

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

Minutes of the Membership Meeting of September 17, 2026

1. Call Meeting to Order

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Clif Kelly.

2. Roll Call of Members in Attendance

Members attending in person included Wayne Aiken, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Mike Hinman, Ken Howard, Clif Kelly, Ted Kunstling, Paul Lebieczinski, Don McPherson, Len Nieman, Alan Servas, Jim Smith, John Spach, Mike Wagner, and Bob Witwer.

Members attending by Zoom included Pete Donofrio, Jake Forbes, Chuck Larnerd, Tom Magnani, Collin Martinko, Jack McDonald, Greg Rehe, George Sawyer, Gene Sing, and Ben Wallace.

3. Recognition of Guests in Attendance

We had one guest tonight. Julie Abella attended by Zoom for her son Ansel.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

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

5. Treasurers Report

In the absence of Schaefer O'Neill, Ken Howard gave the Treasurer's report.

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

6. Show and Tell

a. Randy Foulke shared an EMD Switcher operator's manual for SW1 and SW7 model switchers.

b. Len Nieman shared a photo from a 1940's logging operation that included three high lines to move the logs from the mountain to the landing.

c. Tom Magnani mentioned a digital receiver for those interested in listening to railroad traffic. He will provide a link to be placed in the Whistle Post for more information.

d. Tom Garren shared a PFM Southern wooden caboose he has recently acquired.

e. Alan Servas has an item from the New Hope Valley group. They have an older brass HO Southern Pacific AC12 in need of repair and restoration. The hope is someone in our Club will be willing to take this on and fix up the locomotive. NHV will display

the engine with a plaque noting who did the restoration work. It was suggested that Alan contact George List to see if he is interested in this project.

7. Communications with the Club

- a. Mike Hinman noted that tree crews will be on site in the near future to trim out the power lines serving the tower behind our building.
- b. John Spach made the group aware of a husband/wife team from California who are producing a video of Real Model Railroads. This will feature various clubs from all over the country. Ken Howard will follow up with them for more information.
- c. John Spach also announced that our Facebook page has approximately 10,000 views and 2,000 followers.
- d. Collin Martinko stated that Ken Croft plans to bring an N scale donation to the show.
- e. Ken Howard stated that we have received several donations including a small and a large HO donation as well as some O gauge donations.
- f. Ken also shared that JM Hobby Supply & Railroad Artifacts has an auction coming up on October 10th and 11th.
- g. Ken further shared that the French Broad N scale group will have a show October 9th and 10th at the WNC Ag Center in Fletcher, NC.
- h. Ken made us aware of a walk for the Dravet Syndrome Foundation on October 17th. Jim Smith is sharing this information in case anyone would care to make a donation.
- i. Wayne Aiken stated that the Myrtle Beach, SC club will not have to move from their current location. The site has been bought by Guy Fierri and will be renewed.

8. Committee Reports

- a. Membership Committee
George Sawyer reported that we currently have 88 members. There is only one remaining member yet to pay dues.

We have an application from Ansel Gent who is applying for a Youth membership. He likes N, S, and HO scale.

George Sawyer made a motion to accept Ansel Gent as a Youth member. The motion was seconded by Bob Witwer and passed unanimously.

Randy Foulke asked if we knew the reason several people have not renewed their membership. Ken Howard stated that we did. The reasons included aging out of the hobby, moving away from the area, and change of interests.

b. Ways and Means

The Ways and Means committee is still waiting on the financial records for the last FY. Once available the audit will be performed.

c. House

John Spach noted that John Kuchnia had cleaned up and hauled away some debris from outside the building.

Ken Howard noted that Dan Egy had hauled away trash and empty boxes from inside the building.

Also Bob Witwer and Mike Hinman have fixed the outside light on the side of the building.

Mike Hinman stated that he has seen a couple of roaches and crickets in the building. If there are more, it may be time to contact the landlord about getting an exterminator to stop by.

Wayne Aiken stated that he is planning one more storage shelf in the drink room. Other than this, there are no changes in the Library.

Ken Howard asked everyone to be more safety conscious. If you see something on the floor please pick it up and put it where it belongs. We have had three falls in the Clubhouse in the last two weeks. We need to work together to keep everyone safe.

d. Engineering

N Scale – Randy Foulke reported that Milo Poulin continues to make progress on the permanent layout.

T-TRAK – Randy Foulke stated that we had a successful event in Holly Springs with North Raleigh in August.

Randy further reported that storage of the T-TRAK modules is still an issue. To facilitate better storage, several members of the T-TRAK group are now storing some of the modules at their homes. John Spach requested that a list of which modules are being stored at which location be created and sent to Tom Garren for safekeeping. Randy Foulke also asked for help to man the T-TRAK layout at the Fall show.

Randy is also working on a Christmas time event for the T-TRAK layout.

HO – Chuck Larnerd asked all people with an interest in the HO layout to please attend the HO committee meetings.

Ken Howard noted that we had 10 members at the last HO committee meeting. There are 60 members that express interest in HO.

Chuck further stated that we are in a trackwork moratorium so that we can concentrate on scenery prior to the Open House.

He further noted that Plexiglas is being installed on the layout. Members are cautioned to be careful as there could be sharp edges on the Plexi.

Len Nieman is working on the lumber camp.

Greg Rehe has been working on tunnel portals, the ramps to the mountain, and getting the road put into the industrial area.

John Spach has added a number of buildings to the layout.

Plans have been created for redeveloping parts of the layout.

A preferred method for applying ballast has been identified. There is a lot of track that needs to be ballasted. Chuck will conduct a training class in the future to teach those interested how to apply ballast using this preferred method.

Bob Witer suggested a ballast class for the Education Station at the show.

S Gauge – Ken Howard reported that George List has been getting the S group together and cleaning the layout, the shelves, and the items on the shelves. The layout is running very nicely. It will be a great opening item for our Open House.

O Gauge – George Sawyer reported that he has been working on getting items ready for sale at the Fall show. All tracks are working on the O gauge layout.

G Scale – John Spach has been able to procure 300 feet of brass G scale track. Alan Servas has volunteered to clean the track and record the amount of track available for installation. He will send that information to Tom Garren.

It was proposed to plan on installing the brass track on the G scale layout in the December-January timeframe.

Alan further stated that at a recent Thomas event at New Hope Valley, he referred anyone showing interest in model railroading to the NRV.

It was suggested that we could perhaps run a battery powered G scale set at the Open House. Jim Smith thinks he may have a couple of these sets we could use.

Chuck Larnerd suggested that when we change out the track on the G scale we consider installing foam under the track to help deaden the sound.

- e. Program Committee – Randy Foulke reported that he has programs lined up through January 2027. Anyone interested in giving a program please contact Randy. Randy also suggested that someone might want to do a program on Southern Railway passenger trains.

- f. Social Committee – Nothing to report this month.

9. Old Business

a. Building Committee

Ken Howard noted that Phil Michaud has been following up on a number of leads with several municipalities about buildings. All members are asked to send any information you may have about a potential building for the Club to Phil.

b. Open House

Ken Howard reminded everyone of the Open House on October 17th. The event will be led by Phil Michad and John Mezera. Jake Forbes has agreed to be the trainmaster for the HO layout. We need all layouts running and all hands on deck to greet our visitors. Members are encouraged to carpool to leave as much parking as possible for our guests. Members are reminded to donate refreshments for the Open House. Finally, we need to move the guest book close to the front door and make sure our guests sign the book. In this way, we can know how many guests we had attend the event.

c. Layout for Sale

Ken Howard reminded everyone that we have a 4x8 HO layout for sale. The layout includes NCE dcc. We will display the layout at Open House if it is not sold before then. The price for the layout with the DCC system is \$250.00.

d. Fall Show

Bob Witwer reported that we will have 420 vendor tables at the Fall show. We have lost 80 tables to Train Fest in Milwaukee. We still have 84 vendors and 20 layouts. There are two new layouts, one from the New River Valley from Blacksburg, Virginia, and a large wooden Thomas layout.

Bob also reported that John Spach has eighteen slots for the Education Station with fourteen of them filled.

We also have twenty sponsors for the show.

Bob Witwer next stated that we don't have enough people to work the show. We need a minimum of twenty people on duty each day to run the show. We also need people

on Thursday night to load the truck, and on Friday to set up the show. We want at least a four hour commitment from our members to staff the show. Assignments will be made. Please sign up on the new sheet. When you are available, you will be told where you are needed.

John Spach noted that we need 250 more paid admissions to make up for the loss of revenue for eighty vendor tables.

Members were encouraged to post the show flyer on all of their social media platforms.

It was also suggested that members bring the kids or grandkids to help with portering duties on Friday and Sunday.

e. Webmaster

Ken Howard reminded everyone that we are still looking for a webmaster.

10. New Business

a. Items on Crew Lounge Table

Mike Hinman requested that if you leave an item on the front table, please label it so we know what is happening with the item.

11. Program

Ted Kunstling presented part one of his Railroads in the Civil War presentation. This part concentrated on the logistics of the war and the part the railroads played..

12. Adjournment

Bob Witwer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Tom Garren and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 pm.