

Purpose: Garden State Division (GSD) Staff Meeting
Date/Time: Saturday, October 2, 2021
Place: Home of Mark Moritz
Attendees: Mark Moritz, Jim Homoki, Bob Dennis, Ciro Compagno, Paul Harbord, Andy Brusgard and Jim Walsh in-person and Chuck Diljak, Steve Ascolese and Tom Casey online
Not in attendance: JP Mikesh

Meeting started at 10:04 AM.

October 2, 2021 Motion Submitted and Approved:

(2021.10.2.1) Based on Chuck's research Bob Dennis is authorized to purchase 2 wireless Bluetooth microphones with a maximum price of \$200.

Reports were presented:

President's Report – There was not much activity over the summer. We have been planning the Northlandz meeting.

NER REPORT – There were two NER board meetings – August 29 and September 13. Most of the discussions focused on the upcoming convention a week after this meeting. Six of us will be attending the convention. At the NER meeting on September 13 they identified upcoming conventions: 2022 in Windsor CT and Long Island for 2023. Right now Bob Dennis is the President of the NER until the convention next week. Ciro is the newly elected NER Southern Director representing Sunrise Trail, Garden State and Metro North Divisions. He will be a representative for the division if nobody else can attend an NER board meeting. He must fully understand the divisions in order to represent them.

Vice President's Report – Jim H had nothing additional to report.

Secretary's Report - Jim W distributed two draft minutes: DRAFT minutes of the BOD meeting of 26JUN2021 and DRAFT minutes of the Special BOD meeting of 29AUG2021 previously sent out by email. There were no comments or corrections for the documents and they were accepted as written.

Treasurer's Report – Bob D reported that for the entire year we received \$102. For Amazon smile we got \$10.99 and 1 or 2 people are participating. Bob suggested that we sign up for Amazon smile and designate the Garden State Division as the charity. Bob distributed the Profit and Loss statement. He noted that some errors in our finances were corrected. He also distributed the balance sheet that shows our cash. The treasurer's report was accepted.

Education Committee and AP Chair Reports – The only activity for the Achievement Program is that Mark will be volunteering as an evaluator in the contest room at the convention. That should provide enough points for Mark to complete his Volunteer Certificate. Chuck is not aware of any other member activity in the program. Steve will resume writing the AP column with future issues of the Whistle Post since Chuck submitted a column for the next issue.

Events Report - FALL EVENT is on October 30 at Northlandz. We already arranged the date and now we must contact Tariq Sohail, the owner of Northlandz, to address details of the event. Mark and Jim H will make contact to make final arrangements. Later in this meeting we will determine if the meeting will be a hybrid one. If it is hybrid, we will need a good Wi-Fi connection. Check the meeting room and determine how chairs will be arranged and get permission to bring in coffee and donuts. The meeting checklist is on Dropbox. We need to update and circulate it. Jim W addressed the 2 clinics for the meet – Scott Gothe will do a clinic about railroad signaling and Jim W will do a clinic called "Bonding and Filling for Model Railroading". We will have no layout tours since the large Northlandz layout will

be available for self-guided tours. It is a good option considering the pandemic and we will be following the protocols at Northlandz. We will also have masks available as well as hand sanitizer.

WINTER EVENT - The location is Paul's lodge in Park Ridge on 26 FEB 2022 and the snow date is March 5. Bob D will give a make-and-take clinic with an ITLA model that can be built in one of two ways – a building flat or regular building. Bob said that it will cost about \$20. He is preparing the clinic similar to what Clark Kooning MMR did for the Western New York Division with a Hydrocal kit from Downtown Deco. He will go over the kit options and provide instruction for assembling either version. Any tips on techniques will be great to assist modelers. We will need advanced promotion starting with the upcoming Whistle Post. Layouts in the area are: The Garden State Railway Club in North Haledon, the New York Society of Model Engineers(NYSME) in Carlstadt and Jay Held's home layout. Paul will check with the Garden State club, Andy is the POC for NYSME and Jim H will call Jay.

SPRING EVENT is a joint meet with the NJD and they are hosting. We only need to supply a clinic. They will arrange the venue and layouts. Somebody must contact John Gallagher the new NJD Superintendent. At this time their website only indicates it as a joint meet with the us in May 2022.

IDEAS FOR SUMMER: Discussions of locations in the past and the places that we were considering for rotations between odd and even years. Summer venues for odd years included Hope, NJ and Staten Island, NY and Morristown, NJ for even years. However, we are no longer considering Staten Island or Morristown. Therefore, we have no location for Summer 2022. Chuck had a document of the meet location rotation lists and he will post it to the meets folder on Dropbox.

Andy said that Tim at the Model railroad club in Union offered their location for our meet whenever we need it. In the past we also had a summer event at the Whippany Railway Museum – an ice cream social. The Model Railroad Club has limited space but may be good for a summer meet since we often have lower attendance in the summer. In addition we can have an operating session on their layout.

Clinic Report – As mentioned previously, we have 2 clinics for the fall meet. For the future, Kai Ebinger has a clinic on modeling with paper models that he wanted to give at an in-person meet. This should be good for an upcoming meet. Jim W made an appeal for clinics and clinic ideas. He indicated that he should make an appeal to the members at the next meet. Ciro offered a clinic on redesigning his layout with Cadrail. Bob D remarked that he benefitted from the clinic on modeling windows with real glass by Jim H.

Membership Report – Andy reported our membership is down to 220 members and it is slowly going down. Bob D remarked that everybody's membership has dropped due to the pandemic. Andy noted that we lost 8 members due to Covid-19. As usual, Andy sends out email to anybody who is behind. He always puts a note in his report that if you know any of the listed members, reach out to them and notify Andy of your contact. Nobody notified Andy that they contacted any of those members. With respect to the train show at Mother Seton, he has not seen anything. The show is Sunday March 6, 2022 and we want to have a GSD table at the show.

Whistle Post Report – Jim H said that the biggest problem with the upcoming issue is the cover because Northlandz doesn't really have anything on their website. They have some videos but no gallery of photos. When Mark contacts Tariq, he will ask about promotional photos. The current issue is light on articles. Jim W said that his column is coming in a day or two. Jim H also reminded us that for the following Whistle Post, he needs a cover shot maybe from one of the club layouts. You can give the photos to Jim H well before the last minute. The same applies for clinic information and photos.

Old Business:

- Revamp The Whistle Post – It is done – remove it from the list.
- GSD website – Chuck made some comments. He said that the cost as indicated at our special board meeting is not accurate. The only thing we must pay for on an annual basis is the domain name at \$22 per year. We don't pay for any licensing or posting fees since we already have the Constant Contact account – it is part of the account. That saves us around \$170 each year. The

next time we need to pay for the domain will be in April 2022. The reason the domain costs \$22 versus \$17 previously is because the new one has SSL certification making it more secure. Our "nergds" email accounts do not work anymore because they were on the old site. Notify Jim H if you want to use your private email address otherwise the general GSD email will apply. For the leadership page on the new website, Tom C must send Chuck a photo and a short biography. JP is also getting a photo for Chuck to post. When Chuck started up the new website, he received positive feedback from Tom Wortmann who was already planning to retire as webmaster at the end of 2021. Therefore this move proved to be timely. Chuck will be creating documentation for the new website after the Mill City 21 convention next week. Remove new website from Old Business.

- Erie Limited files – Instead of distributing flash drives, Chuck will put the files on the server and this item can be removed from the list.
- JCRHS Train Show at Mother Seton High School in Clark, NJ – We already spoke about it.
- Membership outreach – It is still ongoing.
- RPM/Craftsman Structures Meet – On Hold STATUS: Valley Forge RPM meet is returning in March 2022 and therefore we are not doing anything at this time. We were speaking about having our RPM only if the Valley Forge RPM ends. We are not doing anything about it right now.
- GSD T-TRAK modules – Bob D said that with John Doehring stepping down as President of the NER, this initiative has been dropped. Bob D brings it up at every NER board meeting but nobody wants to take charge of the activity. Drop it from the list right now and if it comes back to the NER we will return it to the list.
- Make-and-take clinic – We already spoke about it and it is now part of the winter event. It will be removed from the old business list.
- GSD online apparel shop is on hold until Steve recovers and is well enough to do that.
- Plan to record and track attendance at in-person meets - We need to address this since we are returning to face-to-face meetings. Andy has been trying to communicate with the legal department at the NMRA. For months he has tried to get guidance for the at-risk policy. Therefore Andy plans to enlarge the NMRA At-Risk Policy letter and post it at the sign-in desk. Bob D noted that we need to follow the 3 strikes rule. Andy will be monitoring that starting with the next meet.
- Plan for donated locomotives - Ciro related that he and Bob D met with JP and gave him 2 containers with about 60 donated locomotives, individually wrapped. They also created an inventory that listed details of the locomotive and its condition. The inventory file was posted to Dropbox. Ciro has been adding photos of the locomotives to the inventory spreadsheet and is about a quarter done. Bob D took the photos while they had the locomotives. They are available to be sold, auctioned or given as door prizes for our next meet. JP will bring the locomotives and a test track to our next meet. We discussed options on disposing of the locomotives. In addition, Tom Wortmann also has many door prizes in his possession that he wants to unload. They will cover more than one meeting.
- Send out BOD contact list for concurrence or correction. That was already done and the final was posted to Dropbox. Remove it from the list.
- Provide GSD server information and login for all BOD members. Some members received the info and accessed the server and others need the information from JP. The server has the Erie Limited files that Chuck uploaded as well as files that had been on the NER server. We could also store the files that are now on Dropbox.
- Bob D – put together content for the Whistle Post to promote the ITLA make-and-take in February. Bob plans to do it this week before the convention.

That completes the Old Business.

New Business:

- We need a policy for donated items. Ciro made a statement explaining an incident that highlighted our need for a policy and procedure for handling donations to our division. Ciro offered a suggested modification to our Bylaws to address a policy for donated items. After

some discussion about any member being approached, there was a suggestion that the language must clearly define that the policy applies to donations to the organization and not the individual. We should also include a statement that our organization does not assess the value of the donation and would be limited to acknowledging the items that were donated. Ciro will send out a DRAFT and we can provide feedback and suggestions to him. Then Ciro will finalize the DRAFT document for approval by the BOD.

- Chuck proposed that we consider hybrid meets for future events. He did a lot of work with our amplifier. For a hybrid meet you need a microphone that feeds through your computer so that anyone attending over the internet can hear but you also need that microphone to feed through the amplifier so that everybody in the room can hear. You may have a virtual presenter who is not in the room and people in the room must hear that presenter. What you really must have for a hybrid meet is a good Wi-Fi connection at the facility hosting your meeting. If Northlandz has WiFi in that room then we would be able to have a hybrid meet there. Although you don't need a wireless microphone, it would be much better to have one. Otherwise, you need long microphone cables since you will be tethered to the computer. The Western New York Division used wireless microphones for their hybrid meets. They had one in the room for anybody with a question and one for the presenter in the room. Chuck sent an email out with information about a recommended microphone. We must determine if we will be doing a hybrid meet in October at Northlandz and first we must know if WiFi will be available. The wireless microphone uses a Bluetooth connection to the computer. Even if Northlandz does not have WiFi, the lodge in Park Ridge has WiFi connectivity. We had a discussion of whether we want to hold a hybrid meet. Ciro suggested that we table the hybrid meet discussion for now. We also should purchase the wireless microphone.
- **MOTION:** Chuck will do some research and send info to Bob D to purchase 2 wireless Bluetooth microphones with a maximum price of \$200. - MOTION PASSED.
- Posting of minutes of GSD meetings on our website. Chuck discovered that there is no requirement for posting meeting minutes and we discussed how many we should post. We will separate the annual business meeting minutes from minutes for the board of directors. Keep the last business meeting and minutes from any subsequent board of directors meetings. When we post minutes for the business meeting, we delete all previous meeting minutes.
- The next NERx is scheduled for March 21 through 24, 2022 in the evenings. Chuck has recorded his anthracite mines clinic for presentation and he has Fred's layout tour. Chuck would also like the Jim H layout tour recording. They really want recorded clinics and layout tours. So if anybody is interested in presenting, just let Chuck know.
- Chuck will resign from the board at the annual business meeting in May. Other members of the board will be needed to assume the responsibilities that Chuck has now. Somebody must become Admin for the GSD Dropbox account. Someone must become acting AP chair for evaluations while Steve recovers. Chuck will hand off the audio system, table signs and other things that he has since he has a conflict and will not attend the meet on October 30. Also, in the meantime Chuck will be training people on how to use the website.

Our next BOD meeting will be January 22 or 23, a week before Springfield. It will be an in-person meeting at Steve's home and Bob D will confirm the date with Steve and inform us.

The meeting adjourned around 12:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Walsh

Jim Walsh, Secretary NMRA/NER/GSD