

# **Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club**

## **Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting of June 02, 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 Richard Calfee, 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, Mike Hinman, Alan Servas, Gene Sing, and John Wallis.

Additional members attending by Zoom included Randy Foulke, Alex Griswold, Haydon Harrison, Ted Kunstling, Phil Michaud, and Carl Zetie.

One Guest, Gary Dabbagh attended by Zoom. This is Gary's second meeting.

### **3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Bob Witwer 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.

George Sawyer also made a motion authorizing Schaefer O'Neill to send a check to the Jim Smith family to be used to help pay for a service dog for his grandson Wesley. The motion was seconded by Richard Calfee and passed unanimously.

### **5. Communications with the Club**

Ken Howard stated there are no donations pending at this time.

Phil Michaud reported working with someone from Greensboro with two Z scale layouts that need wiring help. The person will bring the layouts to the Clubhouse for inspection. John Spach reminded everyone that our policy is not to repair equipment belonging to non-Club members. This is to protect the Club. We can give advice, or a member can help with the repair as an individual only.

Tom Garren reported that Joe Scales is home from the hospital. He is doing well but will need to take it easy for a while.

Tom also reported that Clif Kelly is also home from the hospital and doing better. We hope to see Clif back at the Club soon.

## 6. Committee Reports

### a. Membership

Tom Garren reported that we have two applicants who may be eligible for membership votes on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Gary Dabbagh has satisfied the two meeting requirement. Greg Severson will satisfy the requirement if he attends the June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The Board agreed to have Tom send out an updated version of the dues notice we used last year.

John Spach added that we have one locker available for rent.

### b. Ways and Means

John Wallis reported that the budget was passed by the Board. Ways and Means will now monitor ratio of dues to expenses.

John Spach reminded the committee that they will need to perform an audit on the books for FY 24-25, now that it has ended. Schaefer O'Neill hopes to have the figures ready for review by early July.

### c. Facilities

Mike Hinman reported we had an injury on a sharp corner of the Plexiglas on the HO layout. Mike has rounded off that corner to remove the chance for additional injuries. Mike has also applied herbicide to some of the plants around the building. John Spach asked if we need a Spring cleanup of pine straw etc. Tom Garren asked if we can take a weed eater to the seven foot tall weeds in the front.

Alan Servas is planning to clean the carpet on Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup>. Mike Hinman will help Alan move the machine to the Club and help. It was suggested that small things that can be easily moved should be relocated to the Shop to get them out of the way. The carpet will be cleaned in the Crew Lounge and down the hall.

John Spach announced that on June 11<sup>th</sup> we will have our annual fire extinguisher inspection.

### d. Engineering

N Scale – Phil Michaud reported that the N scale layout seems to be operating OK. There have been discussions about rewiring the layout, but no one is ready to tackle that project right now. Phil also reported that one of the N scale F3's has been repaired by Mike Hinman. We still have no good quality decals for these locomotives. Phil requested that we check out Tichy for possible printing of decals.

There are fourteen T-TRAK modules, in various stages of completion. It looks like there are two that have not been claimed that need work. The goal is to have all the modules completed by the next show. Future plans are to expand the layout with a new yard. Backdrops are a problem. John Spach suggested the N scale group attend the next Membership meeting where George Lasley will present a program on backdrops.

HO – Ken Howard reported that we have had two layouts donations in the last month. One is in one of our storage rooms, and one is in Ken's shed. The one at Ken's is a 6x11 DCC layout. This layout may be used as a raffle layout or may be sold outright.

We now have an accurate scaled map of the legacy HO layout. A map of the extension is underway and Chuck Larnerd hopes to have it ready by the next HO Committee meeting.

There have been eight or nine new additions to the HO inventory.

Ken also reported that work continues to add panels, switches, and switch motors to the staging tracks under the mountain. The panel is set up as a routing panel rather than an individual switch motor panel.

Ken noted that Chuck Larnerd has completed track repairs on Module 4. Other track work (with the exception of track under Mt. Witwer) is in abeyance for now. Chuck will also go back under the layout to work on the wiring. We are doing our best to keep the Mains open for operation. There is also incremental progress on scenery, especially along the extension.

Ken also reminded everyone to please fill out and return the HO Layout Survey. We have received a number of responses thus far but would like to hear from even more members. You do not have to be an HO modeler to participate. The results will be grouped and evaluated.

S Gauge – Nothing to report.

O Gauge – George Sawyer reported that he has made some minor wiring corrections to track near the carnival. George also reported that the Dustbuster in the O gauge room was full of materials from the other layouts. John Spach suggested that we obtain two new ones for the HO and N scale layouts. Ken Howard said he will obtain them with maintenance funds for this month for the HO layout.

G Scale – Alan Servas noted there is still trouble with dirty track over the S scale layout. He has also found some coupler springs on the layout. He will try to procure some parts and repair any damaged couplers. Mike Hinman asked about the status of the track cleaning car. For now the status is not to use it. Alan Servas will see if he can help sell the track cleaning car. He will see what offers he can get.

e. Program Committee

John Wallis reported the program this month will be George Lasley on creating backdrops. Next month will be Bernie Dawson on consisting locomotives with Digitrax.

f. Social Committee

Randy Foulke reported that the trip to Concord to visit Lionel is on and scheduled for August 13<sup>th</sup>. As of now we have thirteen members signed up to attend. Randy verified that it is OK to also invite spouses and friends on this trip. The tour is free, meaning the

only cost will be the cost to carpool to Concord and back. Lionel can accommodate up to two groups of twenty people on that date.

Randy also shared information he has gathered about offerings from the Aberdeen, Carolina and Western, (AC&W). Their shop tour lasts two hours and costs \$25.00 per person. The tour occurs on the first Friday of each month. Randy is proposing we go on September 5<sup>th</sup>. We need to have those who are interested in attending to sign up and pay by August 1<sup>st</sup>. There is a maximum of thirty people for the group.

Another offering from the AC&W is called a Journey in Time. It is a two and a half hour train ride. The cost is \$125.00 per person. It includes a gourmet meal plus drinks. This would not be an exclusive event and may also be pricey for our membership.

Randy learned that we can also rent the whole train. Randy will work with the AC&W to determine options for this option. This would include capacity for up to eighty people. Randy will work to see if CPD13 is also interested to participate.

## 7. Old Business

### a. Fall Show

Bob Witwer reported that the initial group of flyers are out for the Fall show and the magazine advertising has been submitted. There will be 409 tables at the show plus some 16 layouts, maybe more. This year the vendors and the layouts will be more integrated. Aisles will be ten feet, and vendor tables rows will be a full eight feet wide.

A new feature is being planned for the Fall Show, called the Craftsman Showcase. This will allow people to display completed models and have them judged. The areas of modeling will include locomotives, rolling stock, structures, dioramas, etc.

We hope to engage local NMRA Master Model Railroaders to judge this event.

We need to start advertising this event soon so potential participants can get their projects ready. We anticipate set up will be Saturday morning. Judging will be take place on Saturday afternoon with prizes being awarded on Sunday.

Bob Witwer asked for a couple of volunteers to work on the Craftsman Showcase committee. He will also try to recruit a couple of volunteers from CPD13. This event will be a collaborative effort.

Randy Foulke suggested that we have one person assigned to watch over this part of the event. John Spach suggested that we may consider locating this event in one of the rooms off the show floor.

### b. Open House

Ken Howard requested that we establish a date for our Fall Open House. The website needs to be updated. The Board agreed to schedule the Open House for October 11<sup>th</sup>.

John Mezera will be the Open House chair. Tom Garren will create a poster for the event and update the website.

c. Hot Water

Ken Howard asked to reignite the project to restore hot water to the building. Schaefer O'Neill will talk to our landlord about this project.

d. Cleaning Service

Schaefer O'Neill is investigating getting a cleaning service to help with the cleanliness of our building. This would include cleaning and dusting the public areas and vacuuming the exposed floors of the layout rooms.

e. eBay

We still need to manage eBay sales for the Club. Ken Howard will put an appeal for a volunteer in the Whistle Post. The job would include taking the pictures, writing up the descriptions, boxing, shipping, etc. This could be very time consuming and requires attention to detail.

Mike Hinman asked if we could have a display of the items for eBay sale for Club members. Ken Howard agreed that we could certainly do that but reminded everyone that these items are higher priced. It was agreed that we will have this display and sale at the Clubhouse on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> starting at 11:00 am.

John Spach asked if Schaefer has any luck selling the old credit card machine. This item is now being considered as a potential eBay item.

f. Fans

Alan Servas asked if he should rent fans to help dry the carpet after cleaning. After discussion it was decided to use the fans we already have at the Club instead. Alan also stated that he will bring in a vacuum to aid in the carpet cleaning.

8. New Business

a. Resignation

Tom Garren announced that Robert Spohr resigned from the Club on May 29<sup>th</sup>. He cited health issues as his reason for the resignation. We wish Bob well and hope he can return to the Club when his health improves.

b. Website Update

Tom Garren brought up the need to update the website to keep it fresh and new. It has not had a major update in six years, and some areas are in need of a refresh. Tom's suggestion is to set up a committee to coordinate and oversee the update of the website.

Randy Foulke requested a section of the website that is members only.

John Spach suggested a committee with larger scope to include the website, Facebook, Club computers and any other item that may fall under the umbrella of Club IT. Additional considerations are defining the uses for the Club computers to determine the hardware needed.

Watch for information on the establishment of this committee in the near future.

c. Gene Sing Donation

Member Gene Sing stated that after sixteen years as president of the Piedmont Railroad Museum and Library, Inc., he is shutting it down. He is making a major donation the NRV Building Fund as a result of closing down his project. We express many thanks to Gene for his donation that will significantly help our Building Fund. Thanks again, Gene.

d. Donation Form

Wayne Aiken asked if we need to change the wording on our donation form. His concern arises from a recent case where a mother was donating her son's trains. After a discussion it was decided to leave the form as it is.

9. Adjournment

Tom Garren made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bob Witwer and passed unanimously.