

**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.**  
**Executive Committee Meeting - Virtual**  
**Thursday, February 20, 2025**

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**I. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 PM MT by Caroline Tower, Vice Chairman.

**Present:**

Rick Marsden - Ex-officio, non-voting	Bill Lock	John Ferrell
Tim Tennant - Ex-officio, non-voting	John Engs	Melissa Sellers
Caroline Tower		

**Absent:** Don Stewart - Chairman

**Minutes:** Melissa Sellers, Secretary

**II. Introduction – Caroline Tower**

- Caroline started the meeting by thanking Tim for all of his years with the Friends and welcomed Rick to the team.
- Rick said that his heart is with the Friends and that he will do his best to fill Tim's large shoes.
- Tim appreciated the comments and stated he thought Rick was a good choice to follow him. He also shared that, after he leaves, he will just be a phone call away if Rick needs him.

**III. Executive Director's Report – Tim Tennant/ Rick Marsden**

**Railroad/Commission**

- The Saturday February 15<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting was held via Zoom due to a winter storm.
- Marvin indicated that they ran switch engine #19 from Antonito to Osier and return, noting very low snow levels. This will be a concern heading towards opening day.
- A tree/brush contractor has been hired to conduct vegetation trimming which should be completed by July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Loco 487's cylinders are being bored.
- Not much work has been done on Loco 463.
- Glen Avery, the shop foreman from the Chama, resigned.
- Alco diesel #114's control system has to be redone. This was expected, as the commission purchased it with the knowledge that it would have to be redone. The *Durango & Silverton* has done something similar.
- A premium class is being added to the offerings this year.
  - It will be added to regular trains and take turns leaving from Chama and Antonito.
  - The new parlor car will be acting as the premium car because only one parlor car can be at the end of the train.

**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.**  
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**Thursday, February 20, 2025**

---

- The cars will be in the following order (from the back of the train): Parlor car premium car, deluxe car, open gondola, concessions, coaches, locomotive.
- We will get to have this train set for the Moonlight Train.
- People from the back of the train can move forward to the open gondola, but nobody can go back to the parlor car unless they have a ticket.
- Trains will not be operating on Mondays.
- Ed reported that the Commission has requested \$1.275M from New Mexico along with \$800,000 for the Long Creek culvert project. In Colorado, a request for \$1.3M was made.
- The railroad is renting the San Luis Central Railroad shop in Monte Vista, from the Colorado Pacific, in order to work on K37 #492. Steve Butler is being hired as a contractor to manage this project.

**Friends Items**

- Due to our discovery of Chama Days falling on the weekend of August 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, the Moonlight & Wine Train has been moved to Saturday August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The train will board at 5:00pm and depart 5:15pm from Chama.
- Ed is working on the pricing for the Moonlight Train.
- The after-season photo charter has been confirmed and will run on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup> & Monday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. Ed is working on the pricing for this.
- The October board meeting will be held at the Radisson in Colorado Springs on Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025.
- The Spring 2025 Board Meeting and Banquet will be held at the Holiday Inn & Suites, 5050 Jefferson Street, NE, Albuquerque. The Projects Committee Meeting will be on Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, with the banquet that night. The Board Meeting will be Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. The group room rate is \$114/night + tax. The Hotel's telephone number is 505-944-2222. The dinner costs \$58/person. Please call Gwen and specify chicken or salmon for your dinner entrée.
- A request was made to wrap up the spring board meeting by 12:30 and have a private tour of the 2926 site. We would really need expedite the board meeting to make that work. Rick would need to get volunteers to stick around, so he wants to do it early. Caroline suggested that it might be difficult for us to get done before 1:30ish.
- Rick will be attending the National Narrow-Gauge Convention in St. Louis, MO, September 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup>. Friends' member Kevin Sherrow has volunteered to staff the space. Rick will be driving and will transport the train show goods in his car.
- Rick will secure space for the *Rails Along the Rio Grande* Train Show that will be held November 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> in Albuquerque.
- Chris James and Rick have been putting together a complementary, short, 4-page (doubled-sided) dispatch for riders on the train, at the depots, and at Osier. It has a heavy emphasis on Friends and recruiting new volunteers. The commissioners at the HPCC meeting seemed to like it as a concept. Caroline asked to make sure

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---

that it states that the Friends are a non-profit and to make sure that people are aware that they can make donations and become members. We need to see if the Docents would hand them out and walk the train to pick up the brochures left on seats at the end of the ride. Pricing for printing is not known.

- John E. said three docent supervisors have medical issues and will not be able to lead this year. Rich has quit as coordinator. Rick and Tim talked to Tom Stewart about potentially being the Docent coordinator.

#### **IV. Financial Report – Tim Tennant**

##### **A. Budget vs Actual:**

- Because we are only one month in, our budget looks good.
- Contractor services expenses is high because of the Thomas Moore payment for recruitment of our new executive director.
- Caroline pointed out that the budget to date for the donations is high, at \$82.6K. Tim said that Katharina mirrored what happened in 2024, so we must have had a large donation early in 2024. The year-to-date actual is \$23.8K.
- Historic Preservation Fund check has not been received yet either, so the revenue budget to date looks high, but we should get that check soon.
- Revenue over expenses is \$14,990.

##### **B. Detailed Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet):**

- Total net assets are at \$2.1M.

##### **C. Cash Balances:**

- Unrestricted is at \$291,763.
- Cash overall is at \$1.1M.

##### **D. SORFA (Summary of Temporarily Restricted Funds Activity):**

- A \$5,000 contribution for UTLX tank car is from Randy Worwag.
- A \$2,000 contribution for web cams came from Daniel Schmidt. Web cams now have \$21K in the fund.
- Caroline asked Tim why the Cash Balance of Temporarily and Permanently Restricted cash (total of \$509,504.40) does not equal the net ending assets in SORFA (\$500,980.42). Tim said he would talk to Katharina about it.

#### **V. Development – Caroline Tower**

- Caroline is going to work on the letter for the next PNGPF (which goes out twice a year) and will be going out in the mid-March time frame.
- Caroline would like to work with Rick to get corporate and foundation contacts, especially in Albuquerque.

**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.**  
**Executive Committee Meeting - Virtual**  
**Thursday, February 20, 2025**

---

**VI. Interpretation – John Ferrell**

- The committee will be meeting this coming Sunday to finalize the proposal for the Hollywood Car.

**VII. Education – Melissa Sellers**

- Steve is working with Simply Design to get them to recreate our websites. When they refreshed the website, everything that we had created, disappeared.

**VIII. Projects Committee – John Engs**

- John presented a proposal for replacing the rotten logs on the Sublette Bunkhouse. \$25-\$30K is the current estimate for replacing the three rotten logs and re-staining. In the 1920's, they created an extension on the section house. They poured concrete for the foundation backing along the entire wall for the section house expansion. They did the same to the bunkhouse to prevent it from moving down the hill. It was done piecemeal, as they dug under the log and put concrete underneath to support it. There is separation of a major structural beam in the front that was supporting the foundation. It is bowing outward now.
  - The contractor can do repairs but cannot put in a new wall under this proposal. Additional funds would be required if a new wall is needed. He can do the concrete repairs right away, unless the entire wall needs to be redone.
  - He will be jacking up the entire building at one time.
  - The contractor assured that the logs would be cut in the same way as the current boards and chinking would be done. The logs will not be pre-treated.
- Since this is a commission asset and a capital improvement vs. maintaining (the Friends mission), Bill asked if we could get funds from the commission. John said that Bill could ask, but he got the impression that the commission thinks this is our responsibility.
- Bill asked Caroline if she knew of any funding availability in New Mexico. Caroline hasn't researched capital funders in New Mexico in a while. Caroline said that most capital funders want bigger projects.
- New Mexico is considering a constitutional amendment that would make a change in the anti-donation clause that might affect the amount of governmental funding that will be available in the future.
- Caroline also stated that we need to work with the railroad to make sure the most appropriate group is going after government money.

**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.**  
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---

- Caroline observed that we have money in SORFA to pay for the \$10k deposit. There is \$24K in the capital fund and \$7K in the historic structures fund.
  - She suggested that we ask the board to fund the rest of the contract from the \$250K of board designated funds.
- A \$10k retainer must be paid now in order to get us on the schedule, to buy materials, and potentially put deposits down on equipment.

M/S: Lock/Sellers – Move to approve the execution of the contract for replacing the logs at Sublette. Passed unanimously.

- John E. stated that he has been able to post all forms and schedules on the website. Registrations will be released the first week of March.

## **IX. New Business**

- Caroline stated that Don wants us to put a focus on membership this year. She stated that the mini-dispatch is a good first step. She asked Rick to bring ideas to the board meeting. She also requested people think about board members that can take on Membership.
- Bill stated that the property tax for the Antonito CRF has tripled this year. It went from about \$2500 to \$7000. Bill thought we were registered as a non-profit for this property in Colorado, however, it looks like we aren't. Bill is researching this and is working with Katharina and Tim. He believes we will have to pay the bill this year because the protest time has expired.
- Tim and Bill started working two years ago (in March) to protest the property tax assessment in Chama. The protest was denied. They appealed to the Rio Arriba County Evaluation Protest Board. They had a hearing on November 30, 2023. We just got the board's decision that we won and will no longer have to pay property tax on the property in Chama. This came out just after we paid the \$3000 property tax for 2024. Bill will try to get a refund, but isn't optimistic.
- John stated that \$6,000 of the money budgeted for exterior painting at Cumbres will not be used because the crews were not able to finish some work in time for the painting to be done this year. There have not been enough people signing up for paint crew, so we had to hire this painting out to a contractor.

## **X. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- M/S: Lock/Tower – Moves to approve the meeting minutes of January 16, 2025. Passed unanimously.

**Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Inc.  
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**XI. Adjournment**

M/S: Lock/Tower – Moves to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

6:05 adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Melissa A. Sellers*

Melissa Sellers  
Secretary