

**PIEDMONT DIVISION, BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

**16<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

Meeting called to order at 6:07 p.m., Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church, Sandy Springs, GA by Peter Youngblood, MMR, Superintendent. Peter welcomed all officers, board members, committee heads and other Division members. He also announced that we would have two visitors at our General Meeting. Firstly, Kathy Millatt, MMR, from England, who is an incumbent NMRA Board member for the Atlantic District and who will be running for an additional term representing NMRA members from Europe. Secondly, a nationally renowned artist John Coker from Colorado who specializes in works of art of narrow gauge railroads in the western states, and is in the process of moving to Atlanta..

Board Members Present (12): Peter Youngblood, MMR, Matt Coleman, Joe Sullivan, Royal Bruce, Jim Travis, Alan Mole, Perry Lamb, Norm Lundin, Bill Raymond, Brian Sandberg, David Gelmini and Chris White.

Board members absent (2): Joe Maiuro and Charlie Crawford, MMR **Quorum Present**

Committee Chairs, Division Members, and Visitors Present *as taken from the sign-in sheet (15)*: Bill Zawacki, MMR, Rick Coble, Howard Goodwin, MMR, Gary Jarabek, Chuck Hoesch, Jim Hobbs, Joe Nichols, Jr., MMR, Dr. Joe Nichols, Sr., MMR, Paul Osman, Del Kittendorf, John Bost, Walt Liles, Tom Banks, Tyler Gelmini, and Doug Alexander.

**Officer and Director Reports**

**Administration - Chris White** The January 2016 Minutes were approved following a motion by Jim Travis and seconded by Perry Lamb.

**Finance – Joe Sullivan** Joe submitted the January financial reports by email. The January financial report was approved by the Board following a motion by Perry Lamb and seconded by Jim Travis.

**Operations—Matt Coleman** Matt submitted a January report by email and he reviewed the major portions of his report at the meeting. Matt informed the Board that he had discussed the format of the General Meeting with as many Division members as possible. There appeared to be a general consensus that the first part of our General Meeting takes far too long and is of minimal interest to the average member – who attends the meeting to hear about model railroading and not listen to a lot of perceived administration activities. He had a number of ideas to modify the format and concentrate on modeling activities and strictly limit other presentations. A number of Board members gave advice and comments to Matt – but their appeared to be a general consensus that Matt was correct. However, as Chris White commented, this is not a new issue and every Superintendent since Bob McIntyre has made efforts to improve this. We must be vigilant in detailed pre-planning of the agenda items and do all we can to keep verbose members away from the microphone. Norm Lundin suggested we make additional use of the audio video system to make announcements – but this does need pre-planning and coordination.

**Personnel/Membership - Royal Bruce** – Royal presented his January reports by email. There were 111 members and guests at the January meeting which included 3 visitors who signed up as full NMRA members. The 12-month rolling average attendance is 105. The Piedmont Division at the end of January had 416 NMRA members. Chris White mentioned that it is now more than 12 months since we moved the meeting location. The first few meetings at the new location were a huge success with record attendance numbers exceeding 150 per month. However, the average attendance has now returned to very similar numbers achieved at the old Tucker location. What could be the reason for this apparent reduction in numbers from the highs of early 2015? A number of Board members gave their suggestions and opinions. Maybe Matt's new format may lead to a new surge in interest.

**Committee Reports** These reports had been emailed to all Board members. These committee reports were accepted on a motion by Alan Mole and seconded by Bill Raymond.

**Website - Scott Povlot** – Scott submitted a report by email. There were 3327 page views on the Division website during January and 4930 for the Train Show website.

**Pilgrimage, Advertising, and Promotion/Division Apparel - Gary Jarabek** - Gary submitted a report by email. Gary summarized the Company Store inventory and also listed the advertising for the Monthly Division Meetings. His report also included upcoming ads in various publications, including the upcoming Division Train Show in March. The total attendance at 2015's Pilgrimage was 6023 visitors. Peter asked Gary to comment on another successful Pilgrimage. Gary summarized the Pilgrimage numbers. On behalf of the Division, Peter congratulated Gary and his committee for another highly successful outreach program. The Board concurred by suitable acclamation.

**Achievement Program – Randall Watson** There were no outstanding certificates during January.

**Good and Welfare –Chuck & Mary Ann Hoesch** – Email report submitted. One letter was sent out during January.

**2016 Model Train Show –Joe Gelmini** Joe continues to do all he can to find table vendors to replace the loss of three large vendors who normally attend. We are at approximately 80% capacity at the present time.

**Boy Scout Merit Badge Program (Duluth and Kennesaw) – Howard Goodwin.** Howard submitted a report by email. He again reiterated that the 1000<sup>th</sup> Boy Scout will go through the Piedmont Division Merit Badge program during the April class in Duluth. He also reiterated the need to have a PayPal system in place as soon as possible to facilitate easier payment by the parents of the 30 scouts who attend each program. The next class after April will be held in Kennesaw on July 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Audio-Visual Production & Promotion Committee-Peter Youngblood, MMR** Peter submitted a report by email. A Sylvania DVD player has been purchased to show promotional items at our booth and other events in the future, including the new NMRA video.

**Name Badges & Photography - James Bando** – James made 2 Division name badge during January.

**Division Video Library - David Gelmini** – David reported that he continues making excellent progress on converting old VHS tapes to DVD format with appropriate labeling.

**Division Book Library - Stephen Leydon** – Nothing to report.

**Model Railroad & Division Help – Ovidiu Trifanescu** – Nothing to report.

## **Old Business**

**IRS Tax designation from 501 (c) 4 to 501 (c) 3 - Peter Youngblood and Alan Mole.** Peter informed the Board that this item would be discussed at the NMRA meeting in Atlanta this weekend. Depending on the information received at this meeting, the Division will hold off any action at this time.

**Payments to the Division - Peter Youngblood** There was no activity on this issue but Joe Sullivan did inform the Board that a PayPal account requires an email account. This brings up the question, who should open and manage this account.

**2016 Action List - Peter Youngblood.** Peter had submitted a revised Action List for 2016 by email. There were a couple of changes. It had been decided that the Division would not actively participate in the Manchester Days in 2016. Amtrak itself had apparently lost interest in Amtrak Day and was now leaving this event to the local organization. Although some members would participate it would no longer be on the Action List.

**NMRA Board meeting in Atlanta in February – Peter Youngblood** Peter reminded the Board that the NMRA Board of Directors would be meeting at the Drury Hotel near the Atlanta airport on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and possibly the 21<sup>st</sup> of February. The Friday meeting is not open to the general membership but all members are invited for the Board Meeting on Saturday.

## New Business

***Editor of the SER publication – the Southerner Peter Youngblood*** Peter informed the Board that Paul Voelker had informed the SER Board that he would be resigning from his position as the editor of the Southerner after more than 15 years serving in this position. The Region will actively be looking for a replacement and Paul would assist until a replacement is named.

***Wall Street Journal Article on the Future of Model Railroading Peter Youngblood*** Many Division members were very cognizant of this article and many members had made their comments by e-mail. Peter intended to bring up this issue at the upcoming NMRA Board meeting this weekend.

***Contract with Southern Museum Peter Youngblood*** Peter informed the Board that the present five year contract was up for renewal and that the Division would attempt to negotiate improved conditions for the next contract.

***Growing the Hobby of Model Railroading Joe Sullivan*** Joe suggested that a Standing Committee be formed to review new and innovative Piedmont Division activities that would assist in growing our hobby – especially amongst younger members. Brian Sanford indicated he would very much like to participate in this endeavor.

***Meeting Adjournment*** Alan Mole proposed and Jim Travis seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Confirmed by acclamation and the **Meeting was adjourned at 6.53 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

***Chris White***, Director of Administration