

Mechanical Department Report

July 10, 2020

Acting CMO DS Elems

My shop work started back up at TMCC as of this Monday leaving me with at most five hours a day to work at the museum, assuming I make it in early enough. This has already started to slow down some of my work around the museum, but it's the same schedule I had last fall and this spring so I expect to be able to work around it. Regardless, the cleaning of the shop continues and the west end is really starting to take shape. I've also moved stuff out of the old welding bay, far west bay (home of batteries, cords & CAT engines), and have started cleaning and organizing several of the boxcars on RIP1 to accommodate the movement and rearrangement of supplies and parts. Part of the work on the boxcars involved some servicing of the doors, at least as best as can be done; some of the sliding doors are so warped that major work is required if they are to ever be openable by hand again. There are also plans being worked on for clean up in the balloon area were 4Rail and the Inside Balloon come together.

The clean up is twofold. It will come on the heels of recent brush and tree abatement for fire control, as that part of the balloon has lots of dry grass leading into some of our tie piles towards the balloon center. It will also facilitate what we hope to be improved storage and organization of some of our larger railcar brake parts such as brake beams, hangers, slack adjusters etc. Currently they are spread out mostly in the two laydown areas, but can ultimately be found all over the museum grounds. This will also coincide with upcoming clean up in the "back 40" laydown area.

There will also be some work done to reorganize the ties, allowing us to get a better idea of what we have on hand and to get some of the piles that are falling over to be restacked in a manner that makes grabbing ties when needed easier and safer. I also hope to work with the track department on consolidation of track parts, tools etc., which like most things seem to have been spread far and wide across the property.

Habeck has been continuing to clean and do repairs to WP484. I've been supplying and testing LED lighting for both the 484 and other cabooses to help break the monotony of shop cleaning and as an extension of the ongoing LED replacements in the shop. By the end of the season I hope to have the shop and all operational cabooses outfitted with LED lighting.

Maintenance Work & Scheduling

As written above, the main focus is still cleaning things up. As progress is made we are expanding focus to the overall grounds of the museum. This is in part due to the large volume of stuff that has accumulated in and around the shop over the years, and the fact that I'm running out of places to put it. The laydown areas and boxcars have long been out of room and subsequent cleaning and organization is now being done as needed. I expect to be starting work on clearing out the central part of the shop, so as to make room for the long dreaded, albeit necessary cleaning and organization of the tool room and fasteners/pipe bay. My main concern will be the tool room first followed by decluttering the pipe bay which I don't plan to try to

reorganize until this winter; sorting and measuring pipe and screws can be mind numbing work after a while and would be best done when there is nothing else to do.

The amount of cleaning that has been going on shows how long overdue it's been. As such I don't mind that I've been pushing back my plans for some of the locomotive maintenance, which I fully expect will be made easier with a clean and organized shop. when I get back to the fleet maintenance I plan to have all mechanical department tooling separated and locked away from the rest of the shop tools so that it can be found when needed, an issue that hampered a couple of the more recent jobs such as the injector work on 2001 a few years back and the planned injector timing class for WP1503 last year. For the moment I plan to pause the shop cleaning once the tool room and piping bay are dealt with so that I can at least get the injectors done on WP707 later this summer. If time allows I may tackle the radiator issue in SP2873 late summer or early fall before resuming the shop cleaning. I expect the east half of the shop to hold a few surprises once we start pulling equipment out of the way and moving all the stuff stacked up down there.

For the time being I don't have much of a schedule to work with. As with everything we are taking things one day at a time.

Non Locomotive Work

In the last two weeks as part of his stay at the museum, Phil Schmierer got the brown F-150 running again, at least well enough to help in the brush clearing that has been ongoing. There are some issues that have cropped up since last season that will need to be addressed, mainly the ignition and power switch opening and shutting the truck off when being driven.

We also took delivery of the new battery for the electric forklift. We watered and charged it before installation, and it is a vast improvement. Night and day from before. A complete 180 from the last four and a half years. All the problems that we said were because of the battery failing have been resolved. This weekend will be the first time getting charged since it was installed. It has been going strong two and a half weeks now, not that we've put the forklift under excessive strain.

While not equipment work, shop light replacement is work all the same. The bank of 24 watt bulbs installed by Ethan Doty and myself seem to be holding up. It has been decided after comparing to a couple of 32 watt bulbs that we'll install the 24w bulbs in the rest of the shop; the increase in light with the 32w bulbs isn't so dramatic as to go up an extra 8w per bulb. I've got six more bulbs scheduled to arrive at the house sometime Saturday (likely while we're in the meeting) and I'll be buying another 13 in the near future. The center and north rows will all be converted this season, and the south row will likely be converted next year. The two lights on the outside corners of the shop will have the ballasts bypassed and converted to 32w LED bulbs as will the two light poles south of the shop by 4 and 6 rails, all four of which will be on dusk/dawn circuits. I hope to get around to that by the end of summer. The ultimate goal is to get the all the shop area lighting working again and running LEDs were possible.

This Month & Beyond

There isn't much left to discuss in this report that I haven't already brought up. The next scheduled work event is the for WP165, which last I heard was still scheduled to happen at the end of this month and first part of August.