

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

Minutes OF THE ANNUAL MEMBER'S MEETING

Thursday, March 26, 2026
Zoom Application Tele-Conference
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Call to Order. Chair **Aaron Isaacs** called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on March 26, 2026. The Zoom web-based application was used to conduct this annual meeting. This was done for the convenience of outstate and out-of-state museum members.

Quorum. Corporate Secretary **Jim Vaitkunas** reported that thirty-five (35) MSM Members are in attendance using the Zoom application at the call-to-order of the annual meeting. (*Note: Attendance reached a high of 45 members at 7:33 PM and the number remained over 43 members for the remainder of the meeting.*) As of February 24, 2026, active MSM membership was 292 members. Therefore, a quorum was achieved and maintained for this annual meeting.

Opening Remarks. Chair **Isaacs** gave a summary of how the meeting would be presented. First, there will be the state of the Museum presentation which will be followed by reports from the Museum's officers and the General Superintendent, **Bruce Gustafson**. Finally, the last agenda item is the election of two museum directors. Following the adjournment of the annual member's meeting, a short Board of Directors meeting will be held for the Directors to elect the Museum's Officers for 2026-2027 and to appoint Class B Directors for one-year terms. Chair **Isaacs** then introduced the museum's officers and other museum superintendents. After that he began his report to the members.

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

The Year in Review for 2025.

Como-Harriet Streetcar Line

- Depot platform concrete repaired
- Depot canopy constructed
- 1239 wheels, axles and gears received
- North end of line runoff completed
- Radios replaced
- 1300's air compressor replaced, some siding replaced, roof painted
- TCRT "No Trespassing" sign restored
- Car barn computer replaced
- New depot and north platform signs
- Depot benches repaired and painted

Excelsior Streetcar Line

- Solar-powered electricity to Water Street ticket booth
- Car barn lighting replaced with LEDs
- Ties replaced and end of line runoff constructed
- Car barn bathroom rebuilt
- Car barn pit covers and stairs built

History Resources

- 171 new photos and artifacts are catalogued into the database. Total now is 14,895.
- Website history pages updated
- Streetcar history Zoom group started
- CHSL history signs along the CHSL line replaced
- Dick Stoner streetcar models purchased
- Express boat Minnehaha model installed at ESL
- Stillwater Street Ry. history researched
- Motorette booklet published

Personnel Changes. There is always turnover. My thanks to those who filled these jobs and have retired, and to those who have stepped up to replace them.

- Special Events Coordinator: Katie Barron will take over from Pat Cosgrove.
- Facebook editor: Sarah Dibble will take over from Griffin Lawrence.
- CHSL Grounds Foreman: Tony Lebda replaces Jerry Betz.
- Insurance Manager: Tim Gephart will take over from Jim Vaitkunas.
- Scott Benson will be promoted to Foreman.
- Jerry Draeger has been promoted to Assistant Chief Engineer.
- Eric Werner is now the ESL Car Cleaning Foreman.

In memoriam

- Chris Hawyer
- Art Abrahams
- Ron Neitzel
- LaVerne Leipold
- Dave Ferch

Retiring operating volunteer

- Greg Taylor

Projects in 2026

Como-Harriet Streetcar Line

- No. 1239's first truck will be completed
- Clean out car barn junk
- Shop pit lengthened
- Drainage improvements around car barn
- Roof leak repaired
- Roof gutter extended

- Rock apron in front of the Isaacs carbarn extended
- Carbarn doors repaired
- New events: Military History Timeline and Trolley Path Tour

On the above future projects at CHSL, Isaacs stressed that completing the first new truck for No. 1239 was important and a deadline of Labor Day 2026 was established. With the completion of the first truck, several of the projects on the list would then begin. The goal is to arrange the ready barn so three large cars can be placed in the ready barn. The barn needs to be cleaned out with excess tools and equipment, and we plan to participate in the annual Linden Hills garage sale event in early May.

Excelsior Streetcar Line

- Replace the carbarn roof
- Replace the carbarn doors
- Winona 10 enters limited service
- Begin cosmetic restoration of Mesaba Railway No. 10
- Assign dedicated special event carbarn docents

ESL Superintendent **Karen Kertzman** commented on the last bullet item. The intent of the special event carbarn docents is to provide more time for visitors to linger in the carbarn with a docent there to talk about the line, the streetcars, and the history of Twin Cities transportation. Historical displays in the carbarn and having three operating streetcars mean there's more to talk about. The overall goal of these changes is to have more educational opportunities for the visitors.

Chair **Isaacs** commented on the Doors Open Minneapolis event scheduled for May 9th and 10th. Over the last several years approximately one-thousand people visited the museum each year so this is a good event to support. General Superintendent **Bruce Gustafson** then discussed the new docent position in Humanity. He can insert names into these positions when either **Isaacs** or **Kertzman** sends them to him.

There being no comments or questions from the members present, Chair **Isaacs** then turned the meeting over to the museum's officers and Superintendents 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, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. He reported that as of this moment, 45 MSM members are logged on to the 2026 annual member's meeting, which is a good number.

- MSM complied with all Federal, State of Minnesota and local statutory/regulatory reporting requirements.

- Total Membership in good standing. The membership numbers in 2025 were down only by one compared to 2024. Our member count had been steady at around 310 members until 2020 and the Covid epidemic and now is in the 290-member range.
2025 – 292 2024 – 293 2023 – 296 2022 – 300
2021 – 278
- Annual Election of Directors
 - ✓ Notices sent to members on or about February 16, 2026.
 - ✓ No nominations to fill the two vacancies on the board 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 2025
 - ✓ Four Board meetings were held in 2025.
 - ✓ 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 membership through the Museum website. It saves time for Barb Gacek, the Membership Services Manager, and it saves the museum on the cost of postage and envelopes.
- Members are also asked to renew for two years. Doing that also saves our museum the expense of printing and postage of first 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 overall status of cash, savings and investments from February 2024 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 May 2023. It’s clear that the good stock market over the past year or so has helped our investments grow. However, the graph also shows dips in the investments which were caused by using some of these funds to pay for several big projects in 2025. As of the end of February 2026, the museum has approximately \$560,000 in total cash, savings and investments.

Downs then focused on the museum’s investments. The second chart shows the increase in our investment account between mid-2023 to the present showing an approximately 12-percent annual return which exceeds our goal of having the investments exceed the inflation rate by 4 percent. Overall, for 2025, the museum enjoyed good operational income and extremely good income from savings and investments. **Downs** then displayed a third chart which displayed the change in investment strategy that the board of directors approved in late 2025. Basically, the amount of funds invested in securities (stocks) was reduced by about eleven percent and fixed income securities (e.g. bonds) increased by about fourteen percent. This was done because of the uncertainties in

the stock market towards the end of 2025, especially in the tech sector. The Finance Committee felt it would be prudent to reduce the equity portfolio which tends to be volatile in uncertain times.

Continuing his report, **Downs** then displayed a chart displaying the FY 2025 financial information on operational income and expenses (budget vs. actual). The chart shows that income from the sources displayed increased in all accounts except for special events and dues. In the expense category we didn't spend as much as the budget allowed. In summary, for 2025 income exceeded expenses by \$67,131 which is a good indicator of the financial health of the museum and 2025 might be one of our museum's most successful years financially.

Downs then displayed the capital improvement projects that were funded in 2025. He then discussed each of the projects in turn.

The next slide displayed the budget for 2026. **Downs** commented that the FY 2026 budget was developed with a conservative view and the result is that the projected net revenue for 2026 is only around \$1.1K, i.e., 2026 is projected to be a break-even year.

Downs then displayed the final slide which displayed the capital improvement projects that were projected for 2026. He then discussed each of the projects in turn.

Bruce Gustafson asked what is included in the contributions account shown on the budget slide. **Downs** replied that it's basically funds that are donated to the museum mainly through the MSM annual appeal. Training Superintendent **Bill Pekarna** asked about the reduced amount allocated for the ESL car barn roof replacement. Chair **Isaacs** replied that the amount is less than the amount estimated at the long-range planning session in January 2026 because after doing more research, installing a class-4 asphalt shingle roof was more cost effective than the metal roof initially approved.

Bruce Gustafson asked if the members needed to approve the Treasurer's report. Chair **Isaacs** replied that there's no need to do that since it's a report. There's no statutory or legal requirement for the members to approve the report. Treasurer **Downs** commented further that the 2026 budget was approved by the board earlier and the report at this meeting is basically a follow-up to the members.

General Superintendent's Report. General Superintendent **Bruce Gustafson** began his report (supporting slides attached to these minutes) by stating he'll skip over the first slide which is an overview of the museum's performance in 2026. If members want more details, the museum's website has the General Superintendent's annual report which goes into great depth on the subject.

Continuing, **Gustafson** reviewed the ridership statistics for 2026 which showed that ridership in general has not changed much over the last few years. Total ridership in 2026 was approximately 26,000 passengers for both railways. These numbers are from the trip sheets completed after each revenue run but do not include charters and special event riders.

The number of volunteer operators at both railways remained about the same compared to past years. A good recruiting and training program helped immensely in maintaining a good crew roster. Note that 90-percent of volunteers actually operated during 2026 which is an increase over past years.

Gustafson then discussed the financial performance of both railways during 2025. The numbers on the chart are shown differently than the Treasurer's, but it's important to note the percentages of income from the several revenue sources on the right-hand column of the chart. Fares contributed fifty percent to overall revenue, with special events contributing an important eighteen percent. Special event revenue was down slightly in 2026 because several were not operated.

Operating Plan for 2026. Gustafson then reviewed the changes in operating schedules, and other details for the 2026 operating season.

Como-Harriet Streetcar Line Changes:

- Added Thursday afternoon shift
- Moved PCC to Saturday, both shifts
- Reduced weekend shifts to 3 hours (from 4 hours)

Gustafson then discussed the CHSL schedule and the reasons for the schedule changes at CHSL as shown on the bottom of the slide. Thursday afternoons we will be a three-hour shift. PCC operations are moved to both shifts on Saturday with a standard car operating on Sunday. Making these changes, and reducing shifts times on both weekend days, should help with the problem of volunteers not wanting to operate on Saturday's and Sunday's second shift.

Gustafson then asked **Katie Barron**, who is responsible for PCC training, to give an overview of the plans for training PCC crew in 2026, which she did. Barron emphasized that it's important that all Operators trained in PCC operations understand the process. She also noted the importance of training more PCC Foreman.

Chair **Isaacs** commented that the revised hours of regular operations at CHSL means that Charter Agent **Pat Cosgrove** can schedule charters at 12-noon on Saturdays, which is a time slot in high demand. **Cosgrove** then commented that the museum will operate charters on Saturday afternoons using a standard car during this high-demand period, which will result in occasional two-car operations. The Operations Department will also allow a non-qualified person to be on a Saturday PCC shift if necessary, so the shift won't be cancelled because of a lack of a qualified two-person PCC crew. **Gustafson** also highlighted that 2025 was a great year for charters and he thanked **Pat Cosgrove**, MSM's Charter Agent and **Karen Kertzman** for their work with the charters.

Excelsior Streetcar Line. ESL's 2026 schedule basically remains the same as in 2025. ESL Superintendent **Karen Kertzman** commented that the farmer's market for 2026 will run on Thursday from June through August. However, the farmer's market location will move from the parking lot adjacent to the ESL track as in past years to the front of the school which may limit the ridership because of lack of visibility. **Kertzman** and **Sarah Dibble** are exploring ways to connect with library events and boost ridership.

Recertification for 2026.

- All Operating Personnel will be deactivated in Humanity and will be activated only when they complete the annual recertification test and attend the recertification training session. Some Operators will need to take a check ride before they can be recertified and activated in Humanity.
- Foremen and Operator meetings will be scheduled for April 2026.
- All doors and locks in MSM will be re-keyed in late April 2026. Foreman will get the new key when they attend recertification training.

Chief Mechanical Officer's Report. Chief Mechanical Officer **Dick Zawacki** gave his report using the charts attached to these minutes.

- TCRT No. 1300 had its roof painted and a new air compressor installed. It's currently undergoing pre-season maintenance.
- TCRT No. 322 new batteries were installed, and the anti-climber was received courtesy of Bill Wall of the Shore Line Trolley Museum in Connecticut. No. 322 is also undergoing its pre-season maintenance.
- TCRT No. 1239 truck rebuilding project is on-going with all the principal components on-site. The first truck should be finished by fall of 2026.
- Duluth No. 265 had some problems with the electrical system but are now fixed, and this car is also undergoing pre-season maintenance.
- Winona No. 10's brake system issues have been resolved, and the car should see limited service in 2026.
- Duluth No. 78 has had work done on the exterior wood and paint and trim finish.
- Fargo & Moorhead No. 28 remains in storage in Watertown, Minnesota and will remain until room for it at CHSL is made. Plans are to restore the car at CHSL.

Chief Engineer's Report. Chief Engineer **Keith Anderson** commented that most of the significant engineering issues were covered in the Board Chair's report earlier in the meeting. The major project not mentioned by **Isaacs** was the unheated storage building that will be built under the Linden Hills Boulevard bridge. This project will probably not begin until 2027 although some preliminary work and coordination has already been done.

Special Events. **Katie Barron** MSM's Special Events Coordinator reported that there are no major changes to the line-up of special events for this year. Some of the special events will require extra volunteers for set-up and other tasks, and these volunteer requirements will be entered into Humanity/Shift Planning. Pumpkin patch will be moved closer to Halloween. An expanded military timeline event will be scheduled because last year's event proved very popular with our visitors. This event will also include some additional reenactors. **Barron** would like to do some "Trolley Talk" walk and talk events on streetcar history and schedule an event to celebrate the 80th birthday for PCC No. 322.

Superintendent of Training Report. Superintendent of Training **Bill Pekarna** reported on the progress in training new Operators for 2026. Thirty-two candidates are in training as of this date, but he noted that number will be less as training progresses. **Pekarna** hopes to graduate more Operators this year than in 2025 when out of 30 trainees, around twelve or thirteen were finally certified. On-car training should begin on April 6, 2026.

Information Technology. IT Manager **Ben Franske** reported that he and his IT crew have been updating the hardware and software of the museum’s servers. All equipment is secure and up-to-date and operating as it should, i.e., invisible to the user.

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** and **David Downs**. 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.


MOTION: Made by Russ Isbrandt; Second by Bill Graham
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 2029.
VOTE: Unanimously approved by all members present.

(Secretary’s Note: When the above motion was made and the vote taken, there were 43 MSM members present, and the time was 8:15 PM.)

Member **Cooper Hancock** then asked if Winona No. 10’s operations will be announced in advance. **Karen Kertzman** replied that we will announce when No. 10 will run. It probably won’t operate in regular service but in several special events. There are also plans to have an open house at ESL to let folks see the progress being made with the ESL carbarn and with Winona No. 10 and other projects.

Safety Superintendent **John Dillery** asked whether the braking-distance of Winona No. 10 has improved now that the brake work is complete. Chief Mechanical Officer **Dick Zawacki** replied that the braking distance has improved and is very close to industry standards contained in the Electric Railway Handbook (the so-called Richey book), second edition published in 1924.

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.


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