

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting of March 03, 2025

1. Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call of Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President John Spach.

Board members in attendance in person were Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Schaefer O'Neill, George Sawyer, John Spach, and Bob Witwer.

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

Additional members attending in person were Wayne Aiken, Alan Bradley, Ely Carter-Williamson, Bernie Dawson, Randy Foulke, Mike Hinman, Ted Kunstling, Adam Servas, Alan Servas, Alec Urban, and John Wallis.

Additional members attending by Zoom included Scott Hall, George List, Rich Marrello, Phil Michaud, Milo Poulin, Joe Scales, and Gene Sing.

We had no guests tonight.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

George Sawyer 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

Schaefer O'Neill gave the Treasurer's report.

Ken Howard made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by George Sawyer and passed unanimously.

A discussion was held about the Clover credit card machine we no longer use.

Ken Howard made a motion to sell the Clover credit card machine. The motion was seconded by Tom Garren and passed unanimously.

Schaefer O'Neill will verify the cellular charges we are incurring on the current credit card machines. We will look for ways to reduce or get rid of these charges altogether.

5. Communications with the Club

George Sawyer is working with Elliot Susseles on orientation documentation for the O gauge layout.

6. Committee Reports

a. Membership

Tom Garren reported that we have 108 regular members and five honorary members. All dues are paid except for a couple of new members.

b. Ways and Means

John Wallis reported that he will meet with Schaefer O'Neill to set up a schedule for meetings to create a budget for the Club.

c. Facilities

Mike Hinman stated that another outdoor work session is being planned. This will involve cleaning up the area on the outside of the rear of the building nearest to the HO layout. Mike was wondering what to do with the waste. Bob Witwer stated that he could take the debris to a landfill in Johnston County. Look for more details about this session as plans become finalized.

John Spach stated that the carpet in the Clubhouse needs to be cleaned. Mike Hinman was asked to investigate getting someone to do this work. Alan Servas volunteered to clean the carpet as he has a carpet cleaning machine. He will concentrate first on some stains, then do the entire carpet.

d. Engineering

N Scale – Bernie Dawson reported that the N scale team is working on all three of their layouts but is concentrating on the raffle layout for the Spring show. They are ready to do the final attachment of the track, then complete the scenery.

Bernie also noted that the T Trak layout was assembled and tested. They found and fixed one wiring problem. The T Trak layout is being built on a theme of Eastern North Carolina in the mid-fifties. It will include a tobacco farm, an industry, and more.

John Wallis reported that the North Raleigh club will have their T Trak layout at Carol Woods retirement community in Chapel Hill on March 22nd. They will incorporate the tobacco farm module from the NRV layout at this showing.

HO – Ken Howard reported that we have completed a third cleanup session on the HO layout. All the scenic materials are now stored in drawers under or adjacent to the layout. Buildings have been sorted and the keepers are now stored in boxes under the layout. Buildings for disposal have been stored awaiting pricing and sale.

John Wallis found and removed a Digitrax LNWI (Wi-Fi interface) from the HO layout. This unit could be offered for sale. It is not needed since our Wi-Fi connections are created and managed by a Raspberry pi device.

Ken Howard reported that we have an inventory of 341 pieces of HO rolling stock.

Schaefer O'Neill needs a cost estimated for all of our equipment by the end of May for our inventory purposes.

Ken Howard further reported that a color code will be established for each member that stores their equipment on the members' shelves. This code could also be expanded to cover the members with N scale equipment.

Construction continues on the expansion of the HO layout. Bob Witwer offered kudos to Paul Lebedinsky for his work in the logging camp area.

S gauge – George List reported that the S gauge layout is stable. The two new engines, a Sante Fe PA and a Union Pacific 4-8-4 are now on the shelves above the layout and available for use.

O gauge – George Sawyer reported that a switch on the layout has been successfully repaired. Additionally, two replacement switches have been identified and are available if needed. Don Weaver has been working to repair some locomotives. He completed work this week on a pair of engines. Also, George reports that Lionel legacy is working on all tracks of the O gauge layout. The team still needs to get DCS working on two more tracks on the layout.

G scale – Alan Servas reported the layout is operational and he is still working on selling the track cleaner.

e. Program Committee

John Wallis reported we have programs scheduled through the end of 2025.

f. Social Committee

Randy Foulke reported he is working with Ken Mitchell for a tour of the Lionel facility in Concord, maybe in July. This trip will have to be on a Friday as the Lionel staff does not work on Saturday. There is also a Lionel outlet store nearby. More on this trip later.

Randy is also working on a trip to visit both the Goldsboro and the Kinston clubs.

7. Old Business

a. Spring Show

Bob Witwer reported that the vendor flyer needs to be put on the website. He will contact the webmaster to get this done.

Bob also reported that the layout for the show is pretty well set. We have 323 tables with 296 currently reserved, leaving us only 27 tables available.

We will be renting some park benches to be placed in front of the kids layout from the Wilmington museum.

Bob also reported that he is investigating the possibility of having a White Elephant table at the show for NRV members to offer items for sale. The details of this feature are being worked out. Look for more information from Bob in an email on this item. We will definitely need a Club member to lead this effort, if we do it.

Bernie Dawson announced that he hopes to have the sign up sheets for show staffing available this weekend. Please remember to sign up to work at the show.

Bob Witwer stated that he is thinking about creating a pen, or some other token of the show, to give to the vendors as gesture of good will. More on this later.

Bob also reported that we have ten or eleven layouts signed up to appear at the show. There is a possibility that we will add a Z scale layout to the show. He further announced that we will have two new awards for the layouts at the Spring show. These will be a Best in Show and a Most Popular. More on the details of these awards in the near future.

Bob also reported that we are getting more door prizes to award our attendees. Two of the most recent include a pack of track from Peco and a \$250.00 gift certificate from Scale Trains.

Bob said that we want simpler topics for the Train Talks at the show. We also need to better publicize this feature of the show. Bob also suggested that Scott Hall could do a talk on soldering. Joe Scales suggested that he might do a session on lubricating locomotives. In the Fall show we may want to set up a conference room to conduct the Train Talks and clinics.

Schaefer O'Neill asked about magazines. One proposal is to put them on a table in the lobby with a donation jar. Otherwise they are free.

The next meeting of the Show committee is at 11:00 on March 19th at the Clubhouse.

b. Member Handbook

Randy Foulke reported that several sections of the Member Handbook have been submitted to the Board for approval. The Board asked to continue to review these sections and report back to Randy at the Membership meeting on March 20th.

c. Mebane Show

Ken Howard reminded everyone that the Mebane show is Saturday, March 8th. Load out will be on Friday at 3:00 pm. Anyone interested in helping man the tables at the show should let him know to arrange transportation. One vehicle will be leaving Barry's parking lot at 7:15 am.

d. Apparel

Randy Foulke reported that the hat order placed with our vendor should be ready by the end of the week. Randy is also working with Dal to be able to offer more clothing items with the Club logo. More on this later. Randy hopes to have one more apparel order prior to the May show.

e. eBay

Ken Howard asked the question of how to find items we have for sale on eBay. John Spach stated that this not possible with our situation. Since we do not have a store and are listed as an individual, it is very difficult to see our listings together. There will more research on this topic to see if there is a way to find our products on eBay. Once the method has been identified the instructions will be published in the Whistle Post.

8. New Business

a. Drink Prices

Tom Garren shared information about the cost of soft drinks. He found that in most cases, even on sale, we are paying more for the drinks than the price for which we currently sell them. With that in mind, Tom suggested that we raise the price of drinks from fifty cents to one dollar. In this way, the Club will not lose money on having drinks available in our refrigerator.

Tom Garren made a motion to raise drink prices to one dollar per can. The motion was seconded by Ken Howard and passed unanimously.

b. Defibrillator

George Sawyer announced that he would like to investigate the possibility of the Club getting a defibrillator. This investigation should include price, liability, insurance implications, training, etc.

George Sawyer made a motion to authorize him to investigate the possibility of the Club getting a defibrillator. The motion was seconded by Ken Howard and passed unanimously.

c. Locker

John Spach announced that we have one locker available if anyone is interested in renting it. Scheafer O'Neill rented the locker.

d. Groups.io

Tom Garren mentioned that the Club is implementing Groups.io as a communication tool, but we have not put forth a document announcing this to the membership and giving them some information/instructions about how to sign up for and use the service.

John Spach asked that we get Milo Poulin to write an article about our implementation of Groups.io for the Whistle Post. Ken Howard will contact Milo to request him to write this article.

9. Adjournment

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 pm.