

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 26, 2024 MEETING  
OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE  
CHICAGOLAND LIONEL RAILROAD CLUB, INC.**

The January 26, 2024 meeting of the board of directors of the Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club, Inc. (CLRC) was held at the CLRC club house in New Lenox, Illinois pursuant to notice. President Herb Koch called the the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Present when the meeting was called to order were: officers Herb Koch, Ed Carter, Bob Ciolino, and Joe Smolinski. Also present when the meeting was called to order were directors Jeff Mills, Bill Trzaskus, Jim Amarati and Ed Zeglicz. Director Swav Kojro was absent. Ed Carter acted as secretary of the meeting.

The minutes of the November 7, 2023 board meeting having been previously approved by email, the board took up the balance of the consent agenda. In connection with the consent agenda the board unanimously approved a membership report by Bob Ciolino and the Treasurer's report by Bob Ciolino.

In his membership report Bob advised that as of January 25, 2024 the Club had 101 Regular Members who had renewed their membership, that since the last board meeting 13 new Regular Members had joined, and that as of January 25, 2024, 11 Regular Members had not renewed. Bob also reported that as of January 25, 2024 the Club had 16 Long Distance Members who had renewed their membership and that three long distance members had not renewed.

In his Treasurer's report Bob advised that as of January 25, 2024 the Club was in the strongest cash position it has been in since before the Club purchased the clubhouse. Ed Carter reported that as a result of the investment strategy developed by the Finance Committee the Club had earned just over \$1,000 in interest in the approximately 10 months since that strategy was implemented and that the earned interest was reinvested on December 20, 2023 in a brokered CD that matures in twelve months and pays interest of 5% per annum at maturity.

In connection with the Treasurer's report Bob also reported that as of January 25, 2024 total receipts from the sale of items in the Flaherty donation were \$17,875.75 and that total receipts from the sale of items in the Walter donation were \$16,407.00.

As part of his Treasurer's report Bob then reviewed the anticipated major expenses of the Club during the balance of the current fiscal year and in the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2024. In that review Bob noted the following major expenses: 1) insurance annual premium of \$1,816.00 which was paid in full on January 1, 2024; 2) condominium association dues of \$2,400 annually (\$600 per calendar quarter) plus an annual \$100 fire alarm inspection fee that is paid to the condominium owners' association; 3) ADT annual charge (estimated to be \$850); and 4) real estate taxes (estimated for 2024 to be at least \$5,200 and is payable in two instalments).

Bob advised that as of January 25, 2024 a total of 65 of the Lumberjack Lager cars had been sold (36 of number 586 and 29 of number 587), that those sales had yielded \$5,215.00 in receipts, and that the car had cost the Club \$14,400 to produce.

Bob also gave a report on the profitability of the Club's three business centers that covered the period from the beginning of the current fiscal year through January 25, 2024. Bob reported that as of January 25 the diner had a profit of \$1,234.44, the retail shop had a profit of \$9,772.57, and the service station (back shop) had a profit of \$2,836.66.

The board then took up discussion about handling incidents that can give rise to liability for the Club and an incident report form developed by Bob Ciolino and Ed Carter to be used internally to capture information relevant to the event giving rise to the potential loss. Bob reviewed the form with the board and Ed Carter related what information the EMT dispatcher asked for when he called for service for a visitor who had fainted and sustained a head injury during one of the December open houses. Ed suggested that information be gathered by the person making the call so he could have it available for the dispatcher. Ed also cautioned the board members about making any statements relating to any incident requiring a call to EMTs or others agencies and the importance of obtaining the names and contact information of any witnesses or good Samaritans. Ed also suggested that in the event of the need for emergency service that a board member or club officer should be the person to make the phone call for service. Joe Smolinski stressed the importance of all board members being notified when such an event occurs. Joe also advised that cameras inside the clubhouse make DVR recordings of what is happening in the club house and that when an event requiring emergency service occurs we need to make sure to preserve the recordings. Following further discussion and some suggestions from board members about the content of the incident report form Bob advised that he and Ed Carter would incorporate those suggestions into a revised form and circulate that form among the board members.

The board then took up discussion about the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary party previously scheduled to be held at the Old Warsaw Inn on April 13. Bob Ciolino suggested that there was not sufficient time to organize the party for the April 13 date. Whereupon discussion was had about whether the event should be cancelled or rescheduled. Herb Koch made a motion that the Club hold a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. Ed Zeglicz seconded the motion. Following discussion the motion passed by a vote of 5 yes and 2 no. Whereupon discussion was had about by how much, if at all, the Club would subsidize the party. Herb Koch moved that the Club pay \$15.00 for a member and \$15.00 for the guest of a member who attends and that the member pay the balance which is estimated at \$15.00 for the member and \$15.00 for the guest and that the member would be required to pay the full amount estimated at \$30.00 for any additional guests. Jeff Mills seconded the motion. Following discussion the motion passed by unanimous vote. The board then took up the question of changing the date of the anniversary party. Herb Koch made a motion to change the date of the anniversary party from April 13, 2024 to September 7, 2024. Ed Zeglicz seconded the motion. Following discussion the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The board then took up discussion about who would manage the preparations for the party. Bill Trzaskus volunteered to manage the preparations.

The board then began discussion about items that the Club could provide as gifts to members and guests as mementos of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. Herb Koch suggested a flashlight pen with the Club's name imprinted on it and showed a sample of one to the board. Herb advised the Club could purchase 100 pens of that type for between \$1.50 and \$2.50 each. Herb made a

motion that the Club purchase 100 pens in that price range. Bill Trzaskus seconded the motion. Following discussion the motion passed by unanimous vote. Herb then showed the board a sample of a laser cut coaster customized for the CLRC that could also be sold as an ornament. Herb said that the Club could purchase the item in a quantity of 100 at a price of \$5.00 each. Bob Ciolino moved that the Club purchase 100 of the coaster/ornaments at that price. Jeff Mills seconded the motion. Following discussion the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

The board then took up discussion about possibly purchasing coffee mugs bearing the CLRC name to be given out free at the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. Swav Kojro had advised by email that the price for 72 mugs would be the same as it was last time and would include free shipping. A couple of board members noted that the Club still had unsold mugs left from the last purchase and that the mugs were languishing on the shelf of the retail shop. A suggestion was made that instead of a mug the Club purchase beer glasses and have the glasses printed with the logo from the Club's Lumber Jack Lager club car. Herb Koch said he would ask Swav Kojro to look into the pricing for that type of glass.

Herb Koch then reminded the board that the May 2024 open house would be a special CLRC-LCCA open house during which LCCA members would be admitted free of charge. Herb advised that the special open house had been featured in the latest LCCA newsletter.

The board then took up a question about the timing for the removal of the Christmas decorations from the clubhouse. Jeff Mills expressed the view that the decorations should be removed shortly after the beginning of the new year. Bob Ciolino advised that traditionally the Club has kept the decorations up until after the January open house and that we have visitors who come to see the Christmas decorations in January because it is less crowded than during the December open houses. Ed Carter said that in the retail shop we tell people beginning with the November open house that we keep the Christmas decorations up through January to enable those who don't want to face the December open house crowds to see the decorations in January. Jeff Mills made a motion that the Christmas decorations put up for Christmas 2024 be taken down before the January 2025 open house. Jim Ammirati seconded the motion. Following discussion the motion passed with 5 voting in favor of the motion, 2 voting against it, and one abstaining.

Joe Smolinski then provided a report about the status and functioning of the mentorship program. Following discussion it was decided that instead, as the practice has been, of assigning mentors to new members that new members would be directed to existing members when new members have questions.

Joe Smolinski then reminded the board that the Club needs to start a formal backup training program for key job functions. Joe said he had previously sent out a list of key job functions. The board decided to take up the matter at its next meeting.

The board then considered an email report from Tom McGrath about the progress he had made in developing a program for prototypical running. Herb Koch discussed some of the highlights of Tom's report and noted that Tom had suggested that the last Sunday of each month be dedicated to prototypical running. Herb Koch then made a motion to dedicate the last Sunday of each month to prototypical running. Bob Ciolino seconded the motion. The motion passed by

unanimous vote.

Jeff Mills then advised the board that more of the tri-fold brochures are needed. Ed Carter pointed out that the current brochure incorrectly tells the public that they can enjoy running trains at the Club's open houses and that needs to be corrected in the new brochure. Herb Koch said he would take care of the correction and order new brochures from Dan Martinez.

Ed Carter then took up the matter of raffles. Ed noted that during the December open houses that the Club held raffles and tickets for the raffles were sold to the public. Ed advised that the raffles violated the Raffles Act because the Club did not have a raffle license. He told the board that the county issues licenses and that if the Club wants to hold raffles in the future it should obtain a license. Ed advised that the raffle the Club proposes to hold at its May 2024 open house for LCCA and CLRC members does not implicate the Raffles Act because LCCA and CLRC members will be given raffle tickets instead of being charged for them and because they will not be charged admission.

The board then took up discussion of Article IV, §9 of the by-laws. Ed Carter explained that that section of the by-laws limits email voting to questions of urgency and that under that section only the president of the Club can call for an email vote on an issue. Ed explained that during the Covid outbreak the Club had understandably often ignored §9, but that with the Covid outbreak past, the Club should now resume abiding by that provision.

The board then took up discussion of possibly adding more running days or shortening running time to increase run capacity. Herb Koch said that more members were running trains and it appeared that running conflicts were occurring. Jeff Mills and Ed Zeglicz advised that on run days they have not seen running conflicts nor did they see a need to increase run capacity. No further action was taken on the issue.

Jeff Mills then addressed the board about the hours of operation on run days. Jeff advised he needs to leave the Club by 2:30 p.m. on run days and suggested that the hours of operation be changed. Jeff then made a motion that the running hours on Wednesdays and Saturdays be from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Herb Koch seconded the motion. Following discussion, the motion passed by unanimous vote.

The board then took up a presentation from Nick Pucel in which Nick expressed interest in taking electronics courses at Joliet Junior College to enhance the services provided by the back shop and asked the Club to pay for the classes. Charlie McCarthy spoke in support of Nick's request. The board decided to discuss and decide the matter in executive session immediately after adjournment of the regular board meeting.

Ed Carter then reminded the board that under its by-laws the Club is required to hold an annual meeting of the membership and that historically that meeting has been held in April. Ed also reminded the board that following the 2023 annual meeting a number of members asked if future meetings could be put on a live podcast. Joe Smolinski said that could be done. The board scheduled the 2024 annual meeting for April 13 at 10:00 a.m. at the CLRC club house.

Bob Ciolino then addressed the board about some membership issues. Bob expressed

concern about new members and probationary status. The board was shown Article VII, §7 of the current by-laws that provides that the first year of membership is probationary and that subject to certain exceptions, the probationary membership may be terminated at any time. Bob also urged that the Club do better vetting of new members.

Joe Smolinski then advised the board that the Club had received a request from the Joliet Public Library to display model trains in the library's lobby during the month of October. He said the Library was interested in models of trains from railroads that had served Joliet. Some board members expressed interest in displaying trains at the library, but wanted to make sure that the Club would be able to display its name and publicize its open houses. The board took no action on the Library's request. Joe said he would follow up with the library and report back to the board.

The board then scheduled its next meeting for March 26, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. There being no further business the regular meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m. and the board went into executive session to consider Nick Pucel's request.

Respectfully submitted

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Edward Carter  
Secretary of the meeting