

A Message from the Board of Directors

At the last two Board of Directors meetings, the issue of a dues increase was discussed. It was a long and involved discussion, as it should be, since any time the Society considers increasing dues, it should be for the right reason and should make sure that we either maintain or improve what we provide to our membership. The Society is in sound financial shape right now and why should we increase dues if things are solid?

The Board is reasonably sure everyone has seen costs increase in the past year. From food, to utility bills, to gasoline, to postage, inflation seems to have arrived and is making up for lost time. The Society's bills are no different. Postage for the *Sentinel*, renewal cards, company store orders, and general mail have gone up. Costs for *Sentinel* layout and printing have increased. Utility rates for the Society's building in Eldersburg have increased. The only thing that hasn't increased is the rate of pay for volunteers (\$0/hr plus the knowledge that one is helping preserve and make accessible the raw history of the B&O Railroad).

Because of these increases and the fact that the Society operates on a balanced-budget protocol, we have had to increase dues for renewals in 2022. Ideally this increase will be able to absorb cost increases for the next several years and will not need to be revisited. We understand that this may make renewal untenable for some members. Some may opt to go to a lower level of membership. These facts were all considered and debated, as was the specific rate of increase. The Board feels that it did the best it could. A compromise where pretty much everyone was relatively unhappy was made. Usually this is the sign of a good compromise.

One positive outcome of this dues change was an increase in the amount of color pages in the *Sentinel*. It's a marked improvement for the magazine and helps provide a better service to our membership. This, and the continued excellent work we will be getting from our layout staff at ThunderGrafix and keeping our budget balanced will offset some of the sting of this increase.

The Society is happy to answer any questions about this if you have them. Please contact us directly at secretary@borhs.org. If anyone would like to get more involved with the operations of the Society, directors positions are up for reelection every three years. Two will be up this year and all officer posts are up for reelection annually. Board meetings can be attended by Society members in good standing if they are so interested, except when we have to go into executive session during a meeting. We are also always happy to have more volunteers helping at the archives, the convention, the mini-conventions and writing for the *Sentinel* or writing or editing for the *B&O Modeler*.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and thank you for your continued support of the B&O Railroad Historical Society and its mission.