

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting of May 1, 2023

1. Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call of Board

The meeting was called to order at 6:59 pm by President John Spach.

Board members in attendance were Wayne Aiken, Richard Calfee, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Mike Keelean, John Spach, and Bob Witwer.

2. Recognition of Additional Members and Guests in Attendance and on Zoom

Additional members attending in person were Bernie Dawson, Randy Foulke, Clif Kelly, Ted Kunstling, John Mezera, and Don Weaver.

Members attending by Zoom were Ed Bottum, Liam Bryant, Craig Doggett, Jimmy Hall, George Lasley, and John Wallis.

One guest, Haydon Harrison, attended by Zoom.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Ken Howard made a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting as submitted. It was seconded by Bob Witwer and passed unanimously

4. Treasurers Report

Mike Keelean gave the Treasurer's report.

He reported that the quarterly sales tax has been paid.

Tom Garren made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. It was seconded by Bob Witwer and passed unanimously.

5. Communications with the Club

Richard Calfee talked with a visitor from Pennsylvania.

John Spach stated that he has had six or seven requests to buy advance tickets for our Spring show.

John Spach also stated that members of the Club should not make changes or repairs to equipment belonging to visitors. You can give advice or suggestions, but let the visitors do the work.

Ted Kunstling reported that he had been in contact with a person on Facebook who wants to make a donation to the Club as well as fill out an application for membership. He also stated that boosting our information on Open House and our shows are getting good exposure.

6. Committee Reports

a. Membership

We have three applicants who will be eligible for membership at the May 18th meeting.

b. Ways and Means

There will be no dues increase for fiscal year 2023-2024.

Mike Keelean requested that when members pay their dues to note on the envelope that the check or credit card receipt is for their dues and place the envelope in the Treasure's box in the library.

c. Facilities

It was noted that four throttles were damaged at the recent Open House. Members are reminded that we all must take responsibility for taking care of all Club equipment.

7. Old Business.

Randy Foulke offered some observations from the Open House, concerning throttles.

a. Multiple occasions were observed of throttles hanging from the plug receptacle.

b. Multiple occasions were observed of throttles placed on top of layout and scenery.

1) One fell to the floor.

c. All cords that John Spach produced and placed in the shop are now missing.

d. Two of the UT6D throttles were damaged.

1) One screen is not working.

2) One throttle has tab of receptacle broken so that cord does not remain in the throttle.

e. RECOMMENDATION

After many attempts to inform members of throttle etiquette, we are continuing to have issues with throttles not being used properly, and members not being considerate of other members. The Board may need to revisit the use of Club-owned throttles. Continued improper use may result in extra costs to the Club.

Scott Hall recommended the Club establish a check out – check in procedure for throttles.

Ted Kunstling noted that he closed the Club on Sunday and at that time all throttles were plugged into the Loconet connectors and were in their holders.

Next Randy Foulke shared more observations about the Open House.

a. Some members were disappointed they could not operate, or could not operate as they desired, on the HO layout due to some members operating for an extended time.

- b. The Club is growing, and HO scale layout members need to be considerate of other members.
- c. There were instances of some members parking their trains on mainline tracks.
- d. Members were staging their trains on the mainline tracks.
Trains need to be staged on sidings or staging tracks.
- e. Operation needs to adhere to railroad standards, which means right-hand running. Observed an instance where mains 1, 2, and 3 were all running the same direction at the same speed and at the same location (looked like a parade lap at the Indy 500).
- f. Members were not remaining with their train.
At least one instance where someone ran into the back of another train. This can result in damage to rolling stock.
- g. Members should not be socializing in the aisle on the backside of the HO layout as this can cause problems with members operating trains.
- h. Members should not leave cars or locos on scenery.
- i. Vehicles on the layout were moved during the Open House. This was likely done by children. Members need to help police activities during an Open House by non-members, especially children.
- j. RECOMMENDATION
A committee needs to be formed, consisting of two at-large members, one Board member, and the President as an ex officio member, to develop a set of special operating procedures during an Open House. The committee will come back with the special operating procedures by the next business meeting. A membership hearing would be held to present the procedures and take comments from members. If comments were significant enough to require revisions, the proposed procedures would be revised for presentation at the next Board meeting, and then adopted, if the Board approves. The membership hearing would be advertised at the membership meeting, the newsletter, and an email to the entire membership.

John Spach suggested we come up with a draft version of a “Rules of the Road” document. This should be reviewed at the next Board meeting.

Bernie Dawson stated that the cords on the controllers for the N scale layout are too short and requested to get some longer ones or extensions for the existing cords.

Ted Kunstling suggested that we refer these issues to the HO committee.

John Spach stated that each layout needs its own set of rules of operation. We also need staging tables to unpack equipment and place it on the layout for running.

John Spach further stated that he will establish a new committee and name the members to get started. The committee will work to establish the rules for each layout.

John Spach also established the role of dispatcher or train master to manage operations during an Open House. This will be especially important for the HO layout.

k. HO Layout

Ken Howard reported that the sidings into the engine facility have been installed.

The next HO committee meeting is May 21st. At that meeting plans will be reviewed for how to develop the industrial area.

l. Spring Show

George Lasley reported that everything seems to be in order for the show.

A few tables will be vacant but will probably be used at the show.

Members should arrive at the Club at 5:00 pm on Thursday to load the truck.

On Friday the building at the Fairgrounds will be open at 8:00 am.

George also requested a volunteer to place the double-sided real estate style signs along Youth Center Drive. Bob Witwer volunteered to do that task.

m. Open House

Clif Kelly reported that we had 70+ attendees for the Open House. We got several leads for new members and advertised the upcoming Spring show.

n. Ted Kunstling inquired about the possibility of us advertising and being open on Wednesday again. After some discussion it was decided not to officially open on Wednesday at this time.

o. Development Committee

Bob Witwer reported on the activities searching for a new home for the Club. He asked if the west side of Smithfield is too far. We are also looking south, east and south west of Raleigh. It is realized that we cannot afford too much more rent. It is felt we need to find an abandoned building that needs to be fixed up.

Members are requested to notify Bob Witwer of the address of any building they see that meets this criteria.

John Mezera mentioned the building at Hwy 54 and Page Road that used to house a Social Security office.

8. New Business

- a. Bernie Dawson requested funds for the purchase of new N scale trucks and couplers to make all Club equipment consistently equipped.
- b. Ken Howard made a motion to approve up to \$150.00 for this purchase. Richard Calfee seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.
- c. Wayne Aiken reported that the gym is using a parking lot across the street from our driveway. We should be cautious and look out for pedestrians crossing the street from that parking lot when we pull out of the driveway.
- d. Ted Kunstling stated that we should be thankful for having a well-stocked local hobby shop such as Nicks in our area.
- e. Randy Foulke made a suggestion for the establishment of an Assistant Treasurer position.
- f. The Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club has extensive monetary assets and has many monetary obligations. The administration of these assets and obligations has become complex and requires a much expertise and organization. The NRV Treasurer has been performing an excellent job of managing the assets and obligations. However, the Board should consider the appointment of an Assistant Treasurer to be an understudy, to take over in an emergency, and provide support to the Treasurer.
- g. George Lasley offered some thoughts on acquiring more space. He thinks the goal is to own our own building. This will require several members to make significant donations or for several members to sign a mortgage.
- h. Scott Hall suggested that we look for a grant.

9. Adjournment of the Board Meeting

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.