

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting of April 07, 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 Alan Bradley, Ely Carter-Williamson, Bernie Dawson, Randy Foulke, Clif Kelly, Ted Kunstling, Alan Servas, and John Wallis.

Additional members attending by Zoom included Alex Griswold, Mike Hinman, Tom Magnani, John Mezera, and Gene Sing.

There were no guests in attendance tonight.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Ken Howard made a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting as submitted. It was seconded by George Sawyer and passed unanimously.

4. Treasurers Report

Schaefer O'Neill gave the Treasurer's report.

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

5. Communications with the Club

John Wallis was contacted by a lady in Pittsboro who wants to donate an HO layout. From a photo it appears to be approximately 6 ft. x 8 ft in size. The layout is in Pittsboro and needs to be removed from the house by Friday. Ken Howard will follow up with the contact for details. If all works out Ken Howard, Bob Witwer, and John Spach will go to Pittsboro following the Club breakfast and a short Show committee meeting on Wednesday to obtain the layout.

6. Committee Reports

a. Membership

Clif Kelly reported that we received two applications during the recent Open House. We could have as many as four people eligible for membership at the April 17th meeting. Clif will follow up with the applicants between now and the Membership meeting. Clif also noted that with one more month to go in the current fiscal year, we have added fifteen new members to our roster.

b. Ways and Means

The Ways and Means committee has met and created a proposed budget for the Club. Alan Bradley presented the budget proposal to the Board. Alan noted that no dues increase is being requested for the next fiscal year. A discussion occurred about the budget and the line items in it. After the discussion it was decided to have the Board study the budget and vote on it at the next Board meeting.

c. Facilities

John Spach noted that Alan Servas has been working on stains in the carpet. At some later time the entire carpet will be cleaned. Thanks Alan.

John Spach also noted that we need more people involved with cleanup around the Club. This is for both inside and outside.

Ken Howard noted that we were not ready for an Open House in terms of cleanliness of the Clubhouse both inside and outside. Ken asked if we need a cleaning service to assure that the Club is presentable for future events. Schaefer O'Neill will check with the service his business uses to get an estimate for cleaning our Clubhouse on various frequencies.

In the meantime, if a member sees something that is dirty, please clean it up. We have a number of people through each weekend, and we need to keep the Clubhouse more presentable.

d. Engineering

N Scale – Bernie Dawson reported that the N scale team is working on the raffle layout and needs help completing the scenery. With the Spring show only a few weeks away, this is a very important need. Please help if you can. John Spach reread his story about Everybody, Anybody, Somebody, Nobody as an example of things not getting done.

The other efforts of the N scale team are getting the T-Trak layout ready for the Cary show this weekend. There is nothing new happening on the main N scale layout due the time requirements of the other two items mentioned above.

HO – Ken Howard reported that progress is being made on the scenery on Mt. Witwer. There has also been much work done on Module 4. Randy Foulke staged some trains on the sidings during the Open House to improve the appearance for the event. Milo Poulin has made progress on the quarry and power plant. Work continues to improve the HO layout.

Ken also noted that we have asked members who store their personal equipment on shelves designated for that purpose to mark their cars with a color code. They should also note their chosen code on the list hanging next to the member equipment shelves. We would like this list to be completed by April 30th. If equipment is not labeled by then, it will be removed and stored until it can be reclaimed.

The inventory for the HO layout has been completed and given to Schaefer O'Neill. This included the rolling stock, engines, and layout modules.

S gauge – John Spach reported that there are no changes on the S gauge layout. The layout ran well during the Open House last weekend. George also reported that he and Mike Keelean will be going to Thomasville on Wednesday to pick up items we have had there on consignment and bring them back for our show.

O gauge – George Sawyer reported that the inventory of the rolling stock and engines has been completed. The layout was not included in the inventory. During the Open House all three types of control systems were working on the O gauge layout.

G scale – Alan Servas reported that he has supplied Schaefer with an inventory of the rolling stock, engines, and track. He has not yet provided values for these items. Alan also noted that the coupler on the tender of one of the engines has become damaged and will not stay coupled. He has removed the engine from the layout until it can be fixed. Finally, Alan continues to work on cleaning the track.

e. Program Committee

John Wallis reported we have programs scheduled through January of 2026. He is also holding one program in the event that it is needed as a replacement.

f. Social Committee

Randy Foulke reported that he is still working on the trip to Concord to visit Lionel. He thinks the trip may take place in July. Look for more information in the near future.

7. Old Business

a. Open House

John Spach reported that we had a very successful Open House on April 5th with over 100 attendees. He noted that John Mezera has now been named the on-going Open House Chairman. John Mezera thanked all the members that helped make the event a success.

b. Inventories

John Spach noted that inventories are due to Schaefer by the end of May. The N scale inventory is still outstanding.

c. Spring Show

Bob Witwer reported that we have nine tables left for the Spring show. We have collected the table fees from all but nine vendors at this time.

The final order for tables, chairs, electrical drops, etc. has been placed with the Fairgrounds office.

Staff is still an issue especially on Friday afternoon.

We will have awards this year for Best in Show and Most Popular layouts. The Best in Show will be determined by a panel of judges. The Most Popular will be determined by ballots filled out by show attendees. The awards will be presented on Sunday morning.

We have Train Talks arranged for the show; four on Saturday and three on Sunday.

Once again we are selling tickets on Event Brite. Kelly Darden will trigger advertising beginning this week on Event Brite. We are also advertising again in RAL Today. If anyone thinks of more ways to advertise, please let Bob Witwer know.

We have more sponsors and door prizes than ever for the show. This includes Astrack, Broadway Limited, and many others.

Ted Kunstling noted a problem we had with traffic flow in the building during vendor setup. Bob Witwer stated that we are aware of the problem and will address it at the Spring show.

Several comments were also made regarding the Fall show.

We have made the deposit for the Fall show to the Fairgrounds.

Bob Witwer and Randy Foulke met with Rick Allen to discuss layouts at the Fall show. Randy Foulke stated that we need a Tik Tok presence to improve advertising for our shows and attract a younger audience. John Spach noted that we may be able to get some videos of our shows from Whitney's as they make and post videos regularly.

Ely Carter-Williamson asked the status of a Club Instagram account. Bob Witwer stated that he has created an Instagram account for NRV.

d. Member Handbook

Randy Foulke reported that he will reactivate the Member Handbook committee after the Spring show.

e. Apparel

Randy Foulke reported that we have new hats in stock. We will also be getting more hats for stock. The price of the hats will be determined and announced soon.

Randy further stated that the current prices for shirts and apparel will remain the same for now. There are also new items that may be added to the list including:

- Polo shirts with pockets
- Crew sweat shirts
- Coaches jackets

Further, members can have their name embroidered on a garment for an additional fee of \$2.00.

If a member has a garment that they would like to have the NRV logo embroidered, this can be done for \$6.00.

If a member would like to see even more product possibilities, they can go to the website for Carolina Made Apparel.

8. New Business

a. Groups.io

Ken Howard announced that the Club now has five Groups.io groups. This includes one for the entire Club, one for N scale, one for HO scale, one for S gauge, and one for O gauge.

John Wallis will be the overall coordinator for Groups.io for the Club.

Each group has its own moderator or moderators.

The NRV group is moderated by John Spach, Ken Howard, and Tom Garren.

The N scale group is moderated by Milo Poulin and Bernie Dawson

The HO scale group is moderated by Ken Howard

The S gauge group is moderated by George List.

The O gauge group is moderated by George Sawyer.

Invitations are being sent to the membership for the Club group.

Ken Howard asked if we want to proceed with the implementation of Groups.io. John Spach restated the question for clarification. Then John Spach made the statement as a motion to say the Board is endorsing the use of Groups.io as a communications tool for the Club as a whole and for specific sub committees. The motion was seconded by Bob Witwer. The motion passed with five positive votes and one abstention.

George Sawyer stated the he wants us to still use email from the Secretary and the Whistle Post for official communication from the Club. It was agreed that we will proceed in this way for now.

Ken Howard will have a detailed article about Groups.io in the next Whistle Post. This document will hopefully answer the majority of questions members may have about this topic.

b. Grant Program

John Spach announced that our printer, Telepathic, has announced a grant program that will allow non-profits to apply for a portion of \$30,000 to be used on high-quality marketing materials. This could be very useful to the Club for new brochures, flyers, etc. Bob Witwer and Ken Howard will follow up on this and determine what is needed.

9. Good and Welfare of the Club

Schaefer O'Neill reported he had talked to George Lasley and George is doing well and back at work for about six hours a day for now.

Tom Garren stated that he talked with Joe Scales who is still recovering from some respiratory problems and not travelling much at this time.

10. Adjournment

Bob Witwer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Ken Howard and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.