

Meeting called to order at 6:07 p.m., Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church, Sandy Springs, GA by Peter Youngblood, MMR, Superintendent. Peter wished all the officers, board members, committee heads and other Division members a Happy New Year and welcomed them all to the first meeting of 2016. He specifically welcomed two new Board members – Bill Raymond and Brian Sandberg and apologized for David Gelmini's absence because of work requirements. (ed. Note: Peter also thanked Chuck Hoesch and Joe Nichols, Jr., MMR at the general meeting for their service as outgoing Board members.)

Board Members Present (13): Peter Youngblood, MMR, Matt Coleman, Joe Sullivan, Royal Bruce, Joe Maiuro, Jim Travis, Alan Mole, Perry Lamb, Charlie Crawford, MMR, Norm Lundin, Bill Raymond, Brian Sandberg and Chris White.

Board members absent (1): David Gelmini **Quorum Present**

Committee Chairs, Division Members, and Visitors Present *as taken from the sign-in sheet (14)*:

Bill Zawacki, MMR, Dottie Maiuro, Rick Coble, Howard Goodwin, MMR, Rob Dodds, Gary Jarabek, Randall Watson, Scott Povlot, Martin Gulden, Chuck Hoesch, Jim Hobbs, John Stevens, Joe Nichols, Jr., MMR, and Doug Alexander, .

**Officer and Director Reports**

**Administration - Chris White** The November 2015 Minutes were approved following a motion by Alan Mole and seconded by Jim Travis

**Finance – Joe Sullivan** Joe submitted the November and December financial reports by email. The November financial report was approved by the Board following a motion by Jim Travis and seconded by Perry Lamb. The December financial report was approved by the Board following a motion by Norm Lundin and seconded by Matt Coleman. Alan Mole asked the status of the 2016 budget and was informed that the budget had been discussed at the Strategic Planning Meeting in late 2015. Joe promised to email a copy to Alan. Joe also informed the Board that the Train Show account had an outstanding check from March 2015 which would most probably be cancelled and the Train Show total bank balance would be increased by \$150.

**Operations—Matt Coleman** Matt submitted the December report by email and he reviewed the major portions of his report at the meeting. One of the items not previously discussed was the Train Days event in Chatsworth later in the year

**Personnel/Membership - Royal Bruce** – Royal presented his November and December reports by email. There were 108 members and guests at the November meeting and 99 at the Christmas party in December. The Piedmont Division at the end of 2015 had 418 NMRA members – down by 12 members over the entire year 2015. Royal suggested that our objective should be to at least maintain the Division membership at 418 through 2016. Royal also asked for volunteers for the upcoming Train Show

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

**Website - Scott Povlot** – Scott submitted a report by email. There were 2081 page views on the Division website during November and 1538 during December. Scott informed the Board that it was time to renew our website domains for the next three years. (This had been his practice for many years.) On a motion by Alan Mole and seconded by Joe Sullivan the Board approved expenses of \$454 to pay for the Division websites for a three year period. Joe would let Scott have the Division credit card number to expedite this payment.

**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. One particular point of emphasis was the availability of a brand new Division shirt. The total attendance at 2015's Pilgrimage was 6023 visitors.

**Achievement Program – Randall Watson** Randall was in receipt of the following certificates – Structures for Bill Raymond, seven certificates for Tom Brennison, plus 4 other certificates to other Division members. (Ed. Note. At the Division General Meeting Randall, with the assistance of Joe Gelmini, presented a Master Model Railroader Plaque, # 571 to Tom Brennison. Those present gave a standing ovation to Tom for his outstanding achievement.)

**Good and Welfare –Chuck & Mary Ann Hoesch** – Email report submitted. Four letters were sent during November, and one in December...

**2016 Model Train Show –Joe Gelmini** Joe submitted an email report. We are currently committed for 58% of vendor tables. Unfortunately, three major vendors, representing a total of 25 tables, will not be able to attend our Show this March. This could have a significant impact on the Train Show bottom line this year and Joe informed the Board that he and his committee would do all they could to attempt to reduce costs but accepting that the majority of the expenditures are relatively fixed.

**Boy Scout Merit Badge Program (Duluth and Kennesaw) – Howard Goodwin.** Howard submitted a report by email. He and his member assistants completed another Boy Scout Merit Badge program in Kennesaw on January 9<sup>th</sup> – with 29 more scouts receiving Model Railroad Merit Badges. Howard also informed the Board that the 1000<sup>th</sup> Boy Scout will attain a Merit Badge at the class in Duluth on April 16<sup>th</sup>. Howard recommended to the Board that the Division suitably recognize this achievement by donating a Lionel Train Set to this 1000<sup>th</sup> recipient. Following a motion by Jim Travis and seconded by Chris White, the Board approved an expenditure of \$260 to purchase this Commemorative Lionel Train Set for the 1000<sup>th</sup> recipient. John Stevens, who made a similar presentation to the 500<sup>th</sup> recipient a number of years ago, suggested that all Boy Scouts attending the April program have their names placed in a hat and that one name be drawn – which would be the 1000<sup>th</sup> recipient. Howard indicated that he would do something very similar because there is no other way to fairly decide who this Boy Scout is. Howard also informed the Board that Rick Coble and Howard had attended every Boy Scout Merit Badge program and had (and would) assist all 1000 scouts who had successfully completed this program. The Board showed their appreciation with suitable acclamation to Both Rick and Howard.

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

**Name Badges & Photography - James Bando** – James made 1 Division name badge during November and December...

**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 reminded the Board that to his recollection the NMRA had been more than 2 years “testing” a Division for 501 (c) 3 status with little if any progress. However, he recommended that we wait for the NMRA Board meeting to be held here in Atlanta in late February to ascertain the precise progress of this program. Depending on the feedback at the NMRA board meeting, we may or may not recommend that the Piedmont Division work on this issue on our own and had asked Alan Mole to head up this review. We will revisit this issue at the March Board meeting.

**Payments to the Division - Peter Youngblood** Peter and Joe Sullivan had agreed that the Division would form a small sub-committee to review the establishment of a Pay Pal account (or accounts) to permit easier transactions from the public to the Division – for Howard Goodwin (Boy Scouts) and Gary Jarabek (Division clothing). Little progress had been made during the vacation period and Joe Sullivan agreed to continue to actively research this issue.

### **New Business**

**2016 Action List - Peter Youngblood.** Peter had submitted a brand new Action List for 2016 my email. He reviewed the first couple of months of this list in detail. All Board members and Committee Heads were requested to review this listing and start planning their activities to ensure completion of all items on the list.

**Appointment of Director-at-Large Peter Youngblood** Peter informed the Board that following the election of Matt Coleman as Director of Operations for 2016 – Matt’s position of Director-at-Large was now vacant for the year 2016 and that this position was now open. The Superintendent has the right to select any member to this position, but previous Superintendents have generally made their decision based on the previous November election results – and that member who ran for Director-at-Large but who was not elected, but who received the next highest vote count was selected. In 2015, two members who were not elected had identical votes. Peter decided, after discussion with other Board members, that the only fair resolution was a simple coin toss. Bill Raymond won the coin toss and Peter informed the Board that Bill Raymond was our replacement Director-at-large. The Board showed their congratulations to Bill by suitable acclamation.

**New NMRA Member Recruitment Video – Peter Youngblood** Peter informed the Board that the NMRA had very recently completed a Video for all potential new members of the NMRA. The Piedmont Division had purchased a video player and monitor for the 2013 Convention presentations. This unit was somehow appropriated by the NMRA in 2013 but no one apparently knows where it is. Peter recommended that the Division purchase a new unit so that the Division could show this video at all events where

potential new members would be present. He suggested that he may be able to purchase a unit for less than \$100 – which he could approve without Board approval. Some members suggested that we should invest in a larger and more expensive unit. Peter would continue to review potential options and would return to the Board in February if the proposed unit would cost more than \$100. (ed. Note. Peter showed this video at the General Meeting and the majority of those present thought that the video was excellent as a potential recruitment tool.)

**Senior Members Action Plan – Peter Youngblood** Peter reminded the Board that many of our Officers, Board members, and Committee Heads were not getting any younger and suggested that the Board consider a possible “understudy” program. Senior members would recruit a “younger understudy” to work with them and assist them in their activities. This would provide a much smoother transition if and when these more senior members retired from their positions.

**NMRA Member Code of Conduct – Charlie Crawford** Charlie requested from Peter if the NMRA had made any progress on a “Code of Conduct” for NMRA members. (This follows a number of incidents that Charlie had to deal with when he was Superintendent – and there was no guidance at all provided by the NMRA.) Peter commented that this was a very difficult and sensitive task and that the NMRA had been studying this issue. John Stevens (NMRA Secretary) informed the Board that the scope of the document had been narrowed and that it could possibly come before the NMRA Board for review at the upcoming meeting in Atlanta.

**NMRA Board meeting in Atlanta in February – Peter Youngblood and John Stevens** Peter and John informed 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 (which could go into Sunday if the agenda necessitates that.)

**February 2016 Board Meeting and General Meeting** **All members are reminded that the second Tuesday in February is Shrove Tuesday and that the church meeting rooms will not be available to us. The February meeting will therefore be held on the third Tuesday of February – which is 16<sup>th</sup> February.**

**Meeting Adjournment** Jim Travis proposed and Norm Lundin seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Confirmed by acclamation and the **Meeting was adjourned at 6.48 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Chris White**, Director of Administration