

Purpose: Garden State Division (GSD) Staff Meeting
Date/Time: Saturday, January 14, 2023
Place: Fulton Friendship Lodge
Attendees: Mark Moritz, Jim Homoki, Andy Brusgard, Paul Harbord, Bob Dennis, JP Mikesh, Ciro Compagno and Tom Casey and Jim Walsh
Absent: Steve Ascolese

Meeting started around 9:45 AM.

No Motions Submitted at the Meeting

Reports were presented:

President's Report – Mark spoke about the 2023 Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show in Springfield. The NMRA national directors are coming to Springfield for the NMRA winter meeting this year and the NMRA booth will be large. It will have the national and the NER with some GSD board members volunteering to man the booth. The HUB Division will display a modular model railroad at the show. Mark followed up on an item from a previous meeting concerning a collection of a man who was hospitalized. Mark will get contacted when the owner is out of the hospital but so far he was not contacted. Mark said that the Lakeshores Division (Rochester) will be doing "Op Around the Clock" and the CNY Division does "Ops Till You Drop" in the Syracuse area. He asked if we have an interest in a similar event in New Jersey. There are already operating events in New Jersey that are not associated with the NMRA. Ciro suggested that we have another operating session at The Model Railroad Club. Jim H mentioned some other layouts in our area that support operating sessions. We could start small with an operating event at The Model Railroad Club. Andy will check with Tim at the club.

NER REPORT – There are two virtual events coming up – NERx and NMRAx. The NERX is on March 20-23. Jim W and Scott Gothe will be presenting clinics. They need layout tours and Mark asked Jim H about providing one. Jim does not have a virtual layout tour recorded because when he presented his virtual layout tour during Covid it was presented live with PowerPoint slides and some video clips. Other suggested layouts were Fred Dellaiacono and Tom Wortmann but both were already presented in previous NERx events. Steve Kay's layout was recommended. Mark said that there are people in the NMRA who can assist the layout owner. NMRAx is in May but Mark has no details yet. NER conventions are planned out to 2025- Long Island in 2023; Rochester in 2024 and New Hampshire in 2025. There is also a convention in Nova Scotia in May 2023. They finally signed a contract for the 2023 NER convention. It will be in Uniondale on Columbus Day weekend. As the price is being negotiated, right now it is \$199 per night.

Vice President's Report – Jim H brought the signs from the last meet used for Dave Olesen and Ted Pamperin. Jim is keeping one (#3) for his layout tour in May. Mark mentioned that at a prior meeting we agreed that whoever sets up the layout tour retrieves the sign from the layout host.

Secretary's Report - Jim W distributed DRAFT minutes of the BOD meeting of 11SEP2022 previously sent by email. There were no comments or corrections for the document and it was approved as written. However, there was an item noted that although the minutes correctly relate the plan to have the meet at the firehouse, it was later changed to the town center.

Treasurer's Report – Bob D reported that activity for the year was minimal and the 3 meets that we hosted comprised the biggest expense. Of those, the summer was most expensive at \$510. The winter was \$390 and the fall meet was \$275. Ciro asked if the \$5 donation covers the cost of each meet. Bob replied that it covers and our balance continues to grow. Treasurer report was accepted.

Education Committee and AP Chair Reports – Mark reports no activity in the AP program. He will be following up with people who expressed an interest. He spoke to Christina Zambri and he needs to get back to her as well. He does not know what else he can do but he will contact people that he knows are working on certain certificates and try to renew their interest. Ciro reported that he has met the requirements for Association Official. Ciro will also host the next BOD meeting and after it some of us can visit Bob D's layout and check it for the Scenery AP Certificate. Mark thinks that he has the requirements for dispatcher but he will show it to Jim H.

Events Report - **WINTER EVENT:** Library in Oakland, NJ. on February 25. Mark spoke to Fred Dellaiacomo who indicated that everything is set. The library opens at 9:30 AM and we have the same two rooms that we had the last time – coffee room and meeting room. The event starts at 10:00 AM. For clinics, Rich Newmiller will present one on scratch building a lumber yard and Angela Sutton will give a clinic on her N scale model railroad project. For layouts - Fred Dellaiacomo's - Mark will check with him. Garden State Railway Club if they can. Jim H did not hear back from Dave Ramos. Tim Moses is in the middle of a garage expansion and cannot host. Andy said that NYSME is available. Tom C suggested the Mahwah Museum – with a model railroad in it. He will check and get back to us. **SPRING EVENT:** Right now we are looking at a date of May 13. Previously, Steve A suggested that we try the Old Bridge library for our spring meet. In October, Mark contacted the library director who said that they would be finalizing their policy for outside use in mid-January. Our alternative is the Hillsborough Municipal Building but we cannot do anything with that until January as well. Mark will contact Old Bridge but if it will not work for us then he will notify Jim H to move ahead with Hillsborough. Mark also let us know that Steve A is leaving the board and Andy noted that Steve will be working with him making telephone calls. At the joint meet, each division supplies a clinic and we take the lead on layout tours but ask the NJD if any of their layouts will be open for the meet. If the meet is in Hillsborough, the available layouts are Jim H, Rocky Hill, Bill Chapin and Father David Garretson. For clinics we have Joe Valentine and his presentation about the signs that he made for his layout. Mark will contact NJD Superintendent John Gallagher to find out about their clinic. **SUMMER EVENT PLAN:** Morristown Area – Mark already checked a VFW in Mt Tabor but it was too expensive. He will contact the Morris County Library. Other possible locations are the meeting room at Saint Elizabeth's and the Morris Museum. We usually pay a donation of \$100 but sometimes \$150. **FALL IDEA:** We need a date to avoid the NER convention on Columbus Day weekend (Oct 5-8) and the MER convention in Altoona, PA on Oct 19-22. We should have our meet on September 23. We are looking at Staten Island and ideally we would go to the Marine Corps League. Ciro will check with Tom Wortmann.

Clinic Report – Jim W only has the clinics that he mentioned for the winter meet and spring meets and no other clinics right now. Jim asked the board if they have any ideas for clinics or clinicians. Ciro said that he will ask Mark Pitanza about doing a clinic especially if we are on Staten Island in the fall. He will also ask Chris Oliva. However, we still need clinics for the summer meet. Bob D noted that he wants to do another ITLA make-and-take clinic. He is interested in an HO scale elevated railway structure and he is speaking to Nick at ITLA about making a starter kit of that type of structure at a cost of \$35 or \$40. Ciro is concerned that type of structure would have limited interest to our members.

Membership & Club Chair Report – Andy said that for the year through the November 2022 report our membership has remained stable at 202. Twenty of them are life members including one honorary life member (Tony Koester). Unfortunately 5 members have passed on. Andy reaches out to members who do not renew. Tom C announced the names of members whose membership expired in 2022. During a discussion of the Rail Pass program, Ciro noted that a Rail Pass is good in the US only and for new members and for those who have not been a member for 2 years or more. Andy noted that Rail Pass members can only get the digital NMRA magazine. He also reminded us that when you renew your membership the digital magazine is the default and you must add the print version.

Whistle Post Report – Jim H received an article from Steve Kay and Jim is also trying to get a structure article from Mason Logie. Jim mentioned that Gulliver's Gate is moving to the ferry terminal on Staten Island and Mason will have an article about that. Jim W will supply his column in a few days. Jim H really needs a cover photo for the next issue. We usually feature something that ties in with an upcoming event – either a clinic or one of the layout open houses. Paul plans to provide a photo of The Garden State Railway Club layout. Jim W suggested that maybe Jim H could get a photo of the lumber yard on Rich Newmiller's layout. This ties into the clinic Rich is giving. Jim H also noted that since Rich is a presenter, any photo on his layout would apply.

Dropbox – We received an email from Dropbox this month and Paul suggested that they may not continue the free accounts. Ciro reported that that he copied items from our Dropbox to our server but he has not deleted the information from Dropbox. Ciro can start deleting the old items- maybe everything prior to 2022. He will definitely leave items that we use in our operation and that we need to access easily. Wait! Don't delete until we get our remote backup plan in place and executed.

Old Business:

- BOD members outreach – Andy does it regularly and Mark will contact John Montagna . Andy reminded us to notify him if you contact a member. Remove item from the list since it is ongoing.
- RPM / Craftsman Structures Meet: Mark is not clear on what we are doing about this item for 2024. We should make a decision about it. We originally became interested when it appeared that the RPM in Malvern would end. However, Malvern is still continuing every other year. Ciro suggested that we start with an operation event with The Model Railroad Club – we will make small steps. Remove the RPM from Old Business.
- GSD online apparel shop – Bob D mentioned how we were going to work the payments and Mark asked how many shirts would we need to buy to make the shop viable. Mark also noted that it depends on interest from our membership. Bob D suggested that we put a hat and a shirt in the Whistle Post and see who is interested. Mark would also put it in the next Constant Contact email. We could put it on the agenda for the next GSD meet – make it a golf shirt and long sleeve shirt. What color? CNJ colors – green and yellow shirts.
- Bob D - submit receipts to NMRA National for fund reimbursement for the winter clinic. – Bob reported that we did not have expenses for the make-and-take because the members paid for the kits. We can consider it for a future event.
- Paul - Hawthorn library information – Paul reported that the library does not open until 10 AM on Saturday. He needs to go back to see the details for a future meeting. The 10 AM start time is too late for us. That closes this out.
- Apply for NER matching fund program for Winter make-and-take. With no cost for our make-and-take, this does not apply. Bob said that we could have another make-and-take in the future. He will speak to Ron Klaiss at the Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show in Springfield. We could subsidize some of the kit cost.
- Find out how we would arrange a meet at the Sterling Mine. Ciro tried to contact the mine and he will follow up on that. It would probably be the summer of 2024. This item is still open. Andy heard that the mine closed during Covid but did not reopen. JP confirmed that they are still closed.
- Print 4 or 5 copies of the Whistle Post for the next GSD meet. Ciro is doing this and we will see them at the February meet.
- JP is making arrangements for a remote backup of our server. The current status is that JP needs to get an old computer to harvest and he will build a server located at his home in Pennsylvania.
- Announcement about Amazon Smile – Bob D will have information on the program at the next GSD meet. Leave it on the list.
- Mark – get info about Morristown Armory – Mark already spoke about that earlier. Done.
- Paul – Info on commercial backups and Dropbox upgrade – Paul said that the cost is based on the amount of material being backed up. Ciro will provide the information for how much we need

backed up. Paul noted that the price of the solution can range from \$40 per year up to hundreds per year. He looked at a few and also checked to see if there were good recommendations. There was one that did not seem expensive but he was not familiar with it and a magazine gave it a great rating. Microsoft has One drive, Google has Google Drive and then there is Dropbox. Paul will get the information from Ciro and prepare some cost options for backing up our data. Paul will look into commercial backup solutions and an option to increase our Dropbox capability.

- Jim W – Check about maximum BOD directors - Constitution and Bylaws have no limit to the number of directors but the minimum is 2. However, half of the directors are elected at one time. Mark will make an announcement at the GSD meet that we have director position openings on the GSD board. Ciro suggested Bob Nalbone and Andy will ask Bob. Mark asked when Steve A's term is up. Jim W will check and let Mark know.

That completes the Old Business.

New Business: NONE

The next BOD meeting will be at Ciro's home on April 22, 2023. It will be 3 weeks before the next GSD event. BOD meeting to start at 9:30 AM with breakfast at 9 AM. After the meeting, evaluate Bob D's work for the AP Scenery certificate.

The meeting adjourned around 12:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Walsh

Jim Walsh, Secretary NMRA/NER/GSD