

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

Minutes

Of the

ANNUAL MEMBER'S MEETING

Thursday, March 28, 2024

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 for the convenience of outstate 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 45 members at 7:29 PM and this count remained throughout most of the meeting.*) As of February 24, 2024, active MSM membership was 296 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's officers and 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 special presentation on the repairs to streetcar TCRT No. 322 will be given by shop volunteer **Dennis Stephens**. Lastly, a short Board of Directors meeting will be held for the Directors to elect the Museum's Officers for 2024-2025 and to 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 were as follows.

The Year in Review for 2023.

Administration and Library

- The museum now has a single landlord for CHSL, which is the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.
- A long-term investment account was created.
- A link to all the issues of the MTM and later joint MTM and MSM *Minnegazette* newsletters and magazines are now posted on MSM's website.
- The museum's *Twin City Lines* history magazine back issues are now also posted on MSM's website except for the two years prior to the latest issue.
- MSM had the first intern work for the museum in the Russell Olson library. The young lady is a student at the University of Minnesota, and she chose us for her mandatory internship requirement for one of her classes. She accomplished quite a large amount of photo scanning, artifact documentation and other related tasks.

- Approximately 75 percent of the documents in the Russ Olson Twin City Rapid Transit Company and Minnesota electric railway research papers have been scanned. The papers are in approximately 35 binders and are the notes and reference items Olson amassed on the electric railways in Minnesota. **Floyd Child** has been working on scanning the documents and other items.
- A large collection of transfers discovered by member **Leah Harp** were received from MTM. The transfers and some other small artifacts were organized.
- Over 140 new historic streetcar photos and artifacts were catalogued into the collection database. The photo database now lists over 14,375 photos.

Como-Harriet Streetcar Line

- CHSL's George Isaacs carbarn was linked with the Linden Hills station's internet connection by underground fiber-optic cable and hard-wired for Wi-Fi.
- The wood platform at the Linden Hills station was removed.
- Initial planning for building the canopy at the Linden Hills station has begun.
- With the new tower car completed and in operation, the old tower car was donated to the National Capital Trolley Museum and moved to their museum in Maryland.
- Original historic TCRT no trespassing sign was restored.
- New battery-powered groundskeeping power tools were purchased. Thanks to **Karl Jones** and **Jerry Betz** for working on this project.
- MSM participated in the first Doors Open-Minneapolis event with over 900 people coming to visit the Isaacs carbarn.
- MSM operated the first American Sign Language event on several weekend operations. Thanks to **Anja Curiskis** who spearheaded this effort.

Excelsior Streetcar Line

- Both old and prone to failure heaters in the Excelsior carbarn were replaced.
- The damage to the rear wall of the Excelsior carbarn was repaired. Kudos to **Karen Kertzman**, **Jerry Draeger** and **Howie Melco** for supervising and working on this important project.
- The ESL carbarn passenger platform was rebuilt.
- The concrete apron in front of the carbarn was poured which was an important improvement to keep rainwater out of the carbarn.
- Thanks to Chief Mechanical Officer **Dick Zawacki's** efforts, Winona No. 10's motor was repaired and installed in the car. The work to repair the damage to the rear platform of No. 265 has taken precedence over the work needed to make No. 10 fully operational but we hope to have the car in service late in 2024.
- Emergency lights and exit door lights on the ESL carbarn were installed.
- Floor and safety features added to the tower car.
- The vehicle entrance to the carbarn yard was widened and improved.
- The work to repair the damage to No. 265 continues with an estimated completion date of June 2024.

Personnel Changes.

- Long-time member and volunteer **Jerry Olson** retired as Foreman and operator.
- **John Prestholdt** retired as CHSL Shop Foreman after many faithful years in that position.
- Many thanks to **Todd Bender** for his service as the Excelsior Superintendent. Todd has decided to retire from the position and **Karen Kertzman** has agreed to become ESL Superintendent.
- **David Downs** is now the MSM Treasurer replacing **Chris Heck**. Kudos to Chris for his excellent service over the last few years.
- **Rod Eaton** has retired as Special Events Coordinator, and he is replaced by **Pat Cosgrove**.
- **Jerry Betz** is now CHSL's Grounds Foreman, and he will be promoted to streetcar shift Foreman.
- **Jerry Draeger** is now the Grounds Foreman at the Excelsior Streetcar Line.
- **Katie Barron** will be promoted CHSL streetcar shift Foreman.
- Seventeen new operators and station agents were trained in 2023.

Looking ahead to 2024—Projects we Plan to Work on. Here are the projects and activities we plan to execute in the year 2024.

At Excelsior:

- No. 265 will return to service with the exterior repaired including painting the roof.
- Winona No. 10 will be in service. New window shades will be installed.
- ESL car barn lighting replaced with LED fixtures and bulbs.
- The ticket booth at the Water Street platform will be repaired and painted.
- A storage shed adjacent to the ESL car barn will be constructed.
- The mezzanine railings in the shop will be rebuilt to OSHA standards.
- All new radios will be purchased.

At Como-Harriet

- Revised Sequence of Operations featuring historically accurate rear boarding of passengers will be implemented.
- TCRT PCC streetcar No. 322 will return to service.
- The Linden Hills station's platform work, and the new canopy, will be completed.
- TCRT No. 1239 trucks will be finished.
- Two-hundred ties will be replaced and the Lakewood cemetery runoff ramp built.
- Russ Olson research paper scans completed.
- New radios purchased.

Chair **Isaacs** then announced that for this year and into the future, the museum will put increased emphasis on safety. In recent years, MSM has had several accidents involving damage to buildings and streetcars and also personal injury. Safety Superintendent **John Dillery** has worked with the museum's safety committee to develop a formal safety policy. The policy will go beyond those safety policies stated in the MSM rule book. It will establish policy for the museum's industrial/shop operations and provide specifics on shop

and physical plant maintenance operations such as jacking a streetcar or operations on the tower car.

There being no comments or questions from the members present, Chair **Isaacs** then turned the meeting over to the museum’s 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, 45 MSM members are logged-on to this annual meeting, which is a good number but not as many as 2022’s annual member’s meeting.

- MSM complied with all Federal, State of Minnesota and local statutory/regulatory reporting requirements,
- Because of the accident in July 2023 involving No. 265 running into the rear wall of the Excelsior carbarn, the museum’s liability and property insurance policies were not renewed. After much work by our insurance agent, new policies were obtained and approved by MSM, but at a substantial increase in premium as shown in the table below. We were lucky to get a new insurance carrier as several insurance companies refused to insure us.

Coverage	2023 Premium	2024 Premium
Liability	\$ 1,177	\$ 14,500
Property-Buildings	3,111	8,240
Property-All Streetcars	4,428	6,120
Directors & Officers	1,607	1,704
Volunteer Accident	300	300
Auto & Misc	357	--
TOTAL	\$ 10,889	\$ 30,864

- Total Membership in good standing. The membership numbers in 2023 were down slightly compared to 2022. Our member count had been steady at around 310 members until 2020 and now hovers in the 300-member range.

2023 – 296	2022 – 300	2021 – 278
2020 – 291	2019 – 310	
- Annual Election of Directors
 - ✓ Notices sent to members on or about February 24, 2024.
 - ✓ No nominations were received from the Museum’s members.
 - ✓ Two incumbent Directors will be elected at this meeting: **Ben Franske** and **Jim Vaitkunas**. Voting will occur later in the meeting.
- Board Meetings held in 2023
 - ✓ Four Board meetings were held in 2023.
 - ✓ BOD meeting minutes are posted on MSM’s website, usually no later than seven to ten days after the meeting. Members are encouraged to view the minutes.

- ✓ Members will be informed in advance of any scheduled board meeting and are invited to attend the 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 that also saves our museum funds spent on printing and postage of renewal notices, reminders, second notices, etc.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer **Dave Downs** began his report using several PowerPoint slides, copies of which are attached to these minutes. He began his presentation with the first slide showing the status of cash, savings and investments from September 2021 until the present. The information shows the amount of cash on hand, funds in savings and funds in the museum's investment account that was established in March 2023. It's clear that the good stock market over the past year or so has helped our investments grow between mid-2023 and the present with the 10.4 percent appreciation exceeding our goal of having the investments exceed the inflation rate by 4 percent. The museum also enjoyed good operational income and income from savings.

Continuing his report, **Downs** then displayed a chart showing historic information on operational income. Obviously, the year 2020 was not good but the museum has recovered nicely since then as shown on the slide. This slide does not show donations which will be shown in the next slide. The donations slide depicts historic trends with 2022 being an aberration as that the year the museum received a significant bequest from a member's estate. This large donation also caused the museum to establish an investment account as shown previously.

Operations expenses were shown on the following slide. **Downs** commented that this information does not include capital expense, nor the expenses associated with repairs to the Excelsior car barn. **Downs** then displayed and described the capital improvement projects for 2023 and the projected capital project expenses for 2024.

The final slide displayed the budget for 2024. The only disparity on this slide is that it doesn't show the increase in insurance premium for the 2024 budget year.

Member **Chris Heck** asked does the \$40.3K loss come from capital expenses or the operating budget? **Downs** replied that it was an operating loss. Another member then asked whether the museum has considered giving active volunteers a discount on their dues. Chair **Isaacs** replied that this has not been discussed in the past but during the entire fifty year-plus history of MSM, the culture and tradition in the museum has always been that members pay their own way to be a member and volunteer. In addition, to do so would be a significant administrative and accounting complication and the feeling is that we shouldn't put that burden on the Membership Services Manager or the museum's accountant/bookkeeper.

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

<p>MOTION: Made by Dave French; Second by Tom May That the MSM Treasurer's annual report be approved as to form and content. VOTE: Unanimously approved by all members present.</p>

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

Using a Power Point presentation (attached to these minutes), **Gustafson** began with an overview of the operational results for 2023 with a look at the upcoming 2024 season.

The year 2023 was a good year operationally compared to the years prior to Covid. However, for the Excelsior streetcar line the year was down because of the accident to No. 265 which caused the special events in the fall to be cancelled. For 2024, the emphasis will be on safety and **Gustafson** highlighted what the museum plans to do to emphasize safety during the year. This emphasis includes attendance mandatory at Operator recertification training and taking the annual recertification test in person during the recertification training to emphasize key safety points on the test.

The number of volunteer operators at both railways remained about the same compared to past years. The situation in 2023 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 several 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 2024.

Gustafson then reviewed the ridership statistics for both railways. The numbers were comparable to past years other than the Covid years. The numbers for both railways reflect the figures coming from POS data (i.e., paid fares recorded by the cash registers) rather than the shift trip sheets. Typically, the trip sheets reflect about 30-percent more riders than the POS figures show because the trip sheets count passengers who rode using membership cards, season passes, multi-trip tickets, etc.

The fall-winter 2023 special events were shown with the various statistics on rider counts as well as revenue generated by these events. Special events are a big deal for MSM because around 30 percent of our annual revenue is generated by these events.

Merchandise sales are also a good revenue generator as shown on the slide. Sales in 2023 increased by about 20-percent compared to 2022.

2024 Operating Plan.

Start-up Activities.

- All operating personnel will be required to take the recertification quiz in person. The restructured test will emphasize safety.
- Foremen and Operator meetings will be scheduled for April 2024.
- Recertification check rides will be scheduled for April and May for all 2nd year operators and those volunteers who operated less than 10 hours in 2023.
- POS Training will be required for both railways.
 - ✓ CHSL - training led by **Rose Arends**
 - ✓ ESL – training led by **Karen Kertzman**

CHSL

For TCRT No. 1300, passengers will now load through the rear doors or gates of the car and exit through the front doors. We're doing this to be more historically accurate. However, during certain special events passengers will load from the front of the car to expedite passenger flow. Detail on this operational change will be discussed during the Operator and Foremen meetings.

The regular scheduled operating season will begin on May 4, 2024 and continue 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.
- Depending on the repairs being made to PCC No. 322, the car will operate on Saturday 1st shift and Thursday evenings in June, July and August
- Full slate of special event operations in October and November.
- Special events planned include Doors Open Minneapolis, Summer Santa and neurodiverse special event operations.

ESL—The schedule for ESL will remain unchanged for 2024 with two shifts on Saturday and one shift on Sunday through mid-September. A full slate of special fall and winter events are scheduled.

A volunteer asked whether those who are Station Agents will also be required to attend the recertification meetings. **Gustafson** replied in the affirmative because of MSM's increased emphasis on safety starting this year. Station Agents, along with all operating personnel, will also be required to attend the POS refresher training at both railways.

Chief Mechanical Officer's Report. Chief Mechanical Officer **Dick Zawacki** began his report with a summary of the accomplishments achieved in 2023 regarding maintenance and improvements to the museum's operating streetcars. His PowerPoint presentation is attached to these minutes. **Zawacki** heaped praise on the volunteer shop crews at both railways for doing an excellent job in preparing the operational streetcars for service in 2023. Their work was vital to keep No. 1300 operational when PCC No. 322 was out-of-service after the accident in August.

TCRT No. 1300

- Made repairs and improvements without affecting the CHSL operating schedule.
- Repaired a recurring oil leak.

TCRT PCC No. 322

- Repairs made to both trucks on No. 322 will be addressed in a special presentation by **Dennis Stephens** after this annual meeting.

TCRT No. 1239

- Truck rebuilding project continues including work by outside shops manufacturing new gears, springs, motor support bearings, etc. The MSM shop forces are rebuilding the TCRT No. 5 truck frame.

DSR No. 78

- No. 78 was serviced and performed well during regular service.

MVPS (Winona) No. 10

- The car was made operational with the installation of the repaired motor, but no more work was done to put the car in service so the shop forces could devote their time to the repairs to No. 265.

Mesaba Railway No. 10

- The car was moved to track #2 in the carbarn but not much work was done because the repair work on No. 265 takes priority.

No. 265

- **Zawacki** then described the progress on the work to repair the damaged that occurred to the car in July 2023 using the slides in his presentation. Much of the unique structural woodwork is being done by Shop Foreman **Howie Melco**.
- In addition to the basic body repairs, some other work was done on the roof to clear and paint the canvas.

Chief Engineer's Report. Chief Engineer **Keith Anderson** reported on plans for 2024. He described the work to be done on the platform at the Linden Hills station to include:

- Removing the old rotten wood platform;
- repairs to the concrete retaining wall;
- building the step boxes; and,
- constructing the replica of the TCRT platform canopy.

The canopy project is complicated and will require the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board involvement, but he hopes the project will get done in 2024.

Anderson then reported that some major track work at CHSL will be done in the fall of 2024 with about 200 cross ties being replaced. MSM will also have an over-run ramp built at the Lakewood Cemetery (north) end of CHSL to prevent the problem that occurred in 2023 that damaged the trucks to No. 322 when the car ran-off the end of the track. Chair **Isaacs** commented that this over-run track will also be built with guide rails to prevent the car veering off the track to ease rerailing the car if that's necessary.

Anderson finally commented that nothing specific is planned for ESL but depending on the progress on the CHSL projects there may be several things that can be done there.

Superintendent of Training Report. Superintendent of Training **Bill Pekarna** then gave his report of the progress in training new Operators for 2024. Approximately 26 candidates stated they wish to be trained this year, but that number will likely be less as training progresses. The first two classes are scheduled, and the on-the-streetcar training will begin the week of April 8th. **Pekarna** commented that he hopes that the class will be a good one like 2023 when eleven new Operators graduated.

Information Technology Manager's Report. In the absence of Information Technology Manager **Ben Franske** who was unable to attend this annual meeting, Chair **Isaacs** listed some of the information technology accomplishments in 2023 provided by **Franske**.

- The video display computer in the Linden Hills station has been upgraded to show movies.
- At ESL the internet connection was upgraded from DSL to cellular and redesigned to make it faster and to reduce the cost.
- Updated the financial requirements system to be compatible with MSM's vendors.
- Put the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and *Twin City Lines* magazines on-line.
- Created a bulk e-mail system.
- Replaced the failed firewall at CHSL.

In 2024, the following technology projects are planned.

- Install the motor-airbrake interlock system on No. 265 to meet the requirements of our new insurance carrier.
- Transition ESL off the legacy voice data system.
- Clean-up network cables in the CHSL Linden Hills station and the Isaacs carbarn.
- Install video display at ESL.
- Install additional security cameras at both demonstration railways.
- Provide sales support to the General Superintendent
- Assist in development of new e-mail newsletter.

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 by acclamation.

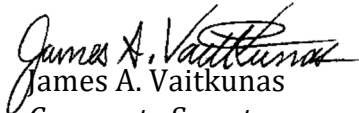
<p>MOTION: Made by Dave French; Second by Russ Isbrandt That Ben Franske and Jim Vaitkunas are elected by acclamation to fill Director positions on MSM's Board of Directors for a term of three years that expire in March 2027. VOTE: Unanimously approved by all members present.</p>
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Member **Bill Pekarna** asked a question regarding the annual meeting agenda. The agenda listed a report by the Excelsior Streetcar Line Superintendent, but it wasn't given. General Superintendent **Bruce Gustafson** replied that the information on ESL was included in his report given earlier in the meeting.

Adjournment. There being no further business, Chair **Isaacs** adjourned the MSM 2024 annual member's meeting at 8:18 PM. Forty-three members were present at the adjournment.

At the conclusion of the 2024 annual meeting, a PowerPoint presentation on the repairs and rebuilding of PCC car TCRT No. 322's trucks was given by senior shop volunteer **Dennis Stephens**. This presentation is attached to these minutes, and it concluded at 8:45 PM. Attendance at that time was 35 members.

Minutes
MSM Annual Members Meeting
March 28, 2024


James A. Vaitkunas
Corporate Secretary

ATTACHMENTS.

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