

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the HO Committee Meeting of January 21, 2024

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Ken Howard.

2. Roll Call of Members in Attendance

Members attending were Wayne Aiken, Alan Bradley, Liam Bryant, Pete Donofrio, Dan Egy, Jake Forbes, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Ralph James, Ted Kunstling, George Lasley, Paul Lebieczinski, Collin Martinko, Don McPherson, Phil Michaud, Adam Servas, Jim Smith, and John Spach.

3. Initial Comments

Ken Howard commented that we have not had a meeting since November.

4. Rules Committee

The Rules committee is developing a document on operating trains on the HO and N scale layouts.

The Rules committee is also developing a plan for new member orientation. This will require input from each layout team.

Randy Foulke commented that the Rules committee is working on a policy where members must provide their own throttles. This includes using a cell phone for a throttle. The document being created will outline how to use a cell phone for a throttle. With the Wi-Fi upgrade being implemented on the HO layout, an unlimited number of cell phone throttles can be accommodated.

Several items were suggested for inclusion in the documents being produced by the Rules committee. These include:

- Start up and shut down procedures for the layout.
- Operation of throttles and controllers

Peter Donofrio noted that some Loconet panels do not currently work, and some throttles are broken. These Loconet panel problems will be referred to Ralph James for investigation and repair. One known bad location is near the engine house at the back of the layout.

A discussion was held to briefly describe the rules for engines and rolling stock. Any item that is stored on the shelves and is Club owned is available for anyone to use.

If Club equipment has a problem, the established bad order system should be used to start the repair process. That means placing the car in an Athearn "blue box" on the bad order shelf and filling out a card describing the problem.

Members need to make sure the Club and member owned equipment is stored separately and not intermingled. John Spach commented to be aware of which shelves are for member car storage and which shelves are for Club car storage.

Equipment put on the layout to run should be taken off the layout when finished. This includes if a member is leaving for a while and planning to come back. In this case the train should be removed from the layout during the absence.

George Lasley suggested that cars switched into industries should stay and only trains on the main line should be removed. After more discussion the final suggestion was that no trains are to be left on the main line or sidings.

Ted Kunstling asked if personal cars should be marked. All Club equipment is identifiable by a three digit number on the underside. Personal equipment will not have that number.

Tom Garren suggested members put a sticker on the bottom of their equipment with their initials on the sticker. The idea was rejected because stickers may fall off and foul track.

Track cleaning cars are in the blue box on the back shelf.

After much discussion Ken Howard volunteered to write up a straw man to organize these suggestions for review.

Randy Foulke summarized the progress of the Rules committee by stating that they are working on three documents: one covering Open House procedures, one for new member orientation, and one for operating rules. The third document is nearing completion.

5. General

It was noted the Richard Calfee has been repainting the edges of the layout. Also, new module numbers are being applied. This will ultimately include the modules on the expansion.

6. Emergency Procedures

It was noted that we need verbiage concerning emergency procedures at the Club. We do not have an AED at the present time.

CPR training for the Club has been investigated and is too expensive to do at this time. If something is sparking turn the power off.

It was suggested there needs to be a Rules section on emergency procedures for the Club as a whole.

Ted Kunstling commented that training is needed for individuals wanting to use the power tools in the shop.

Phil Michaud suggested there be two people in the shop when power tools are being used.

Collin Martinko asked about filters for air in the shop.

George Lasley stated that one person operating the power tools should be ok, but it is acknowledged that the user assumes all risk. Rules for the Shop are beyond the purview of the HO Committee.

7. Club Shut Down

Proper shut down of the Club needs to be done every time.

Dan Egy mentioned to be sure all doors are locked before leaving. He also stated that he clears the memory on the command station when shutting down the layout.

Ralph James suggested pressing the power button on the laptop on the HO layout to wake it up. This will start JMRI and Wi-Fi. For now the LNWI will remain in place.

8. Guests

Ken Howard began a discussion about limitations for guests.

Collin Martinko noted that guests must obey the same rules as Club members.

Ralph James noted there can be two tiers of guests. Unknown guests that you must stay with for the duration of their visit and known guests that are friends of members.

Paul Lebiezinski suggested that guests should not run our best equipment. He also suggested that we have a train made up for walk in guests and use it as needed.

It was concluded that guests can run their own equipment or Club equipment with proper supervision. John Spach reminded all of our trackage fee policy for guests that want to run trains after three visits. Also, guests are not entitled to run equipment from the members' shelves.

9. Troubleshooting

Ralph James suggested that Randy Foulke work with Ralph James, Ken Howard, and others to create a troubleshooting document for the layout.

10. Construction Progress and Workdays

Pete Donofrio is working on the interconnection of main 4 to the coal facility.

Set work session days were discussed. The group settled on times that will allow work to be accomplished with minimal disruption to people running trains.

The times settled on are on Mondays from 8-12, Wednesdays from 12-4 and on Saturdays from 2-6.

A prioritized project list will be posted so that anyone wishing to work will know what needs attention and in what order. Ken Howard will provide a yellow looseleaf binder with the prioritized list of projects and their descriptions..

There was also a discussion about scenic backdrops to imply more activity off the layout.

11. N Scale

Phil Michaud requested the HO layout people realize the N scale layout has only one control area. HO people should be careful not to congregate there and cause congestion.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:33 pm.