. But with all that, the museum is in very good financial shape.

Secretary **Jim Vaitkunas** commented that if our members want more detail on the financial status of the museum, each board of directors meeting has a complete financial report in minute detail. These minutes of the meetings can be read and/or downloaded from the MSM website.

There were no further comments or questions.

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

**MOTION:** Made by Leah Harp; Second by Floyd Child  
That the MSM Treasurer's annual report be approved as to form and content.  
**VOTE:** Unanimously approved by all members present.

**General Superintendent's Report.** General Superintendent **Bruce Gustafson** began his report stating that this annual meeting report is a combined effort from him, the General Superintendent, and the Superintendent of the Excelsior Streetcar Line, **Todd Bender** with input from **Karen Kertzman**.

**Gustafson** began with an overview of the status in 2022 of operating personnel at both railways as displayed on the slides. The number of volunteer operators at both railways increased in 2022 compared to 2021 and is comparable to the pre-pandemic year of 2019. Over the last 8-10 years, operating personnel totals have fluctuated between 100 to 120 operators. The situation in 2022 that is of concern was the number of operators who volunteered a significant and disproportionate number of hours compared to others on the crew rosters. There were a number of Operators who were either qualified or recertified but didn't operate or did only a minimal number of shifts. **Gustafson** thanked those volunteers who were listed on the slide for their dedication and commitment, and he encouraged the others not on the list to try to volunteer more in 2023.

**2022 Operating Season Summary.** **Gustafson** reported that the number of passengers carried at ESL and CHSL in 2022 was very good, much better than the abbreviated 2021 operating season, and comparable to the passenger count for pre-pandemic 2019. Charters at CHSL were well managed by **Pat Cosgrove** and at ESL by **Karen Kertzman**. Ridership at ESL also rebounded nicely in 2022, being slightly ahead of the numbers in 2019.

**Karen Kertzman** commented that ESL has several challenges ahead in 2023 because the farmer's market has been cancelled and the construction adjacent to the Water Street platform blocks people from seeing the ticket booth and streetcar waiting at the platform.

**Gustafson** then displayed a chart showing the income derived from merchandise sales and made several comments on the data displayed. Main point he made was that merchandise sales at both railways generates a significant amount of income for the museum.

## 2023 Operating Plan.

**CHSL** – The regular operating season will begin on April 29<sup>th</sup> and run through the end of October

- Normal two-shift weekend operating schedule
- Operations on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings in June, July and August
- Operations on Wednesday and Friday afternoons in June, July and August
- PCC No. 322 will operate on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> shift and Thursday evenings in June, July and August
- Full slate of special event operations in October and November
- Special events planned include Summer Santa and autistic children's events

In response to a request from **Gustafson**, Special Events Manager **Rod Eaton** commented that the PJ Trolley tickets for the June runs are almost sold out, demonstrating the popularity of this special event. **Eaton** also recognized Merchandise Manager **Bill Arends** who has done a superb job in managing merchandise sales for MSM and the mail-order sales. **Gustafson** also praised **Arends** for his merchandise work and for his input of the statistics displayed on the previous slide.

Member **Leah Harp** commented that she is recognized by Minnesota as a person who can officiate at a marriage ceremony and is ready and willing to marry anyone on the streetcar.

**ESL**—The report was rendered by **Karen Kertzman**.

- Saturday will have one shift starting May 29<sup>th</sup>, then two shifts starting with the Memorial Day weekend.
- Sunday one shift in June, July and August
- No operations on Tuesday afternoon
- Full slate of the usual special events

## 2023 Start-up Activities

- Recertification test developed by MSM operations staff and MSM IT Manager **Ben Franske** will put the automated and self-correcting test on-line
- Foreman & Operator meetings held in-person with all operating personnel
- Check-ride required for second year Operators and those who operated less than ten hours in 2022
- Point of Sales refresher training required at both railways
- At ESL check-ride on No. 78 required for all ESL operating personnel
- All operating personnel will be deactivated in Humanity/Shift Planning until they complete all recertification requirements including the POS refresher training.

Chair **Isaacs** then asked for **Gustafson** or **Vaitkunas** to report on the changes to the Shift Planning crew scheduling system recently seen. **Vaitkunas** gave an overview of Humanity/Shift Planning and described the changes that have been made to the Shift Planning module. Basically, the current “new” system has bugs but luckily the “legacy” Shift Planning module is still in Humanity and can be used to view the overall MSM operations schedule. **Vaitkunas** recommended that operating personnel avoid using the new Shift Planning and refer to the legacy version until further notice.

**Chief Mechanical Officer's Report.** Chief Mechanical Officer **Dick Zawacki** began his report with a summary of the accomplishments achieved in 2022 with regard to maintenance and improvements to the museum's operating streetcars. **Zawacki** heaped praise on the volunteer shop crews at both railways for doing an excellent job in preparing the operational streetcars for service in 2022. It was apparent that not operating at all in 2020 and running reduced operations in 2021 put a strain on the mechanical and electrical equipment on the cars, and through the hard work of the shop crews all operational cars performed well in 2022.

**TCRT No. 1300**

- Made repairs and improvements without affecting the CHSL operating schedule
- Designed and cast new TCRT-type trolley harp
- Improved the braking system components
- Redesigned the heater circuits to balance the electrical load
- Reactivated the independent door switches for the front doors and repaired the sensitive edge mechanism

**TCRT PCC No. 322**

- Upgraded door interlock
- Upgraded battery charging system
- Repaired body damage

**TCRT No. 1239**

- Backdated interior and exterior details to the early 1920s era look
- Baker heater installed in the front platform
- Truck rebuilding project continues including refurbishing four GE-241B motors
- Truck work will result in the trucks looking identical to the TCRT #5 model
- Installed "Edison" LED lamps in the interior

**DSR No. 265**

- Improved back-up controls
- Upgraded door controls

**DSR No. 78**

- Bad controller repaired
- Improvements to battery charging system and ditch lights
- Repaired and painted roof canvas

**MVPS (Winona) No. 10**

- GE-800 motor out for repairs but will be back in late spring 2023
- Window bars being powder coated

**Mesaba Railway No. 10**

- Baldwin trucks and motors cleaned, repaired and lubricated so the trucks are operational
- Cleaned out items and junk stored inside the car
- Moved to carbarn track #2 for future restoration

### **Tower cars and Electric Speeder**

- Electric speeder at CHSL was completed and entered service
- New Tower car at CHSL completed and in service
- Tower car at ESL was reorganized and is ready for service

At the conclusion of the presentation, Chair **Isaacs** commented that the Baldwin curved equalizer trucks under Mesaba No. 10 are very close to the trucks the car had when in service. The only difference is that the car had trucks with a 78-inch wheelbase and the Baldwin trucks under the car now have a 75-inch wheelbase.

**Isaacs** also relayed a question from **John Dillery** via the Zoom chat regarding the new brake shoes for No. 1300. **Zawacki** and shop volunteer **Dennis Stephens** replied that the brake shoes will be replaced as needed and the grey iron brake shoes will be cast for both No. 1300 and No. 1239.

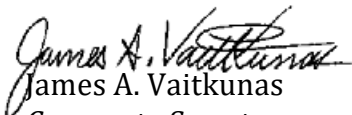
**Dillery** then asked whether there will be a problem with the new TCRT-style trolley harps. Shop volunteer **Jim Willmore** responded that he designed the new trolley harp and it should work just fine. A picture of the new trolley harp was displayed via screen share by **Rod Eaton**.

Member **Russ Isbrandt** asked whether the contract has been let for the new pinions and gears for the motors and axles destined for TCRT No. 1239. **Jim Willmore** responded that the contract has not yet been let.

**Election of MSM Directors.** Chair **Aaron Isaacs** then briefed the members on the two Board Director vacancies for this election and the two nominees, **Karen Kertzman** who will serve on her third term on the board and **David Downs** who will replace **Chris Heck** on the board. Both members agreed to serve as MSM Directors. Chair **Isaacs** then called for a motion to elect two Directors for a three-year period by acclamation.

<p><b>MOTION:</b> Made by Russ Isbrandt; Second by Floyd Child That Karen Kertzman and David Downs are elected by acclamation to fill Director positions on MSM's Board of Directors for a term of three years that expire in March-April 2026. <b>VOTE:</b> Unanimously approved by all members present.</p>
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**Adjournment.** There being no further business, Chair **Isaacs** adjourned the MSM 2023 annual member's meeting at 8:20 PM.

  
James A. Vaitkunas  
Corporate Secretary

### ATTACHMENTS.

Board Chair Isaacs' State of the Museum report  
Corporate Secretary's Report  
Treasurer's Report  
General Superintendent's Report  
Chief Mechanical Officer's Report