

**Purpose:** Garden State Division (GSD) Staff Meeting  
**Date/Time:** Saturday, June 26, 2021  
**Place:** Virtual meeting using Zoom  
**Attendees:** Chuck Diljak, Mark Moritz, Jim Walsh, Bob Dennis, Tom Casey, Paul Harbord, Andy Brusgard, JP Mikesh, Ciro Compagno and Steve Ascolese  
Not in attendance: Jim Homoki

Meeting started around 10:00 AM.

### **No Motions Submitted at the Meeting**

### **Reports were presented:**

President's Report – Not much to report but Mark will focus on NER and Northlandz reports.

NER REPORT – Mark did not attend the NER board meeting on June 13 but Bob D, Jim H and Chuck attended it. Mark referred to notes from that meeting. A special membership development program is for divisions that cannot maintain critical mass. That does not apply to our division. A new committee disburses money to help divisions run their meetings. At the NER board meeting, Bob D brought up the election. The election ends on June 30 and 41% of the mailed ballots were returned. Chuck said that a final reminder is coming by email. Health guidelines for the 2021 NER convention will follow the guidelines of Massachusetts. You must be vaccinated to attend the convention or provide a medical justification. The convention chairman must sign off on the justification and unvaccinated attendees must wear masks. The 2022 convention will be in Windsor, CT and 2023 will be on Long Island.

Vice President's Report – In Jim's absence, there was no report.

Secretary's Report - Jim W previously sent DRAFT minutes of the 20 MAR 2021 meeting. With no comments or corrections noted, the document was accepted as written. Jim also put together a DRAFT version of an update of GSD STAFF contact information. He asked if anybody objected to him sending it out by email for the BOD and STAFF to concur or correct the information. There were no objections.

Treasurer's Report – First, Ciro commented on his audit. He explained that he reviewed account statements and Bob's reports for a one year period from business meeting to business meeting. For Ciro all seems in good order and very accurate. He found the records to be acceptable. For the current treasurer's report, an additional \$5 was donated through the Amazon Smile Program. We were erroneously charged \$69.06 from the EDCO Company. EDCO provides the awards through the NER. This accidental charge for the Spate award will get corrected. The treasurer's report was accepted.

Education Committee and AP Chair Reports – Chuck has a Merit Award for Mark's passenger car, Mark's Cars AP certificate is on its way. Mark is very close for Association Volunteer. Chuck earned his Cars and Association Official certificates and became Master Model Railroader number 682. Chuck noted that Steve is actually the AP chairman and Steve will make the presentations at our next meet in July. Jim H is working on Civil, Tom Wortmann on Cars, Bob D on Scenery and Jim W on Author.

Events Report - SUMMER EVENT is a virtual meet July 24. After a discussion of Free Conference Call or Zoom for the meet, we will stay with freeconferencecall.com. Mark will send out the Constant Contact notice. Two clinics – Chuck will present a Cars clinic and Jim W will present a clinic on making a static grass applicator. Chuck and Jim sent Mark the clinic information for the Constant Contact email. Kai has a presentation of his layout and Fred Dellaiacomo has a video about his layout. FALL EVENT - The Fall event date must work around Mill City convention Oct 8-11. Ciro noted that our July meet is not posted on the GSD web site and we need to provide the information to Tom Wortmann.

The date for the fall meet is October 30 and it will be our first in-person. We discussed whether it should be a hybrid meet. Our policy is that each attendee must be fully vaccinated or wear a mask. We still need a location for the fall meet. Andy said that Tim offered the Model Railroad Club in Union. Paul said that he can get the lodge anytime. Ciro mentioned that the club in Union can have an operating session. Mark asked Chuck about the rotating location list. Chuck reviewed the odd year locations of the Wayne/Oakland area, Hillsborough, Hope, NJ and Staten Island. However, we may not go to Staten Island because the last meet there had a low turnout. For even years are Park Ridge, Wall or Middletown when NJD hosts the joint meet, Morristown and the Model Railroad Club in Union. Franklin firehouse was a great venue but Bruce arranged it. For social distancing, the Model Railroad Club would be a challenge due to limited space. Chuck noted that layout owners may not want to open their houses. Northlandz is an option and Mark will report on it later. Northlandz has an auditorium and space for a make-and-take clinic. Northlandz is a good venue to return to in-person meets and would not require layout open houses since it has a layout. Mark will look into Northlandz. Jim W reported that there are 2 clinics planned for the first live event: Kai has a clinic on paper modeling and Scott Dunlap will give a clinic on getting the Author certificate. Mark noted that Scott Dunlap is moving out of the area. Mark does not know when Scott will move and we need to contact him to find out. WINTER EVENT is February 26 at Park Ridge and we can do a make-and-take clinic. The snow date is March 5 and will not conflict with the Mother Seton show on Sunday. Chuck wanted to speak about the make-and-take clinic. He and Bob D are attending a virtual make-and-take with the Western New York Division in Buffalo for 3 sessions starting in September. Clark Kooning MMR will give the 3 part clinic to Western New York and Division 12 in the Midwest Region. It is building a Hydrocal kit from Downtown Deco. Bob has been working on the ITLA kit but Chuck offered another option that is a virtual make and-take-clinic with Clark. If he would do the same clinic for us, it could be an option outside of the regular meet. For the 3 sessions, Clark has slides that take you through the steps and he assigns homework between the sessions. Mark recommended that we stay with Feb 26 for the make-and-take clinic and we discuss Clark's Zoom clinic at a future meeting when we know more about it. It may be something we want to do in addition to a meet. The kit is the First Timer bar from Downtown Deco and Clark ran a similar series with the New Tracks folks on YouTube. The information about the make-and-take with Clark is on the New Tracks You Tube channel. Chuck said that he New Tracks build was 4 sessions while the Western New York Division will be 3 sessions starting in September. It will be good for us in the future. So many sessions build laser cut wood kits, so Clark builds the Hydrocal kit for an interesting change. Mark has no idea for spring but Jim W pointed out that the NJD is hosting the joint meet. They pick location and we supply a clinic.

Clinic Report – Jim W mentioned that he and Chuck will be presenting clinics for the Summer meet. Depending on their availability, Scott Dunlap and Kai Ebinger would be presenting in the fall since it will be an in-person event. Jim is also working on a few clinic concepts but is uncertain when they will be ready for the future. Also when we go to the Model Railroad Club, he has an idea to get a clinic from the club on operations at the club. At our last meet, Chuck told Jim that Jon Sulvaney was talking about helping us out by providing clinics. Jim noted that Jon did a clinic on 3D printing and airbrushing acrylics for NERx. Jim contacted him and verified that Jon is interested in providing a clinic and Jim will keep in touch with Jon. Three clinics in development by Jim are the palette of rust, bonding and filling and 2D printing for model railroading. Scott Gothe did a presentation on signaling during the virtual World's Greatest Hobby event. It was a good clinic and Scott is willing to do the clinic for us. Chuck mentioned Frank Baker of the Arizona Division and a recent conversation that Chuck had with Frank. Frank indicated that that he made a video of the Franklin and South Manchester using a camera car running on the layout. If we would be interested in showing the video at our meet, he would need to clear it with George Selios. Chuck is not sure if that would be the right thing for an in-person meet.

Membership Report – Andy reported that Norman Frowley MMR has finally renewed his membership. Chuck spoke to Norman late in April and he was not sure that he would renew since he is not into model railroading anymore. He sold all his trains except for his South River Modelworks dioramas.

Chuck was glad that Norman renewed. Andy sends out the monthly report to everybody and always asks if you contact anybody. Andy rarely gets a response so he contacts the individuals on the report. He sends out email but if the email bounces he makes contact by telephone. Our membership is around 230 and it slowly decreases. We need to see what happens with the Mother Seton show and we should be able to get a table there. If you contact anybody on the membership report list, notify Andy. Besides the people who have not renewed, you can call those that have renewed as well.

Whistle Post Report – Since Jim H was not at the meeting, Mark asked if anybody had any information related to the Whistle Post. Jim H sent out an email looking for the usual columns and content. Chuck sent Jim H the AP column and promo for Fred's layout and Chuck's clinic. Chuck sent 2 potential cover shots. Jim W sent Jim H a cover shot of Kai's layout as well as a description. Jim W sent a promo and photo for his clinic. Jim W plans to send in his column in the next day or two.

Northlandz – The new owner of Northlandz, Tariq Sohail, met with Christina Zambri, Jim H and Mark on March 31 at Northlandz. They toured the facility and had a meeting. Tariq is interested in making Northlandz a viable business and he would eventually want to put a hotel on the property. However, the hotel would be many years in the future. Tariq sees our involvement as an opportunity to have essentially a model railroad club there. He would like to have model railroaders actively involved and include a consignment store where they could buy and sell equipment. There is enough space for a make-and- take clinic, workshops or even put up a model railroad layout for a club. Mark noted that there is a lot of space at Northlandz. Basically what he wants from us is some kind of involvement to help with the ongoing maintenance at Northlandz. It needs maintenance since it was neglected for a long time. He has people working on it now. Tariq sees Northlandz as an environment for the model railroad community to be involved. We see Northlandz as a venue for a meet. Maybe someday we could have a convention when a hotel is added. If Tariq wants to have a presence there, we do not have many GSD members in the Flemington area. However, it is an excellent location for a meet and we should approach him to have our fall meet there. He could show us what he has there including behind the scenes. We need a point person to work on this meet. Who lives the closest to Northlandz? It is probably Jim H and Mark will ask Jim if he will do it. We must lock up the date soon. Our meet at Northlandz would give Tariq an opportunity to address our membership about Northlandz and the help he needs. Mark said that first we must contact Tariq to see if he can support the Oct 30 date. Mark or Jim H will call Tariq. Whatever we do, Northlandz will already be following the required COVID-19 protocols. Andy said that Northlandz had a table at the recent NYSME meet.

#### Old Business:

- Revamp The Whistle Post – We already spoke a bit about it and Jim H is not at the meeting.
- GSD website – JP had a preview page that he sent to some people but he did not get many responses. He also worked on a server for us and must send the information to all BOD members. Everything that was stored on the NER server was transferred over. The server operates similar to Dropbox. Chuck could move over all the Erie Limited files. JP must provide logins for everybody.
- Erie Limited files – Instead of distributing flash drives, Chuck will put the files on the server.
- JCRHS Train Show at Mother Seton High School in Clark, NJ – On hold until November 2021. Andy said that if they run the show, he will reach out to them and get a table.
- Membership outreach – Andy already discussed his email contacts with members who are 30 & 60 days behind. If any of us recognize somebody on the lists contact them and notify Andy.
- RPM/Craftsman Structures Meet – We are not doing anything right now and it depends upon whether Ted has an RPM meet. The pandemic ended RPM plans but it is something for the future.
- GSD T-TRAK modules – Bob D said that John Doehring was the champion for an effort for all NER divisions to have T-Trak modules to assemble at train shows and the convention. John is stepping away from the NER board since he was elected eastern director for the NMRA. Bob D sees little activity right now and suggests that we keep it on hold. It may come up again in the future.

- Make-and-take clinic – Bob D has a kit from ITLA that he assembled in 2 different ways – as a full building and as a building flat. Bob would like to do a make-and-take clinic to build that kit. The participants can build the kit either way. Bob is still planning to do it but he wants to see how Clark Kooning does his clinic. Previously, we spoke about it during the pandemic and conducting the clinic at home and not face-to-face. Bob still wants to do something like that because he thinks that it will interest many members. Mark asked Bob if he would do it at our February meet. Bob thinks we should leave it on hold for now since he is still working on it. He wants to see how Clark does it. Clark is doing his virtual make-and-take clinic in September. Jim W asked if that will help Bob with how he runs the clinic? Bob said that it would give him a better understanding of how to do the clinic. In the last make-and-take clinic there was very little interaction between the people building the model and Ron Klaiss who was running the clinic. Ron spoke about the kit briefly and walked around to help people, as they needed it. Bob said that this clinic would be completely different. Jim W noted that if it is live it will be an opportunity for more interaction. Bob added that the later sessions would be virtual. If we have the clinic in February, Bob will be more informed from experiencing Clark’s clinic. Jim W suggested promoting the clinic now if we plan to do it in February and Paul’s lodge is a good venue for a make-and-take clinic. Bob will put something together for the Whistle Post promoting the February clinic. Members should like the kit and its price of \$20.
- 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 - Andy and Tom C are making the plan. Andy set up an Excel file to record email addresses and dates of attendance. He will gather the info from everybody- members, guests and the general public (walk in people). We must track the walk ins because the third time will be the last time unless they join. What is the plan for the at-risk people. Andy has not gotten into that yet. They will be part of the sign in process. Andy noted that the at-risk policy has evoked angry responses from some people. It will be brought to the National board again. Andy sent a request to National for a poster or signage to display at division meets. He was advised to display the policy on a poster and it would serve as notice. Andy also discussed the required notarized affidavit mentioned in the NMMRA at-risk policy. Mark suggested that until the national organization generates a workable policy, we should do what is reasonable. Ciro summarized: Our web site has links for the 3 strikes rule and at-risk policy. For in-person meets we will display it at the entrance. The sign-in sheet categorizes each attendee as: member of our division, guest (NMRA member from another division) or general public (anybody else).
- Call log for membership outreach – Andy has a call log in the membership folder in Dropbox.
- Plan for donated locomotives - JP has the locomotives. We will offer them to the membership at meets and sell remaining locomotives on e-bay. Proceeds go to the division. JP will bring the locomotives and a test track to our fall meet.
- Poster with at-risk policy – Already discussed at this meeting.
- Audit of GSD finances – completed and covered with the Treasurer’s report.
- Zoom for our virtual meets – We already had a Zoom discussion earlier in this meeting.

New Business: NONE

Our next BOD meeting will be on October 2 since it will be 4 weeks before the October 30 division meet. We will meet in-person at Mark’s home on October 2. Mark will send out an announcement.

The meeting ended around noon.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jim Walsh*

Jim Walsh, Secretary NMRA/NER/GSD