

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the HO Committee Meeting of February 16, 2025

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 who attended were Alan Bradley, Ely Carter-Williamson, Peter Donofrio, Jake Forbes, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Alex Griswold, Mike Hinman, Ken Howard, Chuck Larnerd, Paul Lebiedzinski, Collin Martinko, Don McPherson, Phil Michaud, Greg Rehe, John Spach, and Bob Witwer.

3. Status and Problem Updates:

Ken Howard announced that he is working with *Milo Poulin* to set up a Groups.io group for the HO committee. This will be like the one just set up for the N scale group.

Ken reported that we recently had two work sessions to clean up and organize the materials under the HO layout. These sessions were lightly attended - leaving more work to be accomplished. **Saturday, March 1st at 1:00 pm** was set up as the next HO work session. The focus of this session will be scenic materials and buildings.

Chuck Larnerd requested that the glass shelves being stored under the layout be moved to provide more workspace. The shelves will be moved to the outside storeroom.

Ken Howard noted that we have experienced both random acts of track work and random acts of scenery on the layout. Track that has finally settled needs to be glued down. Two of our biggest problems are vertical alignment and wide gaps between sections of track. Problems need to be identified, put in the book, and fixed before we start new projects. The wanton use of soldering to conceal connectivity problems must stop.

Randy Foulke asked about buildings. He also noted that we have some sloppy trackwork including: no flangeways at some crossings and switches that do not work correctly in both directions.

Ken Howard added that sometimes people make things look decent but they still have problems. Ask if you need help completing a repair.

Ken also noted that we are still experiencing random acts of movement. This includes vehicles and buildings moved to different locations on the layout.

Ken also pointed out that the Angier freight house platform was installed and glued down too close to the track.

Collin Martinko said that he and Josh Crane have been putting together suggestions for the HO layout. Collin also stated that he would like to see all switches on the layout

operated by Tortoise switch machines. Both Bob Witwer and Ken Howard stated that converting all switches to electrical operation is a long-term goal.

Pete Donofrio suggested that we have someone to approve all projects and inspect and approve the work upon completion.

4. Crossovers:

There are thirteen crossovers on legacy Mains 1, 2, and 3. Six on Main 1 and 7 on Mains 2 and 3. They are not equally distributed nor do they facilitate right hand running.

Collin Martinko volunteered to study the crossovers and suggest how they should be located, which direction, how many, etc.

Alec Urban volunteered to do a track plan for the entire layout. He will start with the expansion. A layout map will facilitate dealing with track issues such as the connections between the expansion and the legacy layout.

5. Inventory:

Jake Forbes presented eight cars to be removed from the inventory (#s 134, 162, 246, 253, 282, 329, 439, and 490). After passing the cars around for examination, the opinions ranged from keeping all cars to removing all cars from the inventory. Chuck Larnerd suggested we keep all the cars and add more modern cars such as fifty or sixty foot box cars. These cars are more appropriate behind modern locomotives. Tom Garren pointed out that one of the tank cars in the group is a Lionel HO car that has collector value and should be sold. Tom also noted that one of the hopper cars is lettered as a car built during World War II and is very unique and should remain in inventory. In the end, most cars were retained, the Lionel car (490) will go for sale on eBay, and #s 134 and 253 will go to Club sale stock. Two of the cars will be fixed for weight (282) or load (329) by *Chuck Larnerd*.

Collin Martinko presented a revised plan for the former industrial area. Ken Howard noted that we need standards and advanced planning. This need was supported by Randy Foulke, Phil Michaud, and Bob Witwer. Collin requested permission to start on what he calls Phase 1 of his plan as it is not in the controversial area. After some discussion, Collin will provide another more detailed plan for review next month. Randy Foulke said we need to include a steam engine maintenance facility.

Jake Forbes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bob Witwer and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:26 pm.