

THE FEVR FLASH

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM
1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025, MARCH, 2014

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BACK ISSUES:

Back issues of the FLASH and links to numerous railroad related sites may be viewed at www.FremontRailroad.com.

NOTE: YOU NEED TO HAVE NRM MEMBERSHIP TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THE FLASH.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

(Note: the following is not the official meeting report and only summarizes the activities. Only the approved meeting minutes sent to NRM members is the official report.)

The NRM Board of Directors met at the NRM Depot in Fremont on March 5, 2014 for the regular monthly meeting.

All BOD members were present. Guests present were **Greg Weber** and **Mark Kothenbeutel**. Mr. Weber is a Senior Partner in Midwest Rail Associates and Mr. Kothenbeutel is the owner of the Milwaukee Road passenger cars currently on NRM property which were used on an as needed basis in NRM excursion trips.

Mr. Weber offered his professional services to **re-vitalize** NRM and to bring back the rail operations. The BOD would consider the proposal and communicate any decision to him. *(Editor: The BOD voted on the issue later, deciding that it could not accept the proposal terms.)*

The Treasurer's Report was presented and approved.

A motion to terminate the lease agreement with the owner of the Milwaukee cars immediately failed. *(Editor: The current agreement with the owner has specifications for terminations.)*

An executive **session** was held during the meeting.

"NEVER SAY NEVER"

Some of the readers may recognize the title of one of Justin Bieber's hit songs but few, if any, would have thought it would apply to Union Pacific's Big Boy locomotives! But it was **good** advice!

Of the eight surviving of the original twenty five manufactured in the early 1940's, they seemed like a **poor** candidates for restoration to operational status based upon the cost and their limitations for travel because of size, weight, and track

structures. Their conditions ranged from poor to good, depending upon shelter and attention devoted to their preservation.

Union Pacific, which has on its roster the recently rebuilt **844** and the articulated Challenger **3985**, made a decision about two years ago to add a Big Boy to the fleet. *(Editor: the term Big Boy supposedly came from a remark by a worker at the Alco builder's plant).* Of the survivors, **4014**, located at the Fairplex, Pomona, California had excellent care and was acquired, prepared for travel, placed on adjacent commercial rail, and is currently in Colton, CA, awaiting travel to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where restoration to operating condition may take up to **five** years. One of the major changes will be a conversion to the use of fuel oil instead of coal.

All of this has been well documented by the railfan and preservation communities and Union Pacific on the **Internet** and will no doubt be the subject of many publications in the future.

THE 4023 IN OMAHA

The 4023 came to Omaha in 1974 and was located at the former Union Pacific shops in east Omaha. *(Editor: All Big Boys went out of service in the early 1960's.)* After these shops were closed in **1988**, it was moved to a location along Abbott drive, which is the highway to the airport, for display along with the Centennial **6900** diesel.

At this site there was no protection from the elements and vandalism took its toll. The City of Omaha eventually undertook a massive **redevelopment** of the Missouri River frontage which resulted in the current Century Link center and other venues. Much of the railroad track in the affected areas was to be removed and in **2002** the locomotives were relocated. The 4023 was parked south of the Durham Museum – the former Union Station.

In **2004**, Omaha officials and the railroad agreed to develop a new Kenefick Park at the southwest edge of the Lauritsen Gardens at 100 Bancroft Street. In the spring of **2005**, the moves of the 4023 and the 6900 were completed. *(Editors note: A photograph of the 6900 ascending the road to the park site is shown on the NRM web in the April 2005 FLASH.)*

A professional restoration service was engaged and the new park was dedicated

in October, 2005. Where small parts were missing, non-operational replacements were fabricated and paints were those of correct colors.

SPRING 2005 PHOTOS

Taken by FLASH editor



4023 on cribbing before powered road rubber tire wheels are in place. SCRIBBS of David City, NE was the contractor. Durham Museum in the background.



View east from 10th street. 4023 will go south across the UP double tracks and then across the BNSF track east of the AMTRAK station at the far right. It will then proceed on to Pacific street, go west to 10th street and then south to Bancroft and then east to point shown below.



Grading on the access road to the hilltop overlooking the I-80 bridges across the Missouri River. The locomotives are now on display there in the new park facility.

Much credit needs to go to both the City and to the Union Pacific for recognizing the values of these historic artifacts and for making them available to the public.