

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

Purpose: Garden State Division (GSD) Staff Meeting
Date/Time: Saturday, June 27, 2020
Place: Telephone meeting by FreeConferenceCall.com
Attendees: Chuck Diljak, Jim Homoki, Jim Walsh, Bob Dennis, Mark Moritz, Paul Harbord, Andy Brusgard, JP Mikesch and Tom Casey
Not in attendance: Ciro Compagno and Steve Ascolese

Meeting started at 10:02 AM with a moment of silence and reflection dedicated to Steve A and a speedy recovery.

No Motions Submitted at the Meeting

Reports were presented:

President's Report – Chuck will not dwell on any particular topic but quickly mention items to be covered during this meeting. We will cover the past virtual meet, next virtual meet on August 1 and what we need to do for the meet. Prepare for the challenges of the virtual meet. Talk about the membership outreach program and the feedback from our BOD members. Chuck will share some information about membership renewal notices. We will address Free conference call for the virtual meet and how we plan to use Constant Contact. Finally, with Jim W becoming the Clinic Chairman, we will talk about upcoming clinics- what are prepared, ones in preparation and needing to be developed. When will we be scheduling these clinics? These are some of the topics that Chuck wants to address during this meeting while working through the prepared agenda.

NER REPORT – Still no decision on the cancellation of the NER convention. They will wait until the AUG 16 NER board meeting. The NER has a potential new Coupler editor – Chris Carfaro from the Green Mountain Division. At a previous NER board meeting he expressed an interest in the position and Bob D clarified that Chris is definitely interested in the job. Bob communicated that to John Doehring and Jeff Paston and they need to get back to Chris. Southern Tier Division was accepted into the NER and now they are waiting for approval from National to vote on it. The next National board meeting is in July and this may be on their agenda. Major cities in the Southern Tier Division include Elmira, Binghamton and Ithaca. They are not very active now but they will develop as a stand-alone division or be absorbed into existing division or divisions. The Southern Tier division currently has around 28 members mostly in the Binghamton area. The website for the NER is moving to higher end technology. The new NER website has been discussed for more than a year and we are still waiting to see how that develops. In the finance area, the membership rebate that comes to divisions from National through the NER may be reduced by 27%. The reduction in distributions to the divisions will allow the NER to apply that amount to costs incurred by the achievement program. END REPORT

Vice President's Report – Mark had nothing to add.

Secretary's Report - Jim W previously sent out DRAFT minutes of the last meeting of 18 APR 2020. Chuck suggested modifying the RPM discussion. The minutes were accepted with noted correction.

Treasurer's Report – Bob D said that for the first quarter we had a net loss of \$475.72. It was due to the purchase of materials for the make-and-take clinic and awards that were given out including \$100 donation to the Chip Faulter Fund. Bob will send the report to Jim W to file. So far for January through June, our net income is -\$375.86 because we received around \$199 of NMRA fees from the NER. Chuck suggests that for virtual BOD meetings Bob should send the report to the board before the actual meeting. Treasurer's report was accepted.

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

Education Committee and AP Chair Reports – During Steve A's recovery, Chuck will be stepping in as AP Chair and redirecting AP email to Chuck. People have been busy working toward AP certificates. Steve did award Association Official certificate to Tom Wortmann. Chuck included a photo of the certificate presentation in the AP column for the next Whistle Post. In the works are Jim H for Chief Dispatcher and Paul Harbord for Association Volunteer. Jim H is working on Civil, Chuck and Mark are working on Cars, Alex Nawotka is working on Scenery, Civil and Electrical and Bob D is working on Scenery. Chuck remarked that most members working toward AP certificates are usually on the BOD. When things become more normal and we start visiting layouts again, Chuck reminded us that if you see some appropriate work out there be sure to suggest the Achievement Program. The modeler might as well get a certificate for all the work that was done. Steve did update the spreadsheet of GSD AP activity on our website. Submissions during the pandemic depend upon the type of certificate. Some are purely paperwork: Chief Dispatcher, Association Official, Association Volunteer and Author. Scenery, Civil and Electrical require paperwork and at least a virtual demonstration during the pandemic. Motive Power, Structures and Cars require a close-up evaluation. Chuck also considers Prototype Models for this category as well. He suggests filling out the paperwork and holding it until we can meet face-to-face and the models can be evaluated. You cannot do a correct evaluation virtually. National did testing to reach that conclusion. Andy offered NYSME to meet for a night of judging – it can be scheduled by using appointments. Chuck is not comfortable doing it but if somebody else wants to judge models in person, it is possible. Bob D is considering going out to Alex Nawotka's to do some evaluation. Chuck said that for him it is just his personal preference and it is an individual decision. If any members need a model evaluated, they should contact Chuck and he will see who is available and interested in evaluating in person. Mark asked "How do we groom future evaluators and judges?" The challenge is that the only way to do it is by experience and the way to get experience is by building many models in that category and second, participate while evaluations are going on. At the conventions, volunteers can get that experience by helping in the contest judging. If you look at the matrix and how points are assigned, you can get pretty close to being consistent with others. Work with experienced evaluators and learn how they apply points and begin to follow that standard. Chuck really prefers that people who perform the evaluation have some experience in that area of modeling. Jim H agrees that you do not need to have a model judged to perform an evaluation but it helps a lot. Then you start to understand how much effort is required to build the models. Chuck agrees that is a good prerequisite for doing model evaluations.

Events Report - Chuck asked for thoughts on the joint meet in May. The feedback was positive. There were 75 people in attendance – pretty good turnout.

SUMMER – For AUG 1, Chuck is hoping we get our usual summer meet attendance of 40 or 50. We need to start promoting it. Constant Contact will feature the virtual meet, the clinics, freeconferencecall instructions and a link for the meet as well. Chuck set up a separate freeconferencecall account for our meets called "gsdtrains" linked to the gsdtrains@yahoo.com email. Chuck needs more than 1 host on the call. We use cohosts so if the main host is speaking, a cohost could put somebody on mute if necessary, answer any chat questions or anything else that might come up. Chuck would like one or two others on the board to be cohosts on the call for the next meet. We will have a couple of clinics then the "Just Brag" part for the virtual meet. For clinics we have Craig Bisgeier and Bruce DeYoung. We will need description and photos for each clinic. Mark will contact Neal Multz about a virtual tour of his layout. Jim W and Chuck will collaborate on an article for the Whistle Post. Neal could narrate video of his layout. We will have practice sessions before the meet so members can test their equipment and practice making the connection. We will also have some test sessions/rehearsals for the participants and presenters

FALL - Not sure if it will be virtual or live at the Model Railroad Club. Andy spoke to Tim who said that the doors are always open anytime we want to come. We spoke about having a picnic or barbeque there. Chuck does not want to do too much planning yet because he does not know where we will be

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

with this COVID-19 pandemic. The county owns the building and insists on keeping it closed during the pandemic. What about a date whether it is virtual or live. Remember that Mill City 2020 is scheduled for Oct 9-12. Have it the week before Halloween on Oct 24, 2020.

WINTER and SPRING - Winter Meet will be in Oakland, NJ and Spring meet in Hillsborough, NJ.

FUTURE - Chuck spoke about contacting Mason Logie about the NY Transit Museum and the date would probably be next year. Whenever we get back out to the Hope, NJ area, we spoke about Phil Chiavetta. Andy spoke to Phil and he hasn't been to his layout in 3 months but he is willing to host an open house when our meet is out that way. For the future BOD meetings, we will change the agenda so that the Clinic Report follows the Events.

Membership Report – Andy sends out monthly reports on new members but there are no new members lately. Past due members have received their emails. Most respond back and those that do not respond, Andy will contact by telephone. Andy sent a notice to National about Harold's passing and he got a nice reply from Headquarters. Chuck was in contact with National and reported that they send out 3 renewal notices prior to expiration. They also keep a log. Chuck told Andy that he can call National and they will provide the log information for when the notices went out. National will be moving to a new membership database – it is currently being tested. When they complete that move, members will get notices in their email if they have an email address on file. Chuck asked about our experience in making contact with members. Was it a worthwhile effort and what kind of results did you see? Andy has been sending an email to all the new renewals. It is a general greeting type email and hoping all is well and he has been getting feedback from that. In trying to make contact, Chuck found out about Hal's death from the virus. Chuck related how he originally met Hal and saw his layout. He also spoke to a member who belongs to the NJ Hi-Railers club in Patterson. Chuck related a discussion that he had with that member about how scales are represented in the NMRA magazine. Afterward, Chuck looked at the materials for the NER convention, Mill City 2020 and he noticed that several layout tours featured O scale and G scale. Andy related his experiences from calling members including the discovery that a member is deceased. Chuck had some telephone numbers that did not work or emails that were wrong. One common experience was leaving messages and never getting called back. Mark had mostly positive experiences and he considered that it was a good thing to do. Chuck and Jim W thought it was worthwhile. Chuck thought it would be a good idea to call members before the August 1 virtual meet. Chuck also mentioned the summary sheet that he prepared and Jim W distributed prior to the meeting. What was startling to him was the decline in the membership numbers on the graph. A year ago, we had 213 members and now we are at 198 as of May. Andy remarked that when he asked why new members joined, many answered that it is the NMRA magazine. However, the cost of membership will be increasing due to the cost of the magazine.

Whistle Post Report – Jim H received some items by email and he will be contacting others for content because he knows that they have been working on things. We should have enough for a short article about what people around the division are up to. Jim W is planning an article to cover division member activities. Jim H needs it to be done in the next two weeks. Any pictures for the meet should go to Chuck for insertion into the PowerPoint. Include owner name and description. Jim H needs an article about the last meet and one for the upcoming meet. Include short descriptions with photos for the clinics. Basically, use whatever is going into the Constant Contact message. We need to know if Neal will do a layout tour. If Neal hosts a layout tour, then we need a layout photo. Chuck and Jim W will coordinate on the clinic stuff. Jim will prepare the article and send it to Chuck for comments.

Clinic Report – We have clinics from Craig and Bruce for the upcoming meet. Chuck has the JMRI Operations Clinic prepared. Jim W is looking to put together some different concepts of clinics and he is lining up people for future clinics. Jim is working with Joe Valentine to get a clinic on a freight house that Joe is building. Kai has a clinic in the works but it is not intended to be for a virtual meet. In the future, we may talk to Tony when we get out of this current pandemic situation. Chuck will have one on

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

his car building when they are all done. For the future, Jim W is looking at selecting an Edutrain clinic to present at a meet. Mark observed that when he contacted members, a few of them had an interest in a clinic on operations. Joe Calderone presented the last clinic we had for operations at a Winter 2013 meet on Staten Island. Jim H reminded us about the NMRA Operations Special interest Group (OPSIG) and the wealth of information available from them. Chuck suggested that the next time we go to the Model Railroad Club, we could ask one of their members to do a clinic on their operations followed by an operating session on the layout. That would be a good idea for the future. Jim H mentioned that an interesting part of chief dispatcher certificate is putting a timetable together. He is sure that not everybody knows how to put one together or even read one. Jim H said that he might be able to put that clinic together. We will add Jim H to the list for a clinic on making timetables. Paul mentioned that there is a different operating scheme used at the Garden State Model Railway Club. Maybe he can get a club member to do a clinic on their method of operations. It could be combined with an operating session at their club. Ops clinics and Ops sessions. We could do both clubs because they use two different systems. Chuck noted that the Model Railroad club has meeting space but the Garden State Model Railway club does not have a place for a meeting. Paul mentioned that if we did it in the summer, we could do the meeting outside and go inside for the operating session. However, we could not do a barbeque like we did in the past. These are two options for future clinics.

Old Business:

- Monitoring our Facebook is ongoing.
- Revamp the Whistle Post – Jim H said that he will try to give the new format a shot but he needs a photo for the cover. He was given a photo or 2 that he might use but he hopes to get more contributions from what people are doing and maybe get a photo from that. Chuck said that if Neal does a virtual layout tour, it would be nice to have a good photo of his layout for the cover. It is good to feature somebody who will be part of the upcoming meet. It makes a good tie in. Chuck suggested that when Mark talks to Neal and if he will have the virtual layout tour, see if Neal has a good photograph of the layout for the cover of the Whistle Post. Mark will ask him. Meanwhile, Chuck will see what photos were sent in by our members showing their activity. Maybe if Craig has a photo of a finished model that he made by resin casting, that would be a good for the cover. Chuck will check with Bruce; Jim W will contact Craig and Mark will talk to Neal.
- GSD website – NEW LOOK - JP reports that progress is slower than expected. Since he has not done web work for some time, there are some things he needs to learn but he is working at it and getting the training that he needs. When he gets some content for us to see, he will send a link to the BOD. He is also reworking our logo for the new website.
- Flash drives with files from the 2018 convention – Chuck has the flash drives and they are loaded. He is holding them until we can have a face-to-face meeting.
- Train show at Mother Seton HS in Clark in March 2021 is on hold until November.
- We divided the membership list and now we should try to make calls before our August 1 meet.
- RPM/Craftsman Structures Meet – This is on hold for now. We don't know about Ted's event this year and the effect of the corona virus.
- The GSD T-TRAK modules – This item was not mentioned in the last 2 NER board meetings. Bob D has some materials for a module but he is waiting for Steve to recover since he is our N scale guy and he would be a big help in getting this going. Although there is no real action so far, we will keep it on the list and Bob D is responsible for it.
- Make-and-take clinic – We are thinking of having another make-and-take clinic. Bob D contacted Doug Foscale of Fos Scale Models. Doug is interested in doing something and he has a small garage kit that he could sell us in bulk. If we ordered 40 or more kits, they would be \$12 each. The garage normally sells for \$17.95 and you can see the kit on his website. That may be a viable option but we need a facility that could accommodate the build. We also need a place to get a good number of attendees. In Hillsborough, we could get a good attendance and a good facility. It could be too many people there. Chuck will check with Bill Grosse. Bob needs to talk to Doug about

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

some thing else so he will discuss this with Doug again. Chuck said that there are other possibilities for a make-and-take clinic like bring your own car and we can show you how to weather it or detailing structures.

- GSD/Café Press Shop status – Café Press challenged us on our logo with the TM but we got a letter from the NMRA National. Since Steve got sick, the activity is on hold right now. Bob said that the financial part is all set up.
- Andy did not scan the make-and-take clinic attendance sheet for Bob D but he will do it.
- Andy did contact Tim at the Model Railroad Club and they are willing to help us.
- Andy also contacted the TCA about any involvement with the Warren county 4H. The TCA reports that they are not involved there. Chuck reminded us that the NMRA's position is that we will not have any direct ties to any youth groups. Any NMRA member involvement will be on your own and not through the NMRA. Too much liability and it requires a costly training program on how to work with youth. We can close the item since we cannot participate.
- Bob D was to check if we need a gaming license for our Chinese Auction. Bob has been trying to contact New Jersey office for Not-for-Profit groups and he can't get through. He keeps getting a recorded message. This may be due to the to the pandemic with people working from home. Andy went online with the state database and one thing he found was licensing fees are \$20 each day. He found that it says "If price is not in excess of \$400 then no fees are involved". Andy is looking to see if there are no fees, is there still an application requirement? This is for a 50/50 on premise drawing. Andy is trying to confirm that if there is no fee, there is no license required. Andy will document the information that he discovers. He will send documentation to Jim W for our records.
- Bob D recovered the \$50 for the insurance certificate.
- Remaining items under old business were already covered earlier in this meeting.

New Business: NONE

The next virtual BOD meeting will be Saturday morning August 29 at 10:00 AM.

The meeting adjourned around 12:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Walsh

Jim Walsh, Secretary NMRA/NER/GSD