

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY AGENDA REPORT

DATE: June 27, 2006
FROM: Director Vicknair
ITEM: Old Business 2
SUBJECT: **FRRS Membership Drive**

At the January 2006 meeting, I presented several options for increasing membership and asked the Board to consider them.

We have implemented one item, the Gift Membership drive. So far, it has been advertised in the Train Sheet and has resulted in several new memberships, as well as at least 1 current member trying to renew at the discount price. This was disallowed (and violated the stated rules). I am working on expanding the advertising for this and hoping it will continue to encourage new memberships. I would like to continue this program in to the holiday season.

Our overall numbers have been flat from January, but we have been gaining new members. This has been offset by some existing members not renewing.

I would like to request the Board authorize two additional items:

- Discount Memberships – if a non-member purchases an RAL, they can get an Active or higher level 1 year membership for ½ price
- Active Solicitation – contact former employees of the WP, SN, TS and CCT and offer them a special 1 year active membership for free.

Item 2 is based on a program being done by the Northern Pacific Railway Historical Society. They have had members of their organization contacting former employees and telling them about the organization. If the employees are interested, a nice packet of information is sent as well as a 1 year complimentary individual membership. Dan Brady informed me of this program and indicated that it has been very successful. The hope is that it would not only increase our membership, but by engaging people with a vested interest in the WP, would increase our donor levels as well.

Costs on item 1 would be the same as the Gift Membership. Our RAL staff would just have to make the renters aware of the program.

Costs on item 2 would be higher. Member Merrill Thurman has volunteered to join a Membership Drive Committee and take charge of contacting former employees and sending them their materials. There would be mailing costs, as well as material reproduction costs. (The packets would contain the FRRS brochure, a copy of the Zephyr Project prospectus, a copy of the Master Plan map, an issue of the Train Sheet and an issue of the Headlight.) We would also need to obtain a roster of employees for Merrill to work with. I am unsure how to obtain that.

Costs for item 2 would be covered from the previous budget authorization of \$1500 on a funds available basis from line item 67184 – Membership Expense (other). Item 1 was already approved, I would just like consensus direction to implement it. Item 2 is a new concept and would need motion approval.

ACTION: Discussion, Possible Action

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY AGENDA REPORT

DATE: December 31, 2005
FROM: Director Vicknair
ITEM: Old Business 2
SUBJECT: **FRRS Membership Drive**

The Society current has 992 total members breaking down as follows:

	US	Foreign
Active	478	8
Associate	67	
Comp	42	
Family	88	
Family Life	63	
Historical	2	3 (retired category)
Life	223	6
Sustaining	12	
total	975	17

This number has been declining slowly for several years (although there have been several new members joining in the past 2 months, mostly via the PayPal website). To maintain a support base for the Society and the museum, we need to find ways to increase our membership.

Looking at other museums, there are many ideas that have been tried to varying levels of success. I propose that we implement the following actions:

- Gift Membership Drive – give a membership to a friend for ½ price (Active or higher level only)
- Discount Memberships – if a non-member purchases a combo rental, they can get an Active or higher level membership for ½ price
- Advertising Drive – use magazines and newspapers
- Active Solicitation – at events like Santa Train or Railroad Days have special flyers given with ticket sales discussing membership and its benefits
- Hold Member Only Events – a Members Day, special Members Only excursions, etc.

I would like to set a goal of 100 new or upgraded memberships by January 2007. Costs would involve mainly lost revenue from discounted memberships (unknown as based on number sold),

printing for special flyers (under \$400 for 1000 half sheet prints) and any costs involved in holding a special member day event (unknown, but likely under \$1000).

Based on last year's budget report and the current membership numbers, each member costs the Society an average of \$20.50 to service, based on Headlight, Train Sheet, Election and related membership maintenance costs. (Some levels are different. Associate, for example, costs less due to not receiving the Headlight.) Based on this, I recommend that we limit the membership discounts to Active and higher levels.

As directed by President McClure at the December meeting, I am exploring realigning our Life Membership levels again and simplifying them, along with other Membership levels. Jay Sarno and others have recommended ending the "age based" Life Membership scheme and going to a higher flat rate. Based on Mr. Sarno's calculations of needed income from the Life Member dues, he estimates that a Life Member rate of \$2500 should be instituted.

There have also been recommendations to drop the Sustaining as a level or else give it more differentiation from the other membership levels. This should be discussed at a later meeting.

I am seeking Board Approval for a Membership Drive using the strategies outlined above and with a budget authorization of \$1500 on a funds available basis from line item 67184 – Membership Expense (other).

ACTION: Discussion, Possible Action

Reference – Current Membership Structure

- Associate membership does not have a vote, receive The Train Sheet but not The Headlight and are for one person only. \$20.00 annually (35.00 foreign).
- Active memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only. \$40.00 annually (55.00 foreign).
- Family memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, have one vote and include all members of ones immediate family. \$60.00 annually (75.00 foreign).
- Sustaining memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, are for a maximum of two persons with one vote each. \$100.00 annually (115.00 foreign).
- Life memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only for life.
 - Birth-17 years of age \$1200.00 or (5 payments of 280.00)
 - Age 18-39 \$900.00 or (5 payments of 220.00)
 - Age 40-61 \$600.00 or (5 payments of 160.00)
 - Age 62 and above \$300.00 or (5 payments of 100.00)
- Family Life memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, are for a maximum of two people and have two votes (one per member) for life.
 - Birth-17 years of age \$1800.00 or (5 payments of 420.00)
 - Age 18-39 \$1350.00 or (5 payments of 330.00)
 - Age 40-61 \$900.00 or (5 payments of 240.00)
 - Age 62 and above \$450.00 or (5 payments of 150.00)