

**BOD MEETING MINUTES OF GARDEN STATE DIVISION, NE REGION,  
NMRA**

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**Purpose:** Garden State Division (GSD) Staff Meeting  
**Date/Time:** Saturday, September 14, 2019  
**Place:** Home of Steve Ascolese  
**Attendees:** Chuck Diljak, Steve Ascolese, Jim Homoki, Jim Walsh, Bob Dennis, Mark Moritz, Paul Harbord, Ciro Compagno, JP Mikesh and Tom Wortmann  
Not in attendance: Tom Casey and Andy Brusgard

Meeting started at 9:00 AM

**No Motions Submitted at the Meeting**

**Reports were presented:**

President's Report – Chuck has been looking at Dropbox. It is cluttered with many membership folders and he has asked Andy to take a look. Between Tom C and Andy, many items have been added to Dropbox. It is great that people are using it but we need to use Dropbox wisely and keep it organized. Chuck has removed the 2018 NER convention files and he discussed what to do about archiving those files. We can have a detailed conversation about it under new business. Chuck is working with Mark to prepare the Constant Contact email release while Chuck is away. JP will be working with Tom W on enhancing the GSD Website and this meeting will kick off that collaboration. Chuck also added some of the NER administration to our Constant Contact email list to keep them informed of our activities. They are NER President John Doehring, NER Secretary Chip Faulter, Southern Director Kevin Katta and Coupler editor Jeff Paston. That concludes the Presidents Report.

NER REPORT – Chuck reported that Jeff Paston gave notice that he will only be Coupler editor for one more year. He will need to be replaced with one or more editors and the software being used will need replacement since it is a legacy product and not being updated. A new editor must select new software. John Doehring is interested in getting our divisions participating in T-TRAK so that we could collaborate on assembling a layout at our conventions. The region is also searching for ways that we could raise funds. Ideas are welcome. So far, the 2019 convention has 165 registered compared to 185 at our 2018 convention but some walk-in attendees are expected. Only 9 people registered from the GSD. In 2020, the convention will be in Westford, Massachusetts and will include a Lowell trolley tour and power plant, Lowell National Park mill tour and possibly a canal tour. The convention theme is operations and so far they have 6 layouts committed. They have a target of 15 layouts for operating sessions and 25 or 30 for open houses. In 2021 the convention is in Farmington Connecticut for a joint Metro North and Nutmeg divisions convention. There is no location for 2022. The 2023 convention is possibly in the Seacoast division. They are still discussing with Sunrise Trail about having a convention on Long Island but hotels and other costs are expensive on Long Island. Also there are issues with traffic and manpower. A discussion of divisions with territory in Canada and the US could indicate possible changes for the NER. END REPORT

Vice President's Report – Mark has been keeping track of the lawn signs. He knows where they are but retrieving them is a problem. Three signs are with The Model Railroad Club and are still out. Andy volunteered to get them but Mark doesn't know if it was done. The 3 signs from the summer are with Ted Pamperin, Dave Olesen and Ed Suhy and have not been returned. Mark said that we need a policy on how we will get the signs back after a division meet. One suggestion is that the layout owner brings the sign to the next meet. Mark wants them back sooner and he noted that some do not attend the meets regularly. Mark had a point that the layout owner should make an effort to return the sign. One solution would be if a board member is the last visitor to the layout, he could pick up the sign when he leaves. Tom W suggested that we plan to have a board member be a last visitor and retrieve the

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sign. Chuck suggested that the local member(s) organizing the event could be responsible for getting the signs back to Mark. We agreed to make sign management part of the duties for each meet.

Secretary's Report - Jim W distributed a DRAFT of minutes from the last meeting of June 29, 2019. The board members read the minutes and had no comments. The minutes were accepted as written. Jim also introduced a spreadsheet that he is preparing that tracks the service time of the GSD BOD. It is still being developed and needs some more information. Based on election reports, it is easier to track the officers with one-year terms. Also even though Andy serves 2-year terms, he was easy to track since he has served all terms to which he was elected. It is more involved for other directors. Jim W provided a copy of the document to Steve to use in completing Andy's paperwork for Association Volunteer AP Certificate. Jim H mentioned the listing of the BOD members in each Whistle Post.

Treasurer's Report – Bob D passed around a financial report (profit and loss) that tracks from January until now. It shows that we are down \$1361 which is abnormal but part of the reason is the purchase of the cards and card printing equipment (\$359 – budgeted for \$350). However, besides printing cards for our division, Bob is printing some cards for the NER. The \$5 per card that he charges them should help recover the cost of the material. Bob discussed the information and answered questions. Tom W asked about the congratulatory meal – it was listed as special events convention. Mark asked about the funds from NMRA national – listed as National NMRA \$199. Treasurer's report was accepted.

Education Committee and AP Chair Reports – Steve is following up on Golden Spike for a few members. Steve asked about The Paul Mallery Award and if anybody is eligible this year – not so far and the deadline is the Syracuse convention. Mason was interested in the Golden Spike and Steve will need to get back to him. Chuck made a list of Golden Spike recipients who he thought may be able to qualify for some AP certificates based on his recollection of their layouts. They would only need to complete the paperwork. Chuck will provide the list to Steve and the BOD. Steve will contact the people on the list. Chuck and Tom W are working on their certificates for Master Builder - Cars. Education and AP report was accepted.

Events Report - FALL MEET - Staten Island, NY. Ciro summarized the status for open house layouts. So far we have commitments from Steve, Mason's club and Tom W but Ciro was not successful at getting commitments from others. They will look for another layout for open house. For clinics, Mark will present a clinic on helices and Chris Oliva will do a clinic on building N scale catenary.

WINTER - February 29 in Park Ridge, NJ at Paul's Fulton Friendship Lodge. Chuck still needs to contact Ron Klaiss about a make-and-take clinic. This will be the morning agenda with no other clinic. Chuck was concerned about members who do not want to participate in the clinic. The participants can pay in advance with PayPal to register for the clinic and other members can come to watch the build and hear Ron's instruction. In case Chuck cannot get Ron for that meet, we need to have 2 backup clinics. We will also need layouts for the afternoon. Last time we were in Park Ridge, the Garden State Model Railway Club and the New York Society of Model Engineers were open. We don't know of any other layouts in the area. Chuck asked Paul to contact the layout owner just over the NY border who was open during the 2018 convention. Chuck will provide Paul with the contact information from our convention layout book. Chuck will also let us know the outcome of his contact with Ron.

SPRING – It will be hosted by the NJ Division but they have not given a location yet. While we do a bring and brag, they do a contest with a theme. At the spring meet the theme will be detailed industrial structures. We will need to supply a clinic and one option is Chuck's clinic on Using JMRI Ops Pro. SUMMER- At our last meeting, Ciro introduced the possibility of using the CNJ Museum at Liberty State Park. He needs to follow up on it.

Related to events and meetings, Chuck discussed his idea about having a local get together with members in his area. He asked Paul to determine when he would be available to get together with Chuck and some local members. Chuck also spoke of other ideas for some new clinics. One idea was maybe an image manipulation clinic using GIMP or Adobe Photoshop. Another idea was building

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structures with paper. Bob asked about running another event at Gulliver's Gate . Chuck was not enthusiastic because he is still trying to get our deposit back from the planned activity at the convention last year. Mason has some contacts at Guliver's Gate. Bob will follow up on getting the deposit back.

Membership Report – Both Andy and Tom C were absent so Chuck provided a report by discussing the format that he was looking for and he distributed a handout. He noted that Tom C. has produced some information in a similar format. Chuck pointed to some specific information on his sheet. This year, 18 Rail Pass members did not convert to regular membership – but we did get 4 to convert. Our membership numbers are up for this year. We are following similar membership trends consistent with other divisions and we are on an upward trend for the last half of the year. To maintain interest, Chuck is trying new and different activities. However, he still wants to know why some people leave. (Members who do not renew their membership) On the other hand, 24 people who dropped off the roster have rejoined. Jim H asked how many years were people active before dropping off. To the issue of people questioning the value of the NMRA, Chuck related that to get value from the NMRA, you need to be active in the NMRA. We had a discussion of different venues and shows that would be good events for recruiting. The JCRHS Train Show at Mother Seton High School on March 8 could be good. Maybe attendance at that March show in Clark and other recruiting initiatives can be added to the next meeting agenda for a discussion with Andy and Tom C. as responsible. Membership report was accepted.

Whistle Post Report. – Jim H related that the next issue is mostly together. Looking for some remaining columns and it should be ready after next weekend. Jim is missing columns from Jim W and Steve and a write-up on our next meet. He will be running Scott's article about work on The Model Railroad Club. Jim reminded us that he will need future articles since he only has one future article submitted. Chuck mentioned that we spoke about a new format with a cover shot. Jim said that it will not be in this issue and for that format to work we need a really good cover photo. Cover photos must be provided earlier than other content because the format of the cover needs to be determined. The cover photo should relate to content in the issue – it could be a layout shot for an upcoming open house or some news related to our division. The Whistle Post report was accepted.

4H Program – This is our last report for the 4H Program. Bob and Steve finished the layout, adding structures built by the 4H club modelers and building roads. Bob brought it to the 4H for their fair. This was our last year with the 4H program. The 4H report was accepted.

### Old Business:

- We need somebody to maintain our Facebook presence. Remember that our members cannot post to our Facebook page but if they joined the NER Group, they can post there. Keep in mind that more activity on a group can generate more interest more interest. However, we still need monitoring on our Facebook page.
- Clinic ideas - We still need clinic ideas and that will always be ongoing.
- Update the list of Achievement Program certificates of GSD members on our web site. That is done
- About members who have left – Bob, Chuck, Tom, Mark and Andy still have not had the conference call - still open.
- GSD needs a clinic chairman – leave it open for now.
- GSD lawn signs – still open.
- Prepare an item to membership focused on Golden Spike for distribution on Constant Contact. Steve will write something and send it to Mark and Chuck. Steve suggested an image of an actual certificate. Steve will write it up with emphasis on how achievable it is.
- Paul/Chuck - Have a local meeting with members in your area. Discussed earlier in the meeting and it is still open.
- Ciro info for the CNJ museum – still open.

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- Provide Mark with a list of members near his zip code. That is done. Mark has also acted on the information and reached out to members. He received response from Scott Dunlap. He is already meeting regularly with local members during work sessions at his layout.
- Ed Fraedrich Award will be presented to Mason Logie at our meet on Staten Island. Tom W will be presenting it. It is a service award. Mason earned it because he organized the tour of Gilliver's Gate even though it was cancelled. He also organized and led the tour of the Highline and the trip on the fireboat. The last time the award was presented was 5 years ago. The trophy was ordered.
- Purchase a system for member nametags – that was done and Bob distributed nametags to BOD members at the start of the meeting.
- Chuck and Jim H discussed modifying the Whistle Post. It was addressed earlier in the meeting and it is in process

New Business:

- Tom W suggested contacting The Model Railroad Club in Union to see if we can get an operating session. Tom noted that our members always enjoy it. Chuck said that we will see when that will fit into our future schedule
- GSD Website – Last GSD BOD meeting, Chuck gave JP a mock up of an idea that Chuck had for the Website. He wants JP and Tom W to work together to create a new look and function for our web site. They would need to collaborate on what software to use and Chuck thought that we may be able to go live with the new Website even before it is fully functional. Of course, a few core items most visited by members would need to be ready when the Website goes live. Those core items include the Home Page, Whistle Post and information about the next event. The idea is to have a fresh look on the Website. JP will start working on it and hopes to have something to show by the next BOD meeting.
- Chuck asked: "What do we want to do with the files from the Erie Limited 2018 NER convention?" They need to be archived but available to everybody. Chuck will put the material on Dropbox and give everybody time to download the files.

The next GSD BOD meeting will be hosted by Jim Homoki on January 11, 2020. If needed, the snow date will be January 18. The meeting is well before the February 29 GSD meet.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jim Walsh*

Jim Walsh, Secretary NMRA/NER/GSD