

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the Membership Meeting of March 19, 2026

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President John Spach.
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Clif Kelly.

2. Roll Call of Members in Attendance

Members attending in person included Wayne Aiken, Jake Forbes, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Clif Kelly, Ted Kunstling, Don McPherson, George Sawyer, Alan Servas, Jim Smith, John Spach, Don Weaver, and Bob Witwer.

Members attending by Zoom included Ed Bottum, Pete Donofrio, Alex Griswold, Mike Hinman, Chuck Larnerd, Phil Michaud, Milo Poulin, Gerald Powell, Gene Sing, Robert Wall, and Ben Wallace.

3. Recognition of Guests in Attendance

We had one guest, Mike Wagner, attended in person tonight. This is Mike's second meeting. He has applied for Associate membership.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Randy Foulke made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Bob Witwer and passed unanimously.

5. Treasurers Report

John Spach gave the Treasurer's report for Schaefer O'Neill.

Bob Witwer made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Ken Howard and passed unanimously.

6. Show and Tell

Jake Forbes showed a Broadway Limited F9 painted in the Aberdeen, Carolina and Western scheme.

7. Communications with the Club

Ken Howard noted that we have recently received donations from Denise Capparatta and Len Neiman. We have also received several drop-off donations, mixture of N and HO.

Bob Witwer reported that he retrieved two messages from the answering machine. The first was from Richard Flagg looking to sell a layout. Bob sent him to Nick's Trains.

The second call was from someone named Steve who will be bringing an O gauge donation to the Club.

Tom Garren reported that Richard Calfee left us a list of several messages he has taken going all the way back to December. Many of these calls have been taken care of by Calfee. The others have been assigned to specific members for follow up.

John Spach stated that we had a joint phone call with Bernie Dawson. Bernie is taking it easy while awaiting an MRI before his surgery can be scheduled.

8. Committee Reports

a. Membership Committee

Clif Kelly reported that we have one applicant tonight who is eligible for membership. Mike Wagner applied for Associate membership. He models in HO scale T-TRAK. He is in the process of building an HO T-TRAK layout at home.

Bob Witwer made a motion to accept Mike as a member of the Club. The motion was seconded by Jake Forbes and passed unanimously.

b. Ways and Means

A budget meeting was held to begin the process of preparing a budget for the next fiscal year. Tom Garren will continue to research the minutes to identify past allocations made.

c. House

Wayne Aiken reported that all the books from the recent large donation have been entered in the computer and will be placed on the shelves. He will be reorganizing part of the Library to make more shelf space.

We now have 3,133 books in the Club Library.

d. Engineering

N Scale – Phil Michaud reported that work is ongoing on the permanent N scale layout. A full new loop of track has been added. There is also an area for a station and an engine house. There is also a place for an intermodal terminal and several locations for additional industries. The track work that has been done has been tested and is working.

The N scale T-TRAK layout will be part of the Cary show this weekend. Members are encouraged to stop by and see the free show which will include several layouts. Randy Foulke noted that there will be several layouts there from our Club members, including Steve Will's Lego layout and Phil Michaud's Z scale layout. Curiously, the only scale not represented at the show is HO.

Finally, Phil stated that the N scale group will be preparing their budget requests, both capital and maintenance for next year.

HO – Ken Howard reported that work has been proceeding on Mt. Witwer. Greg Rehe, Paul Lebedenski and Ken Howard have been doing this work.

Chuck Larnerd continues to work on the track. The track is now finished on Main 4 extension all the way to the logging camp. Chuck has also been working under the mountain to reroute Main 1 so it is a straight shot under the mountain. The three staging tracks are now located outside of the main so that users do not have to reach over Main 1 to access the staging tracks.

Len Neiman has been working on the yard on Module 9.

Chuck Larnerd stated that he will install a switch allowing the power to be cut on and off on the passing track on the outside of Main 1. He also stated that the both wyes are functional but cannot be used until Mike Hinman completes his work on the control panel for this area.

Ken Howard shared an event covered in the Whistle Post. Recently five trains were run simultaneously for over an hour on Main 1 with no problems. The five members that performed this demonstration were Tom Garren, Mike Hinman, Ken Howard, Phil Michaud, and John Spach. This proves that we are truly a DCC layout. Please remember that you do not have to have exclusive use of a track. Please share with others so that more members can enjoy the HO layout.

Jake Forbes noted that with the long passing siding you could run two trains on Main 1 in opposite directions. This requires attention for success.

There was also a discussion about how to stage for the upcoming Open House as the tracks under the mountain will not be complete by that time.

S Gauge – Nothing to report tonight.

O Gauge – George Sawyer reported he has received some needed traction tires. These may be used as a belt and help to get the merry-go-round in the carnival back in service.

G Scale – Alan Servas reported that Mike Hinman has been helping with the G scale layout. Alan has found no one interested in buying the track cleaner we have. John Spach will try to sell this device on eBay.

e. Program Committee – Randy Foulke reported that he has programs lined up through September..

f. Social Committee

Randy Foulke also reported that we have been invited to visit the Kinston club. They are normally open on a Thursday night. Randy will get more details and report back.

Ken Howard reminded everyone of the CPD-13 trip to Tichy Train Group and two layout tours on Saturday April 11th. Anyone interested will find the details in the current edition of the Whistle Post.

9. Old Business

a. Mebane Show

Ken Howard reported that the big benefit of the Mebane show was the public relations value for both the Club and the Spring show.

As far as sales went, we exceeded our goal on sales. The show was deemed a success.

b. Abandoned Members

John Spach noted that last Saturday we had a Junior member and a guest left in the building without a Senior member present. Mike Hinman was able to help by phone and get them safely out and the building locked up. The lesson here is if you are a Senior member, do not leave the building without another Senior member being present to lock up. Do not leave people without keys stranded in the Club.

c. Open House

John Spach reminded everyone of the May 2nd Open House. We need members to attend and show our guests around as well as running all our layouts. The event will be chaired by Phil Michud and John Mezera. Please let them know if you will be attending and bringing refreshments to the event.

d. Spring Show

Bob Witwer noted we are only ten weeks away from the Spring show.

We have sold 319 tables with 34 more not yet confirmed. This gives us a potential total of 353 tables. We have 62 vendors.

There will be thirteen layouts this year including a large G scale layout that was also at the New Bern show.

A new feature of the show will be our Backshop Sales area. This will be a portion of the Club sales table set aside for Club members to sell their personal merchandise. No tables will be sold individually to Club members. Items for Backshop Sales should be dropped off at the Club by the Sunday before the show. A form will be available to be filled out for each item offered for sale. The items will be packaged for transport. These items will be loaded on the truck and transported to the Fairgrounds along with the rest of the Club's show items. Sales in this area will be cash only, no credit cards. John Spach will be in charge of the Backshop Sales.

A new ticket format will be used this year. It will advertise both the Club and the upcoming Fall show.

Bob will procure several blue lights for identifying door prize vendors and other special events at the show.

Bob will be in charge of staffing. Bernie will be calling members and maintaining the chart. Members were reminded that all Club members are expected to work at least four hours during the show. Members are also encouraged to sign up soon to work at the Spring show. We especially need porters on Friday afternoon and again on Sunday from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

10. New Business

a. Upcoming Elections

John Spach announced that the Nominating committee has been charged and will be presenting their list of nominees at the April Membership meeting. Elections will be held at the May meeting.

If you are a Senior member and have a desire to serve as an officer or At Large Board member, let a member of the Nominating committee know. Members are Richard Calfee, George Sawyer, and Bob Witwer.

b. Classic Trains

Tom Garren shared an email he had received stating that after 26 years of publication, *Classic Trains* will cease with the Spring 2026 issue. Some of the content will appear in a newly expanded *Trains* magazine.

11. Program

Donald Weaver presented a 1955 video entitled “So You Want a Model Railroad.”

12. Adjournment

Bob Witwer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by George Sawyer and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 pm.