

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the HO Committee Meeting of August 20, 2023

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm by Ken Howard.

2. Roll Call of Members in Attendance

Members attending were Wayne Aiken, Alan Bradley, Pete Donofrio, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Clif Kelly, Ted Kunstling, Collin Martinko, Adam Servas, Alan Servas, and Tom Tiemann.

3. Main Four Discussion

A discussion was held to review the plans submitted for the expansion of Main Four. Three plans were prepared and presented by Collin Martinko and were discussed. It was decided that the third plan submitted by Collin was the preferred plan. This features a stub end branch to serve the proposed mine. Bob Witwer will be presented with this plan so he can build in the foam to shape the mountain.

4. General

There are needs for both track work and scenery work on the HO layout. Thanks to Tom Tiemann for the switch throws in the industrial area.

People are encouraged to work on scenery ideas. Collin Martinko is working on completing a road. Ken Howard requested everyone to make sure the scenery they install is glued down, otherwise it will be picked up the next time someone vacuums the layout. Also, be careful not to glue ballast in such a way that it fouls switch points. All other ballast must ultimately be glued down. Most of all, be careful and make sure your scenery does not impede the operation of the railroad. We do have two hand vacs that are good for reclaiming ballast once you are through with your installation.

Ken Howard next presented John Spach's Ten Commandments of the Shop. They are:

1. Thou shall not make a mess and not clean it up.
2. Thou shall return any and all tools used to their rightful storage place.
3. Thou shall turn off all power tools and strips when finished using them.
4. Thou shalt not remove any tools from the clubhouse without permission of the Board.
5. Thou shall not leave unfinished projects on the work bench area.
6. Thou must be at least 18 to use power tools in the shop.
7. Thou shall use appropriate eye and ear protection when using power tools.
8. Thou shall respect the rights of any and all others who use the shop.
9. Thou shall replace any and all parts used on personal equipment and any tools damaged.
10. If thou can't adhere to and follow these commandments, thou shall not have rights to access and use the Shop.

Several ideas and practices were gained from the Aberdeen trip. These include protecting the layout with sliding Plexiglas panels that are normally locked during public display but can be easily opened for access to the layout.

Members of the public are not allowed to bring their own trains to run on the Club layout.

Club members can run their trains on the layout.

Collin Martinko suggested that we should make our scenery reflect the area we are modeling.

The industrial area needs work to be finished. Don't forget the roads and parking lots for this area.

There is a switch behind the reversing loop that needs to be replaced and the roadbed under and around the switch needs to be leveled.

Ken has installed the bridge on Main Four extension.

It was agreed to isolate the Main Four extension from the legacy layout. This will let the expansion (branch) operate independently from the rest of the layout.

When looking at equipment on the Club storage racks, verify the cars have a three digit inventory number. If a piece of equipment does not have an inventory number, it should be considered personally owned and placed on the member-owned equipment shelves. Do not run other people's equipment.

Ted Kunstling reminded everyone that sometimes less is more on scenery.

It was also suggested to replace a cornfield at the end of the legacy layout with a forest to provide a visual break or screen between areas on the layout.

It was further suggested that we have a tree making day on September 16th beginning at noon. It is hoped that John Spach will provide lunch for those participating in the workshop.

Tom Tiemann asked if we were going to have a DC loop on the layout. Adam Servas stated that some layouts have a dedicated DC track. Ken Howard stated that we have decided to be DCC only, with the possibility of running DC equipment on address 00.

Adam also asked if we need radios for our operations. There was no decision on radios at this time.

The next meeting of the HO committee will be on September 17th at 1:00 pm.

Tom Garren encouraged members to remind everyone using the layout to use the staging tracks. This will minimize shorts occurring while making up or disassembling trains.

Ken Howard related the problems we are having with coupler springs. It is believed that their loss is due to coupling with excessive force.

Tom Garren reminded everyone to use the bad order system to get cars repaired.

A power plant is considered as a user of coal from the mine. Concern was expressed about it maybe being too much in the space available.

Clif Kelly asked for verification of the Main Four extension. Is it a loop or a stub? It is proposed to be a stub.

Peter Donofrio asked about the situation the Aberdeen club has for space. Ken Howard stated that Aberdeen pays the rent and utilities as the town owns the station and museum.

Ken Howard asked to let him know of any ideas the members have for future workshops.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.