

2018 Convention Report

President Weber, Executive Staff, and National Directors:

President Weber directed me to make a quick visit to Cass/Elkins, WV, which I just completed this past weekend. This is in preparation for my discussion at next week's BOD meeting concerning our recent decision at our recent Spring BOD meeting in Delaware, to make Cass, WV as the site for our 2018 summer convention location.

Unfortunately, upon visiting both Cass and Elkins, WV, I find this to be a very difficult location for our summer convention. The big problem is access to either of these locations via land transportation other than private automobile. There is no passenger rail, no public bus, and no airport in the area with any airlines of any size, even serving any areas nearby. The closest would be Amtrak to White Sulphur Springs, WV via it trains 50-51, The Cardinal. It is 62 miles up the mountain by private automobile. There are no rental cars available at this location.

The Cass area is wonderful for any railfan, and it is like going back over 60 years in its historical ambivalence, what with the steam locomotives, etc.

I had a discussion with the Sales Manager of the nearby (9 miles away) ski resort of Snowshoe Mountain. She is willing to give us a \$125.00 rate for the week of July 16-19, 2018 up at the top of the mountain in a condo type of housing. There are many restaurants and meeting areas in this location, and they would have available buses to take our people down to Cass for the steam operations. We would have all our meetings, seminars, and banquet up on the mountain in this area.

In Elkins, WV there are some smaller hotels nearby the former Western Maryland RR station, where their trains operate in connection with Cass trains to/from Cass WV.

In all of these cases we still have the problem of "getting there" which will certainly cut into our attendance for our 2018 convention.

I did asked our bus person (Steve Siegerist) to investigate if there were a charter bus operator at Cumberland, MD, where Amtrak's Capitol Limited #29-30 operate on a daily basis. He did find out that there is such a charter service at that location. They quoted Steve about \$1,000.00 for a charter from Cumberland to Cass. We would need service going up to Cass on Tuesday evening (3 1/2 hour trip) and returning on Sunday back from Cass to Cumberland.

I need the direction from all of you as to how I can move forward on 2018.

One other option would be to locate the convention in Cumberland (yes, we were just there last year for a BOD meeting) and spend one very long day going up to Cass and riding their trains, but coming back to Cumberland that evening. Another day could be spent riding the nearby Potomac Eagle for a full day, then a third day riding the locally steam operated Western Maryland Scenic, which is right in town. (and will have a newly rebuilt steam engine in operation by that time)

Please give me your input at the BOD meeting as how I should move forward.

Thank you,

John H. Goodman

National Convention Chairman – jhgoodman2001@yahoo.com