

PIEDMONT DIVISION, BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

10th March 2015

Meeting called to order at 6:01 p.m., Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church, Sandy Springs, GA by Peter Youngblood, MMR, Superintendent. Peter welcomed all the officers, board members, committee heads and other Division members to the meeting. Because of the relatively long agenda he again reminded those present to minimize discussion, especially for those who previously had made their positions very clear.

Board Members Present (14): Peter Youngblood, MMR, Matt Coleman, Joe Sullivan, Walt Liles, Norman Lundin, Chuck Hoesch, Perry Lamb, Alan Mole, Joe Nichols Jr., MMR, Joe Maiuro, Royal Bruce, Jim Travis, Chris White and Charlie Crawford, MMR.

Board members absent (0):

Quorum Present

Committee Chairs, Division Members, and Visitors Present *as taken from the sign-in sheet (19)*:

Del Kittendorf, James and Sally Bando, Joe Gelmini, MMR, Bill Zawacki, MMR, Steve Funsten, Dottie Maiuro, Rick Coble, Gary Jarabek, Howard Goodwin, Scott Povlot, Martin Guldner, Mike Deaton, John Stevens, Tyler Gelmini, Regis Brooks, Randall Watson, Milt Burge and Craig Knox.

Officer and Director Reports

Administration - Chris White The February 2015 Minutes (taken and submitted by Rick Coble) were approved following a motion by Alan Mole and seconded by Matt Coleman.

Finance – Joe Sullivan Joe submitted the financial report by email for February 2015. The February financial report was approved by the Board following a motion by Alan Mole and seconded by Matt Coleman.

Operations—Walt Liles Walt submitted the February report by email.

Personnel/Membership - Royal Bruce – Royal presented his February report by email. February attendance at the first meeting at the new venue was a record 160. Royal also listed members who have not yet rejoined the NMRA in recent months and asked for assistance in following up with these previous NMRA members – the majority of whom has joined with a \$10 Rail Pass. He also listed 17 new members who had joined the NMRA during 2015.

Committee Reports These reports had been emailed to all Board members. Some reports had not been received. These committee reports were accepted on a motion by Perry Lamb and seconded by Joe Nichols, Jr.

Timetable - Doug Alexander – Nothing to report.

Website - Scott Povlot – Scott submitted a report by email. The latest calendar is now on the website and Rick Coble has been sending out eblasts prior to the Division meeting.

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.

Achievement Program – Randall Watson Randall submitted a report by email. There are seven certificates outstanding at National.

Good and Welfare –Chuck & Mary Ann Hoesch – Email report submitted. Four letters were sent during February.

2015 Model Train Show –Joe Gelmini Joe did not submit a report by email. Joe was a little concerned with recent vendor drop-outs but also had managed to sell a few more tables. We were presently 98% sold out as of 10th March. Joe also stressed the need for as many volunteers to help with the show during the coming weekend – 14th and 15th March.

Boy Scout Merit Badge Program (Duluth) - John Stevens – John has opened registration for the next Duluth program which will be held April 25th. John also commented that the number of counselors for these Merit Badge programs has decreased considerably – and we have actually been short of counselors. John asked for as many members to help as possible.

Boy Scout Merit Badge Program (Kennesaw) – Howard Goodwin – Nothing to report.

Audio-Visual Production & Promotion Committee-Peter Youngblood, MMR Nothing to report.

Name Badges & Photography - James Bando – James submitted a report by email. James prepared three new Division badges.

Division Video Library - David Gelmini – Nothing to report.

Division Book Library - Stephen Leydon – Nothing to report.

Train N' Camp - Perry Lamb – Nothing to report.

Member Aid – Ovidiu Trifanescu – Nothing to report.

Old Business

Action List - Peter Youngblood - Peter reviewed the March Action List. Chuck Hoesch will be dismantling part of his railroad, so the anticipated outing to his house will unfortunately be postponed. Joe Sullivan's Train In Camp on model tree construction has moved to May 16th instead of May 23rd. Peter discussed the anticipated "National Railroad Day" and encouraged members to participate. Details still to be made available.

Wounded Warrior Project – Peter Youngblood. Jim Travis had no additional progress to report to the Board.

Ronald McDonald House Charities – Peter Youngblood. Peter remains disappointed that he has not yet had a volunteer to step up as team leader to head up this program. If you would like to lead this program please contact Peter immediately. He reminded all those present that this was a great opportunity to help those children in need as well as providing excellent outreach for our hobby. There would be nothing to set up – but the opportunity to give a presentation on model railroading between 7.00 and 8.00 pm and as frequently as time permitted.

The Shepherd Center – Joe Nichols, Jr. Joe informed the Board that the Shepherd Center was going in a slightly different direction than Joe had anticipated. We would not be meeting individually with in-patients suffering from traumatic accidents but with infrequent patient visitors to the Center. Joe will be having an additional meeting in March to clarify our assistance at the Center.

Division Elections – Alan Mole Alan had previously informed the Board at the November 2014 BOD meeting that he was planning to submit a proposal to change the Division By-Laws regarding the election of Officers and Board members – and also any issue requiring a membership vote – such as By-Law changes. His major concern was that members of the Division who were unable to get to the November meeting were being disenfranchised – and that all members should have the ability to vote in annual elections.

Following the detailed discussion at the February meeting, Alan was requested to email a survey to all Division members regarding this issue. Alan conducted this survey and submitted an excellent report to the Board. In summary, 152 members started the survey and 132 completed the survey. Of the 132 completed surveys 79% indicated that they would want the opportunity to vote in elections when they could not attend, and 21% did not want. Alan discussed the survey in more detail as well as summarizing other issues concerning members. After additional discussion and comments, Alan made a motion to proceed with new balloting system as submitted and the motion was seconded by Walt Liles. There was a quorum with 14 Officers and Board members present. Six were in favor and 8 were opposed to the proposed By-Law amendment. The motion therefore did not pass.

Peter Youngblood expressed considerable disappointment with the vote – reminding the Board that an NMRA member has a right to vote, and that the Division was essentially depriving members of this right. Joe Nichols, Jr. commented that although he opposed the amendment he agreed in principle with what Peter had stated.

Member Aid – Peter Youngblood. Peter had discussed this previously and reminded the Board that Ovidiu Trifanescu had essentially no questions during the last couple of years, and that the late Bob McIntyre was also frustrated with the lack of

questions when he held the position. Peter suggested that the Board form a new committee called “Division Model Railroad Advisors” and he also listed 24 separate advisory categories, with two members stipulated per category. Peter emphasized this was a preliminary recommendation and looked for additional input from the Board. After some discussion, the suggestion was tabled for further discussion at the next meeting.

Kid’s Layout to be donated to the Southern Museum? – Walt Liles Walt informed the Board of a discussion he had with the Southern Museum staff. Walt, who has handled this layout many times, indicated the major problem with the layout is that it is stored in a member’s garage and then frequently moved to and forth. This layout is not designed for this. The Southern Museum will accept a donation of the layout and will take responsibility for its storage. The contract for the Division to operate the layout for the Museum two times a year will continue. Walt suggested that some repair work must be done on the layout before transferring to the Museum. There was discussion on the future responsibility for maintenance of the layout – and also of the Division’s future contractual relationship with the Museum. Walt made a motion and Matt Coleman seconded that the Division donate the Kid’s Layout to the Southern Museum. This motion was passed and Walt agreed to take care of the details and will get back with the Board.

2016 Raffle Layout Proceeds to the Wounded Warrior Project – Walt Liles Walt confirmed again that NARB (North Atlanta Rail Barons) would be responsible for the 2016 Raffle Layout at the Train Show. Walt was highly enthusiastic of the advertising potential of this project – both on TV and in the print media. He anticipated minimal cost because of expected donations of materials. However, despite Walt’s enthusiasm, a number of Board members were concerned of the impact on the annual Division financial results. Joe Gelmini informed the Board that the 2014 Raffle Layout provided Net Income of approximately \$1500, although the average is probably slightly less than \$1000. Joe Sullivan, the Division Director of Finance, expressed some concern because the Train Show is now the sole income source for all Division activities – and in 2015 we were projected to have a Net Loss. It was suggested that the Raffle layout Net Income be divided between the Wounded Warrior Project and the Division – say 50% each. It was agreed to table Walt’s proposal and Peter asked all Board members to consider the pros and cons before the next Board meeting.

New Business

NMRA Membership Report – Joe Gelmini, NMRA Board Member. At the request of Walt Liles, Joe was asked to give the Board an update on NMRA Actions concerning membership. Although the Piedmont Division is thriving – the NMRA overall membership is in decline. The NMRA has established a new committee responsible for recruiting new members. Approval has also been given for funds to prepare a recruitment video to assist recruitment at all levels of the NMRA. Some members expressed their concern that membership numbers were no longer included in the NMRA magazine.

Announcements at Division Meetings – Chris White Chris noted that Alan Mole had mentioned a concern of a member of the protracted “Announcement” procedure at monthly Division meetings. Chris had heard considerable discontent from members of his operating group. This is not a new issue and all Superintendents have struggled with the compromise to limit the number of announcements but also maintain effective communication in the Division. A number of options have been suggested:

- Potential announcements should be given to the Superintendent or Director of Operations prior to the meeting and they vet these announcements and give brief summaries without calling the members up.
- Potential announcements to be submitted in a brief Power Point format and that these announcements be shown on the 3 video screens during the meeting break time.

No system is perfect and we have to have effective communication. Chris requested that all Board members consider this problem and come to the March meeting with proposals to improve the present system.

Meeting Adjournment. Joe Sullivan proposed and Walt Liles seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Confirmed by acclamation and the **Meeting was adjourned at 6.57pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Chris White, Director of Administration