

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

Purpose: Garden State Division (GSD) Staff Meeting
Date/Time: Saturday, January 9, 2021
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, Ciro Compagno and Steve Ascolese

Meeting started at 10:12 AM.

No Motions Submitted at the Meeting

Reports were presented:

President's Report – Chuck wanted to congratulate Mark on his recent retirement. He also recognized that Andy is nearing retirement but Andy added that his retirement plan is being delayed. He was planning to retire at the end of January. Chuck also congratulated Steve for his move to New Jersey. The other items Chuck wants to discuss are covered in the agenda.

NER REPORT – NERx in December went really well. One good thing is that the content was completely by the Northeastern Region members – clinics and layout tours. Jim W generated 2 articles about NERx. One was for the Coupler and another for the February issue of Model Railroad News. Chuck spoke about NER having real and virtual conventions in the future. He will be discussing this on a convention call on Monday. Chuck's main reason for being involved with the conventions relates to his responsibility for NER Constant Contact email messages. He reminded us that the NER convention Mill City 21 is coming up October 8-11, 2021. In 2022 the convention will be in Farmington CT and hosted by the Nutmeg Division. 2023 will be Sunrise Trail and 2024 is potentially the Seacoast Division – in Maine and New Hampshire. 2025 is the Lakeshores Division mostly in the Rochester Area.

Vice President's Report – Mark was not on the call at the time and we passed on the VP report.

Secretary's Report - Jim W previously sent out DRAFT minutes of the last meeting of 10 OCT 2020. Ciro noted an error with respect to term limit of President. There was a short discussion of the term limit and Chuck's decision. The minutes were accepted subject to the noted revision.

Treasurer's Report – Bob noted that we had no activity since last October when we had to pay an annual fee of \$30.50 to the State of New Jersey. Bob reported a small problem concerning receipt of funds from the Amazon Smile Program. It was corrected and now we are receiving funds. Remember to sign into the Amazon Smile Program with the Garden State Division as the charity.

Education Committee and AP Chair Reports – Chuck recognized Steve A for receiving his Golden Spike and it will be included in the Achievement Program column in the next Whistle Post. It was something that fell through the cracks last year but it was included at NERx and in the NER Coupler. There have been no in-person evaluations since our last meeting and we need to wait until modelers and evaluators are vaccinated before those evaluations can resume. We don't know the exact schedule and we need to keep our eyes open. Jim H has been working on Model Railroad Engineer - Civil. Chuck, Tom Wortmann and Mark are working on Master Builder – Cars. The last car that Chuck needs evaluated is nearing completion. Bob D is working on Master Builder - Scenery. Steve will let Chuck know when he is ready to resume some or all of the AP responsibilities. Andy noted that some evaluations are done virtually but Chuck responded that evaluations for Structures, Cars and Motive Power require in-person evaluations. Steve added that we have no candidates for the Paul Mallery

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Award. Chuck related that it is based on points awarded for models at regional and national conventions. Since we had no conventions due to the pandemic, we have no candidates for the award.

Events Report - For the Fall meet we had about 35 to 40 attendees: 8 board members, 15 GSD members, 7 other NMRA members and 11 people that Chuck did not know. Attendees were from as far away as New Brunswick, Canada and down to Virginia. For Bring and Brag were Kai Ebinger, Fred, Jim W and Chuck. The clinics were JMRI Operations and Richard Wehr's Ghosts of Gasoline Alley. Chuck thought that it went pretty well. We already talked a little bit about NERx.

WINTER EVENT – The winter meet will be virtual and the date is 27 FEB 2021. The 2 clinics are Joe Valentine Modeling the Orange Freight House and Jim H Creating a Timetable. Tom Wortmann will have a tour of his layout. The Whistle Post needs photos for the clinics and photos and description for Tom's layout. Ciro will contact Tom. The info should be sent to Mark M and Jim H.

SPRING EVENT - Chuck thinks this meet will be virtual. This is a joint meet with the New Jersey Division(NJD) and hosted by us. Traditionally we have 1 clinic from the GSD and one from the NJD. Chuck has been working on his clinic on cars but he does not know if he will be ready then. Jim H said that he should have a layout tour for that meet. Jim mentioned that Rob Pisani did an Atlas video on the Atlas multi-level cars. The video is on the Atlas site. With Rob's help, Jim will produce a really nice video layout tour. Ciro asked about best practices for good quality layout videos. He observed that you need a script. The joint meet with NJD will be on 1 May 2021. It is also our annual business meeting with our elections. Chuck needs cohosts for the Winter meet in February and the Spring meet in May. Both Paul and Ciro volunteered for both meets.

SUMMER EVENT - Do we want to make plans now with so many unknowns? When would we have it? The national convention is July 4-11 and we need to be later than that. Since we do not know if it will be virtual or in person, Chuck suggested 24 July 2021 penciled in as a tentative date.

FALL - Since that is all we can do for summer, we will not discuss the Fall meet at this time.

Clinic Report – As just discussed, for the winter meet we will have Joe's Freight House and Jim's Timetable clinic. Chuck is working on a cars clinic and he will try to be ready for the Spring meet in May. Jim W is developing a clinic about bonding and filling for models and it is still coming together. He is also trying to be ready for May to have some redundancy. Scott Dunlap and Kai Ebinger both have clinics for the next in-person event. Jim W has some clinics in early development: one is 2D printing for model railroading and the other is called The Palette of Rust. Bob D is considering a virtual make-and-take clinic. Jim W noted that it would replace two clinics at one of our events. Jim also has an idea to use a clinic from the NMRA's EduTRAIN clinics. The President's Car column in the March 2020 NMRA magazine featured EduTRAIN as a resource for our use.

Membership Report – Tom C added the latest membership information to Dropbox including the membership list and the track of the membership trends. Into the Membership folder on Dropbox, he placed: the November membership report and comparison of all divisions in NER for number of members and percentage of the NER. We remain at about 13% - 192 voting members and 3 RailPass members for a total of 195. We are down 15 from the 210 members of a year ago. We do not know why most of them left but we do know that some moved or died. Chuck reminded us that if we know of any member's death, we are responsible to report it to National. Andy sends email to the members who are 30 or 60 days past due. He also contacts members when their email bounces. Chuck followed up on the NMRA At-Risk Persons Policy and received the concurrence that grandparents need the notarized affidavit if they are not the legal guardians.

Whistle Post Report – Jim H has several articles for the Whistle Post and plans to have a draft out within a week. Jim W will be sending his column in a couple of days. Jim H reported that instead of the cancelled Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show they will have a 2 day virtual show. He said that the information was sent to the show mailing list for exhibitors and vendors. Jim H may

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include the information in the Whistle Post timetable section. The JCRHS Train Show at Mother Seton High School in Clark was cancelled for 2021. Andy noted that NYSME's swap meet was conducted with fewer tables and attendees.

Election Report – Chuck acknowledged that the term limit for GSD President is 5 years and not 3 years as he mentioned previously. However, Chuck will still be stepping down. We have a slate for the election: Mark M for President, Jim H for Vice-President, Bob D continues as Treasurer and JimW continues as Secretary. Chuck will become the Immediate Past President. Steve, Andy and Tom C director terms are not up until 2022. Paul and JP will be running for reelection as directors and Ciro will be running for the other director position. This will be part of the Business meeting agenda at our Spring event. Also, the Whistle Post will have an announcement about the upcoming elections.

Old Business:

- Monitoring our Facebook is ongoing and has no actions so Chuck suggested that we remove it from Old Business. Anytime items are added to Facebook, Andy is notified since he is an Admin.
- Revamp The Whistle Post – This remains in Old Business. Jim H needs good cover photos related to the content in the issue. If we do not have a good cover shot then we will revert to the old format.
- GSD website – JP has been working on it and sent something to Chuck. He wanted Chuck's input on photos and layout before he sent the link to the rest of us.
- Erie Limited files – Chuck has flash drives and waits for an in-person meeting to distribute them.
- JCRHS Train Show at Mother Seton High School in Clark, NJ – On hold until November 2021.
- Membership outreach – Has anybody been doing outreach to members? Andy has been calling past due members and new people. JP made contact with Joe Witkowski who is busy with a new baby and fell off the membership list. JP tried without success to contact another member who fell off the list – Al Tillotson. Jim H will check into it.
- RPM/Craftsman Structures Meet – This is on hold for now.
- GSD T-TRAK modules for the NER – It was not mentioned at the last NER board meeting. The next board meeting is on 17 JAN 2021 and Chuck is not sure if T-TRAK is on the agenda. There may be some news from the meeting and Bob D will bring it up at the meeting.
- Make-and-take clinic – Bob D assembled both buildings and he is writing it up and creating a slide presentation in collaboration with Chuck. Bob still has a few things to do but it is 50% completed. The idea is to take the building we have selected and find out who will participate. Bob got the buildings at a discount from ITLA. It may only cost around \$20 and it is a good relatively small building. It can be assembled two ways- full building or a building flat. Chuck asked about the timing for the make-and-take. Bob will finish his presentation in another 3 or 4 weeks. Chuck noted that we need enough notice so that members can purchase the kit and materials. Bob was thinking that the build sessions would be over a four-week period. So maybe every Tuesday night for example we would do another step on the model. We need to get it moving, set up on PayPal and post photos. We will promote it on Constant Contact. JP asked if we would want to have a contest too. The NJD already does contests at their virtual meet and Chuck will get the details from Bill Grosse. Bob D would not be executing the voting part and somebody else must volunteer. Bob said that he never realized how much effort was required to put together a presentation like this. Chuck is able to set up the PayPal but he needs some particular information. Another option is for individual members to order the kit directly from ITLA with a special code for our build. Chuck observed that we must determine how to promote the make-and-take clinic. We discussed having the models completed before the Spring meet but May 1 may be too soon for completion because we need to consider time to promote the event to get more participation. Our next event is tentatively July 24 and that is just for our division. This is a more manageable timeframe and allows us to work out the logistics and promotion for the event. If we have an in-person meet in July, then we can build it at the meet, otherwise we will build it during the weeks prior to the meet and present the results at the July virtual event. Bob will continue with the presentation and the logistics.

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- 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 - Chuck mentioned that when we get to the next in-person meeting we need to track visitors and see how many times they attend as guests. Since we have no history for this, it will start when we reopen the in-person meetings. We must keep track because the third visit is the last and they must join to attend another meet. We need to track the guest sign-in sheets. A guest from another division will show a membership card. We also need to capture sign-in information for at-risk individuals. Andy will work at putting together a sign-in sheet format for use at our next in-person meet. We discussed options for handling the sign-in process at future meets. Jim H asked how our members will know about bringing an at-risk individual to future meets. JP asked about how other divisions were handling the at-risk individuals. Ciro asked if we have info about the 3 strikes rule on our website or in the Whistle Post. Jim H said that the Whistle Post has listed the 3 strikes information several times after it came out but we never included information about the NMRA At-Risk Persons Policy. Ciro noted that the Seacoast Division website has an explanation of the 3 strikes rule. Ciro will send the information to our webmaster, Tom Wortmann, so that he can post it on our website. Ciro will also copy the board on his email to Tom. Mark observed that we should also post the NMRA At-Risk Persons Policy information on our website. Chuck added that the information is on the NMRA website. Ciro will check the NMRA At-Risk Persons Policy on the NMRA website and provide information to Tom Wortmann for our website.
- Call log for membership outreach – Andy used the old contact list but Chuck wants a format to make notes for every contact with members. Andy described an Excel format and he will create it.
- Bring up the NMRA At-Risk Persons Policy at the NER board meeting - The board meeting is 17 JAN 2021 and Bob D will bring it up then.

New Business:

- Somebody passed away and the family contacted the NMRA for help with the estate collection of model railroad equipment. Chuck passed the information to Tom Wortmann who went and picked up the items. There were several used locomotives and Tom has a spreadsheet of the inventory. Ciro is not sure of the detail. The locomotives are in one or two totes in Tom's garage, he does not want to hold them for long and he wants to work with the division for our benefit. JP suggested offering them to the GSD members first and sell the rest on Ebay. We could keep some for door prizes. JP offered to store the items at his home. We need the list first and then proceed from there. We had a discussion of the NMRA donation policy and establishing value of donations. The policy is on the NMRA website.
- Zoom – Should we get a Zoom license? We currently use FreeConferenceCall(FCC) for division meets and BOD meetings but do we want to change? Zoom will cost \$150 per year for up to 100 people on a call. Chuck asked because we do not know when virtual meetings will end. After they end, we may explore hybrid meets of in-person meetings with a live stream. In the past, people had issues with FCC. Chuck likes certain features of FCC that we rely upon at our meets and he is not sure if they are available with Zoom. Chuck wondered if using Zoom would attract more members to our virtual meets. As a group, we do not know much about the features of Zoom. Therefore, we will stay with FCC. Ciro just started a Zoom subscription and he will find out more about the features and capabilities. We can have another discussion at the next meeting.
- D&O insurance - Bob D introduced Directors & Officers Insurance. It protects directors and officers from being sued. Bob's not sure of where it would apply since we already have insurance. Bob brought it up because National has D&O insurance for their directors and officers. Bob said that \$500,000 of insurance costs \$351.89 and he explained what was covered. Bob will be presenting it to the NER board and we will discuss it again next time. It is Old Business for our next meeting.

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Our next division meet is on May 1, Easter is the first weekend of April and Passover starts on March 27. Therefore the next virtual BOD meeting will be Saturday March 20, 2021 or some time during that weekend. Chuck will offer some day and time options for us to provide our availability. From that information he will determine the best day and time for the meeting.

The meeting ended at 12:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Walsh

Jim Walsh, Secretary NMRA/NER/GSD