

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

Purpose: Garden State Division (GSD) Staff Meeting
Date/Time: Sunday, August 30, 2020
Place: Telephone meeting by FreeConferenceCall.com
Attendees: Chuck Diljak, Jim Homoki, Jim Walsh, Bob Dennis, Mark Moritz, Paul Harbord, Andy Brusgard, JP Mikesh, Tom Casey and Steve Ascolese
Not in attendance: Ciro Compagno

Meeting started around 7:30 PM.

No Motions Submitted at the Meeting

Reports were presented:

President's Report –The main thing that Chuck wanted to mention is that he cannot run for president again because he is at the term limit. He wants us to think about what we want to do. Somebody needs to run for president, maybe our VP, Mark. In addition, three board members are up for reelection- Paul, Jim H and JP. Ciro will need to make a change as well since Chuck will become the immediate past president. The elections are in May at the Spring event. During the remaining time, Chuck will begin phasing out his activities. Chuck has already spoken to Mark about taking over Constant Contact for the Garden State Division mainly because Chuck will be taking over Constant Contact for the NER. However, Chuck will remain available to help Mark. Chuck mentioned the NMRAx round table discussion with the NMRA leadership. Throughout this meeting tonight, Chuck expects to discuss topics covered at the leadership meeting. Chuck favored their transparency but some of the message could have been better.

NER REPORT – The Southern Tier Division was formally approved by National as part of the NER. The division may become active again or get absorbed into some other divisions. The NERx will take place December 1-4 each day from 6:30 to 10:30 PM. Gordy Robinson's social media team will support the virtual convention. John Doehring is looking for clinics and layout tours. The clinics will be 30-45 minutes and they can be prerecorded. They want 10–15-minute layout tours and prefer that they are prerecorded. Every evening they will mix in 15 to 20 minutes of award recognition, model contest and photo contest. Originally the contests were going to be by popular vote but they could not figure out how to manage it. So, they will have members send in multiple view photos of the models and they will be used to evaluate the car. Chuck did not know if there would be paperwork submitted as well. Although they will score the models, Chuck did not know if it will count for merit. Chuck said that we will need to provide a couple of clinics. Challenge to Jim Walsh to identify a couple of clinics that will be given virtually. Chuck will give his clinic on scale houses. He has already been playing around with recording that clinic. We can talk more about the clinics later on. The NER actually has 5 years of conventions lined up – Next year Mill City 2021 hosted by the Hub Division, 2022 will be hosted by the Nutmeg Division, 2023 will be hosted by the Sunrise trail Division, the Seacoast Division will probably host in 2024 and 2025 will be the Lake Shores Division. There have been some changes in the NER management team. Mike Bowler will be membership chair instead of secretary. Jeff Paston moved from Coupler editor to take the secretary position. The NER webmaster, David Abrames, is working with John Doehring and Chuck to improve the NER website. They are looking for photos with a minimum resolution of 800 x 400. Primarily looking for the people side of the NER. If anybody has any photos, we can share them with Dave Abrames. Mark asked where the Southern Tier Division is located. Chuck responded that the Southern Tier Division is located in the area from Elmira, NY to Binghamton, NY and then up to Ithaca, NY. END REPORT

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Vice President's Report – Mark had nothing new to report since Chuck already mentioned that Mark will be taking over the Constant Contact.

Secretary's Report - Jim W previously sent out DRAFT minutes of the last meeting of 27 JUN 2020. Chuck had a comment on coverage of his NER Report. The web site for the NER is moving and not the Coupler– change Coupler to NER. The minutes were accepted with the noted correction.

Treasurer's Report – Not much activity nor financial transactions. Bob D reported that for the year we are down \$275.06. We spent no money since the last meeting and the last activity was the make-and-take clinic. Bob will send a written report to Jim W. The treasurer's report was accepted.

Education Committee and AP Chair Reports – Chuck told Steve A. that he is filling in until Steve can resume his duties. Chuck reported that Jim H received the Chief Dispatcher AP Certificate and Paul H was given the Association Volunteer certificate. Chuck submitted the paperwork for Master Builder - Scenery, Model Railroad Engineer - Civil and Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical for Alex Nawatka. Jim H is working on Model Railroad Engineer - Civil. Chuck, Tom Wortmann and Mark are working on Master Builder - Cars. Bob D is working on Master Builder - Scenery. Jim H sent a picture of him with the Chief Dispatcher certificate and Paul will send one with his Association Volunteer certificate. A group of GSD members went to Alex Nawatka's house and helped Alex take down his layout in one day. This is because Alex is moving. Chuck is close to finishing his third car. When he completes the fourth car, he will really want to get his cars evaluated even under these circumstances. Mark has his four cars done. Andy reminded the group that he has offered the New York Society of Model Engineers club location for the purpose of having models evaluated.

Events Report - Discussion of the Summer event that took place on AUG 1. Chuck asked for opinions of the meet. Steve A had access problems using his iPad and Chuck suggested using the FreeConferenceCall App, the meet went well but the attendance was poor. Chuck observed 24 different people on the call throughout the duration of the event. There were 7 GSD board members, 8 regular GSD members, 3 presenters and 6 people were non-GSD members. Chuck was surprised and was wondering about the cause. Chuck suggested possible causes for the low turnout and noted that some members may like our normal events for the socialization of meeting in person. From the current trend of on-line meetings for work, some people are tired of virtual meetings and do not want another one on the weekend. Chuck suggested that may be why the clinics and layout tours will be shortened for the NERx in December. People may not want to have long segments virtually. There will be breaks during NERx. As far as attendance at our events, Chuck does not know what we could do better. We promoted the event like we usually do and we had good clinics.

FALL EVENT – Our next GSD event will be a virtual meet on October 24 and we will talk about clinics when we get to the clinic report

Discussion of NERx – As far as NERX, there was an email from John Doehring looking for a couple of clinics and a layout tour from each division. Chuck remembered that for our 2018 convention in Mahwah, there were 4 layouts that were unable to have layout tours. They were the layouts of Steve Kay, Craig Bisgeier, Jim H and Joe D'Agostino. Those are the layouts that Chuck considered for the NERx event. There may be another layout somebody may think of. Chuck's consideration is layouts that people in the NER would not have seen even if they came to our convention in 2018. Bob D reported that Joe D'Agostino is in the process of taking down his layout in preparation for a move. Chuck asked Jim H if he would be willing to shoot and edit a video of his layout and add narration. Jim H is considering making the video and Chuck said that he could help Jim. If Jim H produces a video of his layout, we will not need another layout. However, we will need another clinic since Chuck plans to present his scale track clinic. It may be possible to fit the time limit with an edited version of Craig's Resin Casting or 3D Printing clinics. Chuck also considered Scott Dunlop's Clinic about revitalizing the scenery on the Model Railroad Club layout. Chuck asked if we could think of any others. For now

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Chuck will put down his scale track clinic and Jim H's layout. We can think about another clinic. Chuck offered his help if anybody needs assistance. The NERx virtual convention is December 1-4. It will be on Facebook and YouTube.

WINTER EVENT - Chuck is not sure if it will be in Oakland. Alternatively, we could plan for it to be virtual and if not virtual, The Model Railroad Club would welcome us. Andy reported that the club members can meet in the building but they cannot open to the public yet. Chuck admitted that the same rules would apply to the library in Oakland. If the rules remain in the winter, our event will be virtual.

SPRING EVENT - Our event will be virtual or it will be in Hillsborough NJ.

FUTURE - Chuck is considering that next summer we will not be dealing with all the pandemic restrictions. It might be nice to have a summer picnic somewhere for the members maybe even at Liberty State Park. We could have Jay Held make a presentation about the facility that was there. Chuck believes that it would be fun and mentioned it as something to consider. Bob D mentioned the Whippany Railway Museum where we once had an ice cream social.

Clinic Report – Jim W asked Chuck about Richard Wehr in the Arizona Division who was interested in presenting a clinic for us. Richard once lived in New Jersey and is a good friend of Chuck. Chuck will contact Richard about giving his “Ghosts of Gasoline Alley” clinic for us. Due to the time difference, Chuck wants Richard's clinic to be the second clinic. Also, Chuck's JMRI clinic is ready to go. We had a discussion of upcoming clinics on Paper modeling, the Orange Freight House and Jim H's clinic on making timetables. Jim said that he will get to that clinic after making the layout tour video for NERx. Chuck will also be putting together a clinic after he finishes his fourth scratchbuilt freight car. Jim W asked if we knew anybody in the OPSIG who would like to do a clinic on operations to inform the audience and maybe generate interest in joining the OPSIG. The last time we had a general operations clinic was in the winter 2013 when Joe Calderone presented a clinic on operations. Andy mentioned that Craig Bisgeier and Phil Monat wrote a chapter in the OPSIG book entitled A Compendium of Model Railroad Operations from Design to Implementation. Jim W will check with the OPSIG and the book.

Membership Report – Andy said that his membership report does not change much from month to month as he is reaching out to past due members sending them emails. He also spoke about reaching out to expired members over the past year and a half. There are around 30 members in this category and Andy is trying to locate an email that he put together for them. In the email he asks what we could have done better. Chuck admits that the email is a good idea but he prefers the personal contact of a telephone call. Chuck also noted that in the leadership call for NMRAx they want to focus on the 50–80-year age group while working with all age groups. One disturbing item that Chuck related from that leadership meeting was starting to develop quotas for the regions to gain new members. These regional quotas would filter down to divisions. We will need to see how this develops. Andy also mentioned Al Taylor's passing. He reported it to headquarters and received a nice reply. Andy also reported member feedback that they joined to get the magazine. Chuck said that we should keep a log of contacts that we make with members. We can set up an Excel file on Dropbox to capture the information. This way we can document what we learn from contact with our members. Chuck asked if anybody read the at-risk policy for young people. He said it is on the NMRA.org website. It is an official policy and it requires that if a young person comes to one of our events and with a parent that is fine. However, if they come with somebody other than their parents, that person needs to be a legal guardian with a legal affidavit that says that they are a legal guardian. There is a sample form for the affidavit on the website. This must be enforced at the entrance to our event. Chuck will send the web location for the policy when he finds it.

Whistle Post Report – Jim H said that not too much is going on and he will probably run that bridge article from Rich Newmiller. If he gets more photographs from members displaying their activities

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during the pandemic, we can run an article about what people are doing. Chuck hopes to have his box car finished and Fred is working on a car ferry kit. Chuck pointed out that there was a different masthead on the last issue and he thought it looked great. Jim H said that he is trying different things. Jim will work on things as he receives them. Chuck is working on his columns and he will revise one that was a reaction to the poor turnout at the last event. Paul needs to send a new picture with him and his AP certificate.

Old Business:

- Monitoring our Facebook is ongoing. Willie Butler has been posting videos of his layout.
- Revamp the Whistle Post – There was some evidence of that work seen in the changed masthead for the last issue.
- GSD web site – NEW LOOK - JP is not on the call now but Chuck reports that he has been busy with things outside the hobby and has not done much lately. Chuck was able to speak to him a couple of weeks ago. JP is still interested in doing the work but may take longer to complete.
- Erie Limited files – Chuck is waiting for a face-to-face BOD meeting to distribute the flash drives.
- Train show at Mother Seton HS - Holding until November 2020 to make a decision but first the organizers must determine if they are even going to have the show.
- Membership outreach – BOD members are contacting their lists and Chuck admits that he has not made a second contact. If Andy sets up the log file, when we make contact with members we can post info from the call. There we can keep track of who was contacted and note their comments.
- RPM/Craftsman Structures Meet – This is on hold for now.
- GSD T-Track modules for the NER – Bob D spoke to John Doehring at the last NER Board meeting and it is definitely something John wants to do and have each division to come up with a module for their area. John is working with a supplier of T-Trak module kits and trying to get a discounted price for the divisions. Bob D hopes that Steve A will get interested when he recovers.
- Make-and-take clinic – We were speaking about a make-and-take for the spring meet in Hillsborough and Chuck did not contact Bill Grosse. Bob D did speak to Doug Foscale and he offered a discounted price around \$13 for a kit which normally costs \$18. Chuck will call Bill Grosse but admitted that under current conditions we don't know what is going to happen. That will make it difficult to plan the event and allow time for getting the kits from Doug.
- GSD/Café Press Shop is on hold until Steve recovers.
- Andy did not scan the attendance sheet from the make and take event but he will get to it.
- Raffle clarification – Bob D inquiry with the state of NJ. Bob will try to make contact again. The last time he tried, they were not open. He plans to get a written clarification.
- Bob D noted that we will need to mention the 3-visit limit for guests at every meeting. Chuck also said that at our meets we must be sure that everybody is welcomed, both guests and members. Make a point to welcome guests and we must make sure that they feel welcomed.
- Remaining items under old business were already covered earlier in this meeting.

New Business: NONE

The next virtual BOD meeting will be Saturday October 10 at 10:00 AM.

The meeting ended around 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Walsh

Jim Walsh, Secretary NMRA/NER/GSD