

## FEDECRAIL REPORT JULY 2021

**DATE: 17<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2021.**

**PERIOD** The present report covers the period between Board meeting 108 (13 February 2021) and Board meeting 114 (3 July 2021), including AGM 28 and matters of general interest.

### 1. Board matters.

#### a) AGM 2021

In order to respect the requirements of Belgian law, this year the date of the AGM has been held on Saturday 19 June 2021. On the same day, the remaining business from the 2020 AGM has been taken care of. In total three members: ÖMT, Febelrail and Blonay - Chamby had send a representative, whereas nine members had used the proxy forms to express their vote on all issues. In total these represented about 76% of all the votes of Fedecrail members.

#### b) Fedecrail membership.

Between the 2019 AGM and April 2021, the Fedecrail secretary has received seven applications for membership. During the AGM, the Fedecrail members have voted in favor to admit all applicants.

- Ferrocarril de Sollèr S.A. (E),
- Seaton Tramway (UK).
- the Scottish Railway Preservation Society (SRPS) (UK),
- the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway (S&KLR) (UK),
- UK Tram (UK),
- The Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway Co. Ltd (UK),
- The Belarus Narrow Gauge Railway Foundation (BY).

#### c) Board composition after 2020 and 2021 AGM.

In 2020, two Board members, Jaap Nieweg (President) and Heimo Echensperger (Treasurer) were due to retire. In 2021 two other Board members, Peter Ovenstone (vice-President) and Jonas Svartlok (member) were due to retire. During the 2021 AGM elections have been held for four vacancies in the Board. Prior to the AGM, several members had forwarded their candidates for a position on the Board. These were:

- MRO and JHRF: Mimmi Mickelsen
- ÖMT and VDMT: Gottfried Aldrian
- Blonay – Chamby: Frédéric Riehl
- HRN: Jaap Nieweg

Our treasurer and vice president for many years Heimo Echensperger was not eligible because he had done more than the constitutional maximum terms of 4 times 3 years = 12 years limitation, that became part of the renewal of the constitution in January 2020.

During the vote, the Fedecrail members voted in favor of each of the candidates. The newly elected Board members have taken up the following positions and responsibilities:

- Jaap Nieweg, President and focal point for lobby and cooperation with special emphasis on activities in relation to Plan Paris and the Green Deal.
- Mimmi Mickelsen, vice-President and focal point for the Tram Group and Human resource management in the broadest sense of the word.
- Frédéric Riehl, Treasurer
- Gottfried Aldrian, who will be the focal point for operations and relations with technical bodies, like HOG and a new projectgroup for non-mainline related heritage rail operation
- Pierluigi Scoizzato was being appointed as vice-President and will point for the development of the strategic plan 2023 - 2028, the youth group and the development of the new communication policy.
- Bruno Fleury will stay as vice president until the end of his term in 2021.
- Josef vanderPerre is our legal advisor and Belgian native citizen, one of the condition under which FEDECRAIL is based on Belgian law.

## 2. Strategic Plan.

### a) Consultation with Fedecrail members.

After a period of preparation, the Board of Fedecrail has started early June with a series of consultative web-meetings with the national umbrella members. This results from the comments made during the 2019 AGM, where some members expressed the view that Fedecrail needs to become more member-oriented. During each of these consultative meetings, representatives of the participating member are invited to come forward with issues which are of concern to their organization. After this, also Fedecrail shares some main issues which are high on the agenda for the coming years, followed by a discussion about common interests as well as how members could play a role in achieving these aims. Most input from members is also of great value in the preparation of the 2023-28 Strategic Plan. Over the past weeks Fedecrail has had meetings with the Dutch member (HRN), the Danish DVK, both Swedish members (JHRF and MRO) and FIFM from Italy. Among the subjects which were discussed are:

- The introduction of ERMTS for locomotives used on mainlines,
- The application of EU guidelines on national level,
- The impact of the Green Deal on the running of historic trains and trams
- The introduction and use of contemporary methods of communication,



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- The difficulties to obtain agreement of running historic trains on abandoned railway lines,
- The legislation regarding the design, construction and testing of boilers for railway use.

More consultative meetings with umbrella members will be held over the coming months. It is expected that after this first round, there will be a second round and that meetings with individual members will be held later this year.

Fedecrail also would like to develop a platform where members could exchange between each other on issues of mutual interest and concern, without having to involve members of the Board.

- b) Cooperation with European Industrial and Mobile Heritage organisations.

The European Green Deal, which is the EU action plan developed to achieve the targets set by the Paris Climate Accords, will have a significant impact on all users of fossil fuels. Fedecrail understands that these will not only impact on the members who operate coal- or diesel powered engines in the world of heritage railways, but in fact impact on all users of coal and diesel fuel in a heritage 'environment'. In order to have a larger voice in Europe, the Fedecrail President has initiated contacts with the European umbrella organisations of historic vehicles, aircraft and ships as well as Industrial heritage organisations such as TICCIH (The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage) and the Europa Nostra Industrial and Engineering Heritage Committee. The main purpose of this is to obtain a common target and strategy to defend the interests of the Heritage community.

- c) Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028

A small committee within Fedecrail, with representatives from the Board and Working Groups has been set up to prepare a first draft of the 2022 – 2028 Strategic Plan. The views of members, expressed during the current consultations will be taken into account, together with current political developments in Europe. We hope that during the 2022 AGM, a first draft can be presented for discussion and a final document will be ready for approval by the members during the 2023 AGM.

### 3. Work Groups.

Activities of working groups have been mostly continued using digital means of communications. Consultations between members of the Working Groups are ongoing. The new Board member Gottfried Aldrian will coordinate between HOG and set up a working group dedicated to address all aspects of operation heritage trains and trams operated outside public transport networks.

### 4. Finances.

Due to several organisational changes, mainly brought about by the effects of the Covid pandemic, the expenditure of Fedecrail has remained at relatively low levels in comparison to the period before the Covid outbreak. The main reduction in expenditure has been achieved by cancelling all physical meetings in favor of webmeetings. This not only saves on travel expenses but also significantly reduces travel time and allows more frequent meetings than in the past. In view of this, even when taking into account the membership resignation of HRA and BRB by the end of 2020, Fedecrail has been able to keep the level of financial contribution for the year 2021 at roughly the same level as the 2020 membership fees, which was ca. 50% of the 2019 level.

5. Fedecrail 2022 AGM.

At the time of writing this report, it is still too early to give an indication about the 29<sup>th</sup> AGM which, according to Belgian legislation, will have to be held in the first six months of 2022.

It has also not yet been decided if and how a conference in conjunction with the AGM will be organized. About the AGM as well as a conference we hope to have more news later this year.

6. Cooperation and International matters.

a. WATTRAIN

Fedecrail closely follows developments from WATTRAIN and continues to participate in global web-meetings which are organised by WATTRAIN to discuss matters of common interest.

b. Europa Nostra

The Achenseebahn has been elected as one of the '7 most endangered' on the 2021 list of Europa Nostra.

c. ERIH and Plan Paris.

Further to what has been mentioned above under item 2b, the first exchanges between FIVA, EMH and Fedecrail on a common approach on how to defend the interests of the Heritage community in relation to the fossil fuels restrictions as part of the Green Deal have been held by means of a webmeeting on 7 July. We aim at organizing a webinar by the end of October, where the EU commissioners of Culture and Climate will be invited to exchange views and possibly indicate which room there will be for exemption in the use of fossil fuels for heritage purposes.

7. Next Board Meetings\*.



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- a) C115 (w) week 32
- b) C116 (w) week 38
- c) C117 (w) week 42
- d) C118 (w) week 46
- e) C119 (w) week 50

\* Till further notice all Fedecrail Board meetings will be webmeetings. The date of each Board meeting will be decided taking into consideration the preferred day of the week of the Board members.

Additional Board meetings may be held during 2021.

***Kees Wijnobel, FEDECRAIL Secretary.***