

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY AGENDA REPORT

DATE: July 26, 2003
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Director Vicknair
MEETING: August 2, 2003
ITEM: Report
SUBJECT: Zephyr Project Report

GENERAL

Rod McClure informed me recently that a set of CZ headrest covers is being donated to the Zephyr Project. Based on information obtained on the recent trip, the specification for the windows is being reevaluated and I am seeking new quotes from the window maker based on input from Mr. Dirk Lenthe. Also, quotes are being obtained to have replica nameboards made for the Silver Hostel.

PARTS TRIP

HIGHLIGHTS

- Donation of 4 Whiting 35 ton Car Jacks. These are inoperable but repairable and valued at about \$40,000 total.
- Offer to sell the CZ dome-lounge car Silver Club to the FRRS.
- Contact with experienced car repair/restoration persons currently rebuilding a CZ dome-obs car. They have offered their knowledge to assist us in our restorations.
- Location and evaluation of 6 F7/9B units available for acquisition.
- Evaluation of MOW equipment being offered at bankruptcy sale.
- Contact with locomotive parts supplier and offer of usable used batteries for good price.

TRIP REPORT

The purpose of this trip was to evaluate parts and possibly whole cars and locomotives available to further the Zephyr Project. Doug Morgan accompanied me to provide mechanical experience and evaluation.

NRE

Major changes to the itinerary occurred right before we departed when VIA Rail responded that their parts and cars were not for sale. Since we would be in the Chicago area, the trip was modified with permission of President Rod McClure to include a stop at the National Railway Equipment facility in Mt. Vernon to evaluate the WP GP20s there. Arrangements were made with NRE personnel for our visit. However, the day of our stop, the shop supervisor called us back and informed us that, unbeknownst to him (and not on their work list), the WP GP20s had been recently scrapped. Instead we went to the Silvis facility as they advised us they may have some items of interest to us there. We did find two complete F7B units that would be possible complements to the 805-A and the 921-D, as well as making contacts for parts for our fleet. In particular, we obtained a good price for used batteries and are pursuing this currently.

FARGO, ND and SILVER CLUB

The major focus of the trip was a visit to Fargo, ND. When we were pursuing acquisition of the Silver Hostel, I had made the effort to locate her sister cars and evaluate their condition. I had visually inspected two that had been converted into charter cars with open observation platforms. One had been scrapped and one was stripped to a tube on VIA. This left one, the CBQ dome-lounge Silver Club. While I was unable to contact the owners, three different persons knowledgeable in CZ cars informed me that the car was being stripped for a charter conversion. After I finally received a phone number for the current owner this spring, a contact with him motivated this trip.

Mr. Dirk Lenthe is the current owner and allowed us to completely inspect the Silver Club. The stripping of the car had been halted and all removed parts were present in the car. The lounge, bar and dome areas were stripped but all major parts present. The kitchen and dorms areas are untouched except for some Amtrak decorations. The exterior of the car is complete, including windows, although all glass needs to be replaced.

While we could acquire the parts (Mr. Lenthe indicated that he would only retain the dome chairs and related dome parts), he offered to sell us the complete car for \$100,000. After some discussion, he agreed that he would be willing to sell it to the FRRS for \$50,000 plus an appraisal for tax purposes for his original \$100,000 price. He is in no hurry and stated that he wants to help us with the Zephyr Project work.

As part of our visit, Mr. Lenthe gave us a tour of his restoration shop and his CZ dome-observation car Silver Lookout. The work his team is performing on the Silver Lookout is marvelous and we had a chance to talk to one of his team. The techniques they have developed will be applicable to any CZ restorations we perform and their experience will be very valuable. He also provided us with the name and number of a gentleman who made custom covers for the Silver Club to protect it from the weather.

The shop was even equipped with 4 Whiting 35 ton Car Jacks. When Mr. Morgan mentioned our desire to have a set eventually, Mr. Lenthe responded that he actually had 8 jacks. The 4 operable ones and 4 non-operable. He stated that, between the other 4, there were enough parts to easily get one or two running and inquired whether we could obtain parts to complete the last two. We responded that we could and Mr. Lenthe offered to donate his 4 non-operable 35 ton Car Jacks to

the FRRS. This donation is worth approximately \$40,000. It was accepted by President McClure and we are currently working on moving them to the museum.

HOYT LAKES

Following Fargo, we traveled to Hoyt Lakes to evaluate a set of F9Bs being offered for sale. The B-units are potential complements for the 805-A and 921-D. We found 4 available and in overall excellent condition. The seller is seeking a very high price for them, on the order of \$50,000 each, but our contact stated that, should we be inclined to make an offer, we should just offer what we want. He stated that the \$50,000 was unreasonable (it was based on statements made by railfans and another RR museum a few years ago that reached the bankruptcy trustees) and that, should they receive no bids that high, they would probably reconsider.

However, we found that there were many other items of interest being offered, including a great deal of maintenance of way equipment that would be highly useful around the museum. These included 2 Kershaw ballast "sweepers", 2 tie inserters, a large enclosed gang speeder, bundles of new ties, ground throw switch machines and other items. A list was provided to our Roadmaster for his evaluation. The seller's rep we spoke with indicated some of them, while requiring work, could probably be purchased for a low cost.

ACTION: Report.