

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the HO Committee Meeting of December 05, 2021

1. Call Meeting to Order
The meeting was called to order by Ken Howard 1:00 pm
2. Roll Call of Member in Attendance
Those attending in person were Wayne Aiken, Brock Bowden, Richard Calfee, Bernie Dawson, Peter Donofrio, Dan Egy, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, George Lasley, Larry Pearlman, Ethan Quiram, Peter Ring, Tom Tieman, and Bob Witwer.
3. Ken Howard reported that progress has already been made on several items previously identified for the HO layout. These included:
 - Shelving for both Club and Member equipment
 - An inventory has been done on the HO equipment
 - We have had an evaluation of our DCC set up on the HO layout by John Wallis
 - A map has been created of the HO and N scale layout room
 - A map and inventory of the existing HO layout are nearing completion.
4. Review of the Existing Layout
A discussion about the existing HO layout was held. It was discussed and determined that:
 - The existing HO layout runs trains.
 - It is assumed that we want to preserve the ability to run trains while any changes or additions are being made.
 - It was decided that we should stay modular and use the existing layout as the basis of future expansion.
 - Wayne Aiken noted that the Sipping and Switching layout is modular and the existing HO layout was built to those standards.
 - Bernie Dawson recalled that it was painful to see the old HO layout cut up when the Club had to move locations.
 - After some discussion, George Lasley suggested that we use the term sectional rather than modular, because there are too many connotations associated with the term modular. Those in attendance agreed to use the term modular.
 - It was agreed that we stay with some sort of sectional construction for the expansion.
 - Ken made the group aware of some 14 sectional modules from the old New Bern layout that are available, if we determine they are useful for our purposes. The modules are in Greenville, NC. If we decide to obtain them, it will require a significant effort.
5. New Items Suggested for the Updated and Expanded HO Layout
Items that have been suggested for the expanded layout include:
 - Topography
 - Multiple grades
 - Turntable capable of turning a large locomotive
 - More industries and sidings giving more opportunities for operations

- A way to turn a train around, be it a reversing loop or a wye.
- Brock Bowden suggested that we maintain the three main line setup for those who like to run trains.
- Ken Howard commented that the lines may not be side by side but could still exist.
- Randy Foulke suggested a staging yard be added to the layout. Ken explained an isolated staging yard along the side wall that could be used to assemble trains without power so the rest of the layout will not experience shorts that are now common.

6. Expansion Scenarios

Ken Howard presented three different scenarios for consideration:

- Number One allows for the addition of 90 square feet of floor space for the HO layout.
- Number Two allows for the addition of 155 square feet of floor space for the HO layout.
- Number Three allows for the addition of 122 square feet of floor space for the HO layout.
- After much discussion, a motion was made by Larry Pearlman and seconded by Bob Witwer to proceed with option two, the 155 square foot addition.
- The motion passed by a vote of 13 to 2.

7. Additional Ideas

As the discussion continued, several other ideas were mentioned:

- Lift outs or removable bridges to allow easier access to the center of the layout.
- Lower the existing layout by three to four inches.
- Consider a travelling HO layout to help promote the Club. The two modules to be removed from the existing layout could become a basis for a travelling layout.
- It was asked if anyone has access to software that allows computer aided design for track planning. Examples include CADRAIL, SCARM, or the Surveyor module in Trainz.

8. Next Steps

- It was determined that HO committee will hold monthly meetings.
- The January meeting will be held at the Clubhouse at 1:00 pm on Sunday, January 16.
- A work session needs to be scheduled in the near future to put the sections formerly used for the Lego layout into storage. Part of this workday will include cleaning up the storage rooms so the Lego tables can be stored. December 15th was selected for this effort following the breakfast meeting.
- We also need an inventory of materials that the Club has in storage that could be used to build the HO expansion. This will help us establish a cost estimate with which we can seek funding from the Board. This inventory will be handled by Peter Donofrio, Randy Foulke, and Ken Howard and will be available for the January meeting.

- Members are advised that anything observed needing work on the layout (track problems, etc.) needs to be reported to Ken.
- Any locomotives or rolling stock needing repair should be placed on the new Bad Order shelf.
- An additional subcommittee was established to develop options for track plans that will meet the objectives for the modification and expansion. The following members volunteered to work on options: Bob Witwer, Peter Donofrio, Brock Bowden, Ethan Quiram, Tom Tieman, and Peter Ring.

9. Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 2:07 pm.