

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the Membership Meeting of August 21, 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 Jim Smith.

2. Roll Call of Members in Attendance and on Zoom

Members attending in person were Wayne Aiken, Bill Butler, Bernie Dawson, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Alex Griswold, Scott Hall, Brian Heaton, Ken Howard, Chuck Larnerd, Don McPherson, John Mezera, Schaefer O'Neill, Jim Smith, John Spach, Ben Wallace, and Bob Witwer.

Members attending by Zoom included Ed Bottum, Jeff Cole, Mike Hinman, Paul Lebedinski, Rich Marrello, Phil Michaud, Milo Poulin, Gerald Powell, Greg Rehe, George Sawyer, Elliot Susseles, and Carl Zetie.

3. Recognition of Guests in Attendance and on Zoom

We had three guests tonight. Jack McDonald attended in person. He has applied for an Associate membership. This is his first meeting. Cat Flynn and Greg Severson both attended by Zoom. Both have satisfied the two meeting requirement for membership. Cat has applied for Associate membership. Greg has applied for Senior membership.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Bernie Dawson 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 Bob Witwer and passed unanimously.

6. Show and Tell

Randy Foulke shared a new PRR Business car made by Broadway Limited Imports.

7. Communications with the Club

Ken Howard reported that we have received two donations. The first is a donation of books from Gary Carlson. Second, we have received a donation of an HO layout from the north Raleigh area. Additionally, we are scheduled to get another HO layout donation from a gentleman in Hurdle Mills next Wednesday.

8. Committee Reports

a. Membership Committee

Tom Garren reported that we have three guests tonight. Jack McDonald is attending his first meeting. We also have Greg Severson and Cat Flynn with us tonight. Both have satisfied the two meeting requirement for membership. Greg has applied for Senior membership. He models in HO specializing in Western and Canadian roads. Cat has applied for Associate membership. She models in S gauge and is looking forward to working with our S gauge group. She likes Southern roads, especially the Savannah and Atlanta route.

Bob Witwer made a motion to accept Greg and Cat as members of the Club. The motion was seconded by Bernie Dawson and passed unanimously.

John Spach reminded everyone that dues are now past due. If you have not yet paid your dues, please get them in by the end of the month. If your dues are not paid by August 31st, you will be dropped from the active roll. Also, if you are a Senior member and change to an Associate or drop out of the Club, please be sure to return your key.

Schaefer O'Neill stated that if anyone needs to make arrangements for paying their dues, please contact him. You can find his contact information on the last page of the Whistle Post.

b. Ways and Means

Nothing to report tonight.

c. House

Library – Wayne Aiken reported on the donation we received from Gary Carlson. It includes several books on short lines mostly in the North East, but with one book on the short lines of North and South Carolina. Be sure and check out these new books. At this time we have 2,820 books in the Library and almost 13,000 magazines.

Facilities – Mike Hinman had nothing new to report this month.

d. Engineering Committee

N scale – Bernie Dawson reported that much work is being done on the permanent layout. So far, one reversing loop has been added and another one is under construction. More scenery is needed. The N scale group is also looking at adding industry to create operations on the layout. Their next meeting will be in September when they will discuss more about ways to create operations.

Bernie also reported the push is on to have all the T-TRAK modules sceniced before the Fall show.

Z scale - Phil Michaud is building a 4'x2' layout in Z scale. He is using Micro Trains equipment. He plans on bringing this layout to our Fall Open House on October 11th. Phil is planning on having both Canadian National and Canadian Pacific equipment on the layout. Bob Witwer asked Phil to also bring the layout to the Fall show.

Scott Hall said he could bring in a briefcase Z scale layout for Open House.

HO – Ken Howard reported that as of Wednesday everything was running on the HO layout. Chuck Larnerd is living under the layout repairing wiring and broken legs. New additions to the inventory include a set of Seaboard streamlined passenger cars.

Chuck Larnerd is preparing a map of the entire HO layout using Any Rail. One advantage to using the CAD program is that it will point out problems we have in the track. This will allow us to make repairs and upgrades where they are most needed.

O Gauge – George Sawyer reported that as of this afternoon Track 1 is not operational. He is installing a new switch and working on other track problems. The other tracks are working fine.

S Gauge – John Spach stated that George List reported there are no problems currently on the S gauge layout.

G Scale – John Spach reported that we still need to get a couple more power drops installed on the layout. Chuck Larnerd volunteered to install the drops prior to the October 11th Open House.

e. Program Committee

John Spach thanked Randy Foulke for taking over the Program Committee with the passing of John Wallis. Randy reported that we have programs lined up through May of 2026.

f. Social Committee

Randy Foulke reported that we currently have fourteen people signed up for the Aberdeen, Carolina and Western shop tour on September 5th. He believes there are a few more slots open. Please contact Randy quickly if you would like to go on the tour.

Randy also reported that he is beginning to plan for the annual Club dinner. Thoughts now are to go back to Golden Corral again. The date will probably be in early February. Randy is looking for a volunteer to help him make the arrangements for this event. John Spach noted that we also need someone to coordinate the gift exchange that was previously handled by John Wallis. Look for more information on this dinner in the next few months.

9. Old Business

a. Dues

Tom Garren reminded everyone once again that if your dues are not paid by April 31st you will be taken out of the roster. Please get your dues in by the 31st.

b. Emergency Contact List

Tom Garren also asked anyone that has not filled out the Emergency Contact List, please see him and do so. This information will tell us who to call in the event of an emergency for each of our members.

c. Lockers

John Spach reminded everyone that we have two lockers available for rent. If interested, let a Board member know. Cost is \$50.00 per year. The cost will be prorated to reflect the remainder of the year.

d. eBay Sales

John Spach noted that we are still looking for a volunteer to take over eBay sales for the Club. Until someone steps up, John will keep handling our eBay sales.

e. Social Media Presence

John Spach reminded everyone that we now have an Instagram account. He requests that all members get their own account, sign on, and follow our account. This will let us get a higher position in the algorithm. The same holds true for Facebook.

f. Fall Show

Bob Witwer reported that this year we will have a shared floorplan, meaning that the layouts will be interspersed with the vendor tables. The current plan gives us 559 tables with the capability to compress the floor plan and go to a maximum of 617 tables.

Bob announced the Craftsman Showcase. This will be a judged exhibit of models including locomotives, rolling stock, structures, dioramas, etc. One particularly interesting class is called Anything But. This means that you start with a structure of a station and kit bash it into a building of another use, i.e. anything but a station. It is very important to get the word out about this competition. Flyers specifically for the Craftsman Showcase are being prepared and will be distributed to hobby shops, clubs, and other places that may be interested in such an event.

We once again have seven Train Talks planned for the show.

A new feature of the Fall show will be a Scavenger Hunt. Participants will be given a ballot which they will fill out with information they find around the show floor on various layouts. The forms will be placed in a box and a winner will be pulled on Sunday afternoon.

Bernie Dawson discussed the staffing requirements for the show. Everyone is asked to sign up and work at least one shift at the Show. If a member is not on Bernie's list and comes to the show, they will be expected to pay the \$10.00 admission fee.

Bob Witwer reminded everyone that we expect all members to help at the show. This is our major fundraising activity, and the work is cannot be done by just ten or twelve people. Please sign up and help.

There will be no raffle layout this year, as it was deemed to not be cost effective.

Bob Witwer shared that we now have a special email address for our shows. It is NRV.Shows@gmail.com.

10. New Business

a. Scale Trains Meet and Greet

Bob Witwer announced that we have received a request from Scale Trains to host a Meet and Greet session on October 16th. We are asked by them to secure a venue for the event and invite other clubs and interested parties to attend. We need a place that can hold 50-60 people. Scale trains will be represented by their president and his wife. This date coincides with our October Membership meeting. The thought is to have a short NRV meeting followed by the Meet and Greet.

Bob is investigating places that can meet the needs of this request. If you have a suggestion, please get the information to Bob Witwer.

b. HO Donation Pickup

Ken Howard requests two volunteers to go with him to Hurdle Mills on Wednesday to pick up a layout donation. Plans are to leave the Clubhouse at Noon. Please let Ken know if you can help. Jim Smith and Bob Witwer volunteered. Thanks guys.

c. Moving Committee

Chuck Larnerd asked if we have a Moving Committee that is looking into possible locations to which we can move. John Spach stated that we have such a committee already. It is chaired by Bob Witwer. Ted Kunstling and Peter Donofrio are both on the committee. Chuck Larnerd, Jeff Cole, and Elliot Susseles asked to also work with this committee.

11. Program

Bill Butler presented a program entitled The Railroads of Rocky Mountain National Park.

12. Adjournment

Bob Witwer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Jim Smith and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 pm.