

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the HO Committee Meeting of May 18, 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 Wayne Aiken, Peter Donofrio, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Don McPherson, Phil Michaud, Greg Rehe, and John Spach.

3. Track Standards Subcommittee

Ken Howard reminded everyone that Chuck Larnerd has been named the chairman of the HO Track subcommittee.

Chuck has prepared a draft of the HO track guidelines.

There will be a meeting of the HO Track subcommittee on Tuesday May 20th at 10:00.

Also, Chuck has prepared a survey. Copies are available to fill out today if you like. There will also be an email version of the survey sent to all NRV members in the next day or two.

4. Plexiglas

Ken Howard led a discussion about the various heights of Plexiglas that have been installed on the HO layout. After a lengthy discussion on the subject, the following decisions were made:

- Install Plexiglas on the front side of the layout and around both ends. In areas where the layout is most vulnerable, install six inch Plexiglas.
- In other areas install three inch Plexiglas.
- The Plexi should be cut in such a way to form a curve between the two heights.
- Plexiglas will not be installed on the back side of the layout or around the staging tracks.
- Mike Hinman will have the lead on this project.

It was also decided to install plastic chain and magnets to prevent unauthorized access to the backside of the layout. John Spach will obtain the necessary materials.

5. New Inventory Items

Ken Howard showed three new inventory items.

A weathered flat car with a boom load from Jerome Wheeler.

An Athearn GE CSX engine with DCC and sound.

An EMD SD70MAC engine with DCC and sound.

6. Switch Machines

Ken Howard reported that Paul Lebedinski is installing above ground switch machines on the staging tracks under Mt. Witwer.

Tortoise switch machines have been installed at the logging camp. Legacy module 2 will be used as a test bed for installing Tortoise switch machines on the legacy layout. This test will help us learn what obstacles we may encounter while installing under table switch machines on the older parts of the layout.

Mike Hinman will lead this effort.

For now, we will create a single switch control panel per module. At some point in the future these may be consolidated into a panel per side of the layout.

7. Backdrops

Randy Foulke stated that he is having trouble locating a source for suitable backdrop building pictures for our needs. He will continue to pursue a source of these materials.

8. Redesign of Engine Facility

This is a work in progress. Randy Foulke stated that he needs to get up with Collin Martinko to discuss the plans for this change.

John Spach stated that we need a place to park the two Big Boys that are currently stored in the engine house. They are fragile and can be damaged if picked up wrong. They run nicely and are available for use.

Peter Donofrio stated that he likes the proposal to remove the crossovers from tracks 1 and 2 in that area.

9. Module 4 Maintenance

Ken Howard stated that maintenance is needed on Module 4 in the area of the crossover on Main 3. There is track on either side of the crossover that needs to be fixed.

10. Moratorium on New Track

Ken Howard stated that there is a moratorium on additional track and modifications to existing track until our track standards and procedures can be established.

The exception to this rule is that maintenance needed on existing track is permitted.

11. Track Plan

Ken Howard noted that we need a track plan of the HO layout. We are looking for a free CAD program and a volunteer to use it to document the entire layout.

12. Donation

Ken Howard announced that we have a donation of an HO layout in the Cary area. The layout is in two parts and measures about 6 x 10 feet. It can be broken into two pieces of 4 x 5 feet each if necessary. The donation includes the layout, three DCC locomotives, one DC locomotive, thirty eight cars, and twenty five buildings.

Weather permitting we will try to pick up this donation on Wednesday, May 21 at Noon.

TBD: We will leave Barry's parking lot or the Clubhouse around 11:30.

Volunteers for this job include Randy Foulke, Ken Howard, Greg Rehe, John Spach, and Bob Witwer. Tom Garren can also be available if needed.

13. Club Cars

Randy Foulke gave a report on obtaining Club hopper cars for the layout. He has talked to both Bowser and ACCU Rail so far. Neither source is perfect in providing what we want. Randy will continue to investigate with Broadway Limited and Tichy Trains to see if they have a more satisfactory solution.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm.