

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting of July 06, 2026

1. Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call of Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Ken Howard.

Note: This meeting was held on Zoom only.

Board members in attendance by Zoom were Jake Forbes, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Schaefer O'Neill, Greg Rehe, and Bob Witwer.

2. Recognition of Additional Members Attending on Zoom

Additional members attending on Zoom were Cat Attack, Mike Hinman, Phil Michaud, Bela Nemeth, George Sawyer, and John Spach.

No guests attended this 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 Schaefer O'Neill and passed unanimously.

4. Treasurers Report

Schaefer O'Neill gave the Treasurer's report.

The deposit has been made with the Fairgrounds for the Spring 2027 show.

John Spach noted that the total eBay sales for the current period are around \$2,000.00.

Schaefer noted that he and Ken Howard have an appointment on Wednesday with Truist bank to get Ken squared away as president on our accounts.

It was also noted that Ken and Schaefer have met with Edward Jones. It was decided to not change our investment strategy at this time.

Schaefer noted that seven people have paid their dues by Zelle. This is an increase of Zelle usage.

George Sawyer requested an updated report on who has paid their dues. This information will allow him to send reminders only to those that have not yet paid their dues.

Schaefer will send a T-TRAK proposal he has received to Phil Michaud for analysis.

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

5. Communications with the Club

Ken Howard noted that we are working on several donations.

John Spach is coordinating an O gauge donation in Fuquay and an HO donation in Chapel Hill.

Additionally, former member Larry Pearlman has sent us information on a large collection of S gauge equipment in the upstate of South Carolina. George List has been asked to follow up with the owner to gather details and learn if he is willing to make a donation to the Club.

Ken also noted a large N scale donation received recently that included rolling stock and track but no locomotives.

Mike Hinman noted that Jim Schaefer, our next door neighbor, is willing to split the cost landscaping services with us. Mr. Schaefer has been given Ken Howard's contact information.

Tom Garren reported that Bernie Dawson is hoping to go to a rehab facility in Smithfield while he recovers from his recent surgery.

Ken Howard reported that he and Tom and Daphne Garren disposed of the layout previously stored in his shed. It required going to two different disposal sites, but was ultimately successful.

6. Committee Reports

a. Membership

George Sawyer reported that we have 101 members of whom 48 have paid their dues. Once his records have been updated from the latest information from the Treasurer, a reminder will be sent out to anyone that has not yet paid their dues.

b. Ways and Means

Ken Howard noted that the audit of the books for the last fiscal year is pending. Schaefer O'Neill stated that he is working on the information needed for the audit. He also noted that he has donated a set of Quick Books to the Club to make record keeping easier. The Audit committee is John Spach, Alan Bradley, and George Sawyer.

c. House

Mike Hinman reported that he has one more shelf to complete in the Board storeroom.

Ken Howard reported that we have our annual fire extinguisher inspection coming up on Wednesday, July 8th.

Ken Howard reported that the hot water heater project is complete with the exception of turning up the temperature.

d. Engineering

N Scale – Phil Michaud reported that allop the track has been laid on the main loop. There is still work to be done on the engine facility, some industries on the back side, and the determination of where to put a passenger station. It seems that almost every member of the N scale group has a passenger train. There is still work to be done to complete the ballasting of the track on the N scale layout. Finally, some old switches that were problematic have been removed. The layout seems to be running well.

HO – Ken Howard reported that Chuck Larnerd is taking over the lead role on the HO committee. Chuck has several ideas including Zoom committee meetings, more shelving in the layout room, and a guidance document for proper usage of the layout.

As of last Sunday everything on the HO layout was operational including the extension up to the logging camp, and the yard on Module 9.

The interior three-track yard will require more work to correct a spacing error between the tracks. These changes are in the planning stage.

HO committee meetings have been changed to the second Sunday at Noon. In this way, a timely report can be made at the monthly Membership meeting.

Ken also reported that Len Nieman has made some test tracks with coupler height gauges and rerailers. These tracks can be used for setting coupler height, testing engines as well as serving as a remote programming track. These tracks will be for sale at the Clubhouse and at our shows.

S gauge – Nothing to report.

O gauge – George Sawyer reported there is one turnout on the layout giving problems.

Len Nieman has suggested adding the capabilities to test whistle and bell to the main test track in the shop.

G scale – Nothing to report on the Club's G scale layout.

George Sawyer reported that the G scale layout at the Albemarle Music store runs well and has no aluminum track.

Program Committee – Nothing to report.

7. Old Business

a. Stoneridge Visit

Ken Howard reported that we had a successful visit with a group of residents from Stoneridge Gracious Retirement Living in Cary. They seemed to enjoy their visit to the Club. It is expected that they will come back. Member Bill Ferguson now lives at Stoneridge and arranged this initial visit.

b. Org Chart

Ken Howard reported that work continues to revise and complete the Club org chart.

George Sawyer has agreed to be the Membership chair.

A new Building committee is being created. It will be led by Phil Michaud. If any member has a desire to work on this committee please let Ken and Phil know. Ken noted that we are in a very tough real estate market. Normal prices for commercial real estate in this area are beyond our capabilities. We would like to find a place with 8,000 to 10,000 square feet. Ken has asked the layout chairmen to submit estimates for their needs to help assure we are looking for the right size space.

We will also investigate getting an extension on our existing lease through 2029.

c. Fall Show

Bob Witwer reported that the show flyers have been printed and early advertising is under way thanks to Greg Rehe. Also, a preliminary floor plan has been developed for the show. While it is basically the same floor plan as last year, changes will be made to accommodate 550 tables.

A discussion was held to talk about how to recoup the increased cost of the building rental from the Fairgrounds. When contacted, the former show chairman could not remember a price increase for vendor tables. Bob Witwer sent the Board members a document with several options listed. After discussion, Phil Michaud suggested adopting one of Bob's proposals that included a flat five dollar increase per table and having only two tiers of table pricing. Tier 1 would be from 1 – 10 tables at a cost of \$55.00 per table, and a second tier of 11 and above for \$45.00 per table. Ken Howard asked if we accommodate the table groupings if some vendors go from ten to twelve tables. Bob feels that is not a problem we can arrange the tables as needed to meet vendor requests.

After the discussion Bob Witwer made a motion to adopt the two-tiered table pricing of 1-10 for \$55.00 each and 11 and over for \$45.00 each. The motion was seconded by Schaefer O'Neill and passed unanimously.

Bob also mentioned that the first Show committee meeting will be held on July 18th to begin work on the Fall show. He is looking for someone to take over the Craftsman Showcase and the coordination of layouts. Ken suggested that Bob put an article in the Whistle Post and also make a plea for help at the Membership meeting.

Schaefer O'Neill talked to four vendors at the national TCA show who expressed interest in our show. He will follow up with these vendors when materials about the show are available.

8. New Business

a. Personnel

Ken Howard stated that he is still looking for people to serve on various committees.

b. Record Keeping

Ken Howard showed a document listing the documents that a 501(c)3 should keep and for how long. From this we will develop a records retention policy. In the meantime Ken and Tom Garren have been finding pertinent documents in a file cabinet and transferring them to the fireproof box in the Library. Some of the items we need to have include:

- A list of current and past Board members.
- A conflict of interest statement. This may require a bylaws change.
- Create a formal document retention policy. A draft is coming soon.

Schaefer O'Neill said that he has some tax records from the previous Treasurer. There may be more documents in the rear storage area.

Ken Howard noted that if anyone has documents pertaining to the business of the Club to pass them to him, Tom Garren, or Schaefer O'Neill.

Tom Garren asked if we need to retain a lawyer. It was agreed to table this thought for now and seek a recommendation from Alan Bradley.

9. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.