

# **Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club**

## **Minutes of the Membership Meeting of February 20, 2025**

1. Call Meeting to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President John Spach.  
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ken Howard.

2. Roll Call of Members in Attendance by Zoom

Due to inclement weather, this meeting was held on Zoom only.  
Members attending by Zoom were Ed Bottum, Ely Carter-Williamson, Pete Donofrio, Tom Garren, Alex Griswold, Mike Hinman, Ken Howard, Ted Kunstling, Chuck Larnerd, Paul Lebedinski, Adam McDonald, Don McPherson, John Mezera, Schaefer O'Neill, Milo Poulin, Gerald Powell, Greg Rehe, George Sawyer, James Smith, John Spach, Robert Spohr, John Wallis, and Bob Witwer.

3. Recognition of Guests in Attendance on Zoom

We had one guest tonight. Jeff Cole attended his second meeting and is eligible for membership tonight.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

John Wallis made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Bob Witwer and passed unanimously.

5. Treasurers Report

Schaefer O'Neill gave the Treasurer's report. Ken Howard made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Pete Donofrio and passed unanimously.

6. Show and Tell

Ely Carter-Williamson showed four pictures he had taken this week of trains in the snow in the Cary and Apex areas.

Schaefer O'Neill reported that last weekend he went to the Newton, NC Narrow Gauge Train Museum. The museum features several layouts for the visitor to see.

7. Communications with the Club

Bob Witwer reported Graham Hopkins called wanting information about the Wilson club HO 40 foot tobacco car. Bob has sent this request to Rick Calfee for follow up.

Bob also reported that Mike Thriven called about a possible Lionel O27 donation. So far Bob has not been able to get up with him by phone but will continue to try.

John Spach reported an email from Elliot Susseles requesting information on the orientation manual for the O gauge layout, and information on any meetings of the O gauge group. George Sawyer will follow up with Elliot to answer his questions.

## 8. Committee Reports

### a. Membership Committee

Tom Garren reported in the absence of Clif Kelly that we have two applicants eligible for membership tonight. Jeff Cole has applied for Senior membership. Also, Rich Marrello has applied for Senior membership. John Wallis made a motion to accept Jeff and Rich as members of the Club. The motion was seconded by Jim Smith and passed unanimously.

### b. Ways and Means

John Wallis reported that they are working to begin meetings work on the Club budget.

### c. Engineering Committee

N scale – John Wallis reported that the N scale committee had met last Saturday. The plans for completing the raffle layout were discussed.

Also discussed was taking the T Trak layout to display alongside North Raleigh at the Herb Young Center in Cary in May. A work session will be held in Milo Poulin's garage on March 01 to put the T Trak layout together for the first time. This will allow the layout to be tested and check the wiring.

HO scale – Ken Howard reported that the HO team has had two work sessions. Even though attendance was low due to weather, they were still able to make progress on cleaning out under the layout.

The next work session will be on Saturday March 01 at 1:00 pm. This session will concentrate on organizing the scenic supplies and buildings we have.

Secenery continues, some good, some not so good. People are encouraged to ask for help if they are not sure how to do something.

A new subcommittee has been created to establish standards for laying track and wiring. This subcommittee will be led by Bob Witwer.

We are establishing a program to evaluate our rolling stock and determining what we want to keep versus what we want to update. Eight cars were presented by Jake Forbes for consideration by the team. It was decided that we would keep five of the eight cars. Two of the cars are being repaired by Chuck Larnerd. We will sell the other three.

Alec Urban has volunteered to create an electronic track plan for the HO layout. This will be the first time we will have a digital version of the extension.

Another area of concern is the shelves reserved for member's cars. We will work to develop a color scheme for each member who uses the shelves to put on the bottom of their cars. This will allow the owner of each piece of equipment to be identified.

Jeff Cole asked about tables or shelves to make using the staging tracks more effective. Ken replied that we know we have a problem in this area and will work to make things better.

O gauge – George Sawyer reported that the outside track is not operational at this time. The problem is due to a faulty turnout. The O gauge team will either repair or replace the switch.

George also noted that we sold a lot of stuff in Thomasville and hopes to continue this in Mebane in March.

George Sawyer will also work with Elliot Susseles to answer his new member questions.

George is still working on some wiring problems on the O gauge layout including incorporating the new TIU that was recently purchased into the track wiring.

d. Program Committee

John Wallis reported that we have programs lined up through December of 2025.

9. Old Business

a. Spring Show

Bob Witwer reported that the floor plan for the Spring show will be adjusted to reflect a few less vendors than at the Fall show. This will allow more space for layouts on the show floor.

We have received reservations for 75% of our tables. We are still waiting to hear from the vendors for another 18% of the tables. We are looking for additional vendors to fill 7% of the tables. Bob is working with several prospects to fill these tables.

Bob is working to obtain more sponsors and door prizes for the show. We are expecting a pack of Peco flex track and a gift certificate from Scale trains for example.

We will send out information about the show to those who purchased tickets last year on Eventbrite. Most of these people were from the local area, but we had several purchase tickets from Charlotte.

The State Fairgrounds is raising their rates by 25% starting in the Fall of 2025. This will increase our cost to produce the shows. We will have to determine if we need to adjust prices for tables, admission, etc. as we go into the Fall show planning season.

The next meeting of the Show committee will be on Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am at the Clubhouse.

10. New Business

a. Groups.IO

Milo Poulin has set up Groups.io sites for both the N scale and HO scale committees. This is a tool that will allow the teams to communicate more effectively. As configured this is a free service. Should we wish to use additional functionality, there could be a cost involved.

Members wanting to join these groups should send an email the group they wish to join. Look for more on this in the Whistle Post.

b. Mebane Show

Ken Howard reminded everyone that we have a show in Mebane on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The show runs from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. The Club has six tables at the show. We are looking for volunteers to help at the show. The load out will be on Friday afternoon before the show. Please let Ken Howard know if you can help.

At the meeting several people volunteered to help including Tom Garren, Ken Howard, George Sawyer, Jim Smith, John Spach, John Wallis, and Bob Witwer. We may also have help from Ely Carter-Williamson and Adam McDonald.

11. Program

Ken Howard presented a program entitled Random and non-Random Wanderings in Search of Railroad Action and Oddities. This covered items Ken has encountered from three of the eleven different states he toured last year.

12. Good and Welfare of the Club

Rick Calfee is out for a few weeks with an injured shoulder.

13. Adjournment

Tom Garren made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Pete Donofrio and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.