

National Model Railroad Association Mid-Central Region
Board of Directors Meeting
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Minutes
May 29, 2020

Attendance:

Bob Weinheimer, President; Bob McKay, Treasurer; Jerry Doyle, Secretary; Jim DiPaola, Division 1; Frank Bender, Division 2; Mark Stiver, Division 3; Lee Sheffield, Division 4; Mike Buehner, Division 5; Matt Goodman (incoming supt.), Division 6; John Shields, Division 7; Fred Soward, Division 8; Robert Osburn, Division 9; Bob Belt, Division 10; Rich Kosakowski, Division 11; and Brad White, Division 12.

Also in attendance were

Steve Zapytowski, Contest Chair; Tom Miller, Education; Bruce DeMaeyer, Modules; Bob Shreve, Nominations; Don Wilke, Webmaster; John Stevens, NMRA V.P Administration; Matt Kross, Incoming Supt. Division 5; Larry Smith Div. 10; Gail Yarnell, Div. 3; Ron Ellison Div. 8; Jeff Hedge Div. 10; Rick Tipton Div. 8.

The meeting was called to order by President Bob Weinheimer at 8:00 p.m.

Minutes of the last BOD meeting:

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as corrected from the September 29, 2019 BOD meeting. *Motion made and seconded and passed unanimously.*

President's Comments:

National

Annual Meeting will be held virtually on September 13. Regions and Divisions will be expected to assist in promoting this meeting which normally takes place at the convention. There is an update from the President, the board and officers are present, and the floor is open for questions from the members. The NMRA is incorporated in Ohio which requires an annual meeting of this sort for organizations like ours. MCR is also obligated to conduct an annual meeting as we, too, are incorporated in Ohio.

The next full board meeting will be a virtual meeting in mid-July. There are monthly video conferences to track action items and to look at other issues but little if any action can be taken at these conferences.

The National St. Louis convention has been canceled due to COVID. The National Birmingham, England 2022 convention canceled due to a perfect storm of events that include COVID. The

convention facilities became unavailable during the summer and a convention in the fall is not practical due to many museums closing at the end of summer.

There is speculation, and it is only speculation, that St. Louis might step in for 2022. No action on 2022 has been taken by the board. Bob's more immediate concern is about Santa Clara in 2021.

NMRA-X has taken the world by storm. This program was put together after the April 9 announcement of the cancellation of the St. Louis convention. April 24 and 25 (North American time) a 24 hour program of hour long live clinics was presented on the NMRA Facebook page. The clinicians were from around the world, those from Australia were on during our night which was their day. Gordy Robinson was the leader of this effort and it was quite successful. Since then there was an Ask the MMR program and another 12 hour program of clinics May 16. There is yet another program for tomorrow, May 30 and another on June 13. I think the plan is for every two weeks as long as there is a supply of clinics. These are all being recorded and put on the NMRA YouTube channel. Comments on Facebook have been very favorable, it may turn out to be something of a recruiting tool for membership. It's a little too early to know if this is the case but when the membership report comes out, look for new members.

Youth Program

For discussion later in the agenda.

MCR

The MCR annual meeting is anticipated to be October 25 followed by the MCR board meeting. This meeting is normally conducted at the convention banquet. Without a convention there is no banquet and we need a Plan B. In 2014 we could see this coming as there was no convention due to the Region hosting the national convention. That year we met in the spring in Marion, OH and had both meetings as the trains went by. If circumstances let us mingle by late October, something I see as unlikely, it might be nice to use Marion again as it is relatively centrally located. If we must avoid each other, a Zoom conference would be the way to do it. Regardless of the COVID situation, I do not see Schmidt's in Columbus as a viable location for this event.

I was disappointed by the low voter turnout for the awards. The Wenderfer Award will be announced by Division 7. The MCR Directors Award goes to Jim Sacco, congratulations to Jim!

NMRA President Award for service to the Division. Nominations were solicited from the Superintendents in February, I had to pick the MCR winner and submit it. It was a tough choice, there are many members who really deserve this award. The winner is normally announced at the NMRA convention banquet but that couldn't happen this year. The names are published in the August NMRA Magazine but for some reason they were published in the June issue that we just received. A plaque will be forthcoming to the MCR winner Bob Dawson from Division 8. Congratulations to Bob.

Recent Achievement Program activity: Chris Broughton is MMR 650 and Bob Kuchler MMR 653 both from Division 8.

Bob is still working on a new MCR map, stay tuned.

The group in Buffalo has decided to become a new division in the Niagara Frontier Region.

John Stevens reported on his activity with the Buffalo group. The new NFR division is named the Western New York Division. Another NFR division, the Southern Tier Division has petitioned to leave the NFR and will joining the North East Region. John is working on a new map that reflects these changes.

Treasurer's Report:

Bob McKay reported a balance of \$29,506.37. He noted two outstanding loans for upcoming conventions for Division 12 and the Tri-Region convention.

Vice-Presidents Report:

No Report.

Committee Reports

Achievement Program:

No Report.

Contest:

Steve Zapytowski nothing further report beyond report submitted.

Education:

No Report.

King Pin:

No Report.

Membership:

No Report.

Modules:

Bruce DeMaeyer, nothing further report beyond report submitted.

Nominations:

Bob Shreve reported that he has found candidates for offices.

Projects:

No Report.

Webmaster:

Don Wilke reported some upcoming routine security changes for the website. A few email forwarders will be changing in June.

Division Reports:

Division 1 – Jim DiPaola: Nothing new to add to the report already submitted for the meeting.

Division 2 – Frank Bender: They have been utilizing virtual meetings for monthly meetings.

Division 3 – Mark Stiver: They are also utilizing virtual meetings and a Facebook page. There are still V&O cars for sale. As of today the November show is still planned subject to change.

Division 4 – Lee Sheffield: Virtual meetings don't seem viable given the large attendance (90 or more). The October show is still planned to occur subject to change.

Division 5 – Matt Kross: The Division held a "How to build a model" clinic at the Painesville, Ohio depot in November.

Division 6 – Matt Goodman: Membership is currently 170. They have been holding virtual contests and is planning a virtual June meeting. The October show is still tentatively planned.

Division 7 – John Shields: They are planning virtual BOD and membership meetings. The October show is still tentatively planned.

Division 8 – Fred Soward: They have been holding virtual meetings and additional bring and brag meetings.

Division 9 – Robert Osburn: They held the first virtual meeting in May and plan to continue this for the foreseeable future. There is consideration of continuing this method as a supplement for members who are unable to attend in person.

Division 10 – Bob Belt: They are planning a virtual meeting for June.

Division 11 – Rich Kosakowski: They have begun in-person meetings again following state-mandated guidelines for social distancing.

Division 12 – Brad White: Nothing new to add to the report already submitted for the meeting. The Fall Jamboree is still planned although in scaled-back form.

Discussion Topics

Youth/At Risk Policy:

Lee Sheffield asked how the new policy affected division picnics with minors and how we follow the new policy. Bob Weinheimer advised Lee to contact Bob Amsler, NMRA Counsel, to get detailed guidance on this. Lee also asked for guidance about whether membership was required for parents of minors. Bob suggested he contact Bob Amsler, NMRA Counsel, to get detailed guidance on this also.

Gail Yarnell asked if answers to various questions could be distributed to everyone to avoid duplicating efforts and provide faster guidance. Bob Weinheimer suggested Lee Sheffield contact Bob Amsler, NMRA Counsel, and report back to Superintendents via email.

Robert Osburn asked if the NMRA affidavit now required has to be notarized. Bob Weinheimer responded that they must be notarized. The affidavit is required for persons other than parents to

bring minors to meetings. Robert suggested that we find a way to flag minor members to assure compliance. John Stevens mentioned that members may still require coverage in certain circumstances even though they are past the age of majority. Don Wilke suggested an archive or FAQ to provide future Superintendents guidance as well. Robert Osburn asked who is required to keep the affidavit and Bob thought it was the division. John Shields noted that persons aged 16-18, when minors typically can drive, present specific concerns since they can show up without parents.

The question of donations to BSA being publicized came up. Bob Weinheimer felt this was prohibited by NMRA policy. Bob suggested anyone with questions on this contact Bob Amsler, NMRA Counsel, to get detailed guidance on this. Gail Yarnell said she had received guidance from the NMRA President that any link was prohibited. John Stevens provided some suggestions to for individual members to continue assisting with activities but outside the official sponsorship of the NMRA or any NMRA Divisions.

John Shields noted that the new record keeping requirements would be burdensome for most divisions. The new policy relieves the NMRA from this requirement.

Coping with COVID:

Fred Soward discussed virtual meetings that Division 8 began in April. They also have an additional meeting between regular meetings. A positive development has been members who are attending that hadn't been able to do so in person. They plan to augment in-person meetings with virtual in the future. Meetings and clinics are recorded. This allows members to access these at times other than when they are held.

Matt Goodman suggested we have a meeting for members interested in further details about holding virtual meetings. Jerry Doyle volunteered to facilitate a meeting in the week following this meeting. Bob Shreve asked about the issue of putting content on YouTube that was available to non-members. John Shields asked about divisions losing venues once the COVID-19 issues are over and internet access issues. He also brought up the issue of layout tours, which are a common feature of division meetings for most. Fred Soward mentioned that OPSIG does weekly meetings. Jerry Doyle mentioned that Division 9 had a virtual layout tour and a clinic as part of their virtual April meeting and that virtual meetings may allow more members to see layouts than before using virtual meetings. John Stevens mentioned his region was planning 50 virtual clinics

and tours in November. Robert Osburn noted that everyone will have to be creative to deal with the current issues and their effects. Jerry Doyle mentioned that some members seem to get left out with the movement to technology and we need to find a way to address this.

Division 7 Program:

John Shields told attendees about an event that is still going forward in August. He provided a copy of the flyer and asked each division to include it in their newsletters.

2020 Convention – This convention was supposed to be occurring as this meeting is being held but was cancelled due to COVID-19. Frank Bender brought everyone up to date. There are no outstanding bills. The MCR 2023 convention will be held in Pittsburgh and they are looking for volunteers.

2021 Convention – Brad White mentioned an upcoming meeting to select a convention chair. The original convention artwork will be auctioned off as a fund raiser. Tours of WABTEC and Union Station are planned. They are working on finding a banquet speaker. The Northern Express will be held May 20-23, 2021

2022 Joint MCR/NCR/MWR Convention – Bruce DeMaeyer noted the potential conflict of a newly-located NMRA National convention in St. Louis that had originally been planned to be held in the United Kingdom but was cancelled. This may affect convention plans. No firm changes have been made. A planning meeting is planned in October.

Nominating Process and Voting – Bob Shreve brought up the need for more specific language regarding the nominating process in our bylaws. He discussed the timing issues of nominations and the Fall BOD meeting in the case where only one candidate has been nominated. Currently this process closes after the BOD meeting. Bob proposed changing the deadline to allow for an in-person vote at the Fall BOD meeting in the case where only one person has been nominated for each office. He also mentioned the need to update the bylaws to allow electronic voting. Currently a paper ballot is specifically named in the bylaws and requires a mail-in ballot only. Bob proposed a change that allows voting by means other than a mail-in ballot.

Motion to consider changes made by Bob Belt and Mark Stiver seconded.

Note: All changes proposed are in **ARTICLE X. NOMINATIONS, BALLOTS AND VOTING**
(proposed changes are in red)

Change proposed for the timing of elections in case of all candidates unopposed:

Section 1. The Region Nominating Committee for Region offices shall be composed of a Manager and at least two (2) other members, all of whom are appointed from different Divisions of the Region by the Mid Central Region President. No current Region officer may serve on this Committee, nor sit with it during its deliberations. The Region Nominating Committee shall report the Region nominations to the Region Secretary by the earlier of the date of the Fall Regional Board meeting or October 31. The Committee report shall then be distributed to the membership in the Fall *KingPin*, or by email, and said distribution shall invite nominations by petition, within the next 30 days. The Region Nominating Committee may use the petition process for their own nominations. The Committees shall obtain enough information for a short biographical sketch about each nominee containing his background, age, family, interests, model railroading experience, and qualifications. These sketches shall be included with the ballot mailing.

Update: The Region Nominating Committee for Region offices shall be composed of a Manager and at least two (2) other members, all of whom are appointed from different Divisions of the Region by the Mid Central Region President. No current Region officer may serve on this Committee, nor sit with it during its deliberations. **The Region Nominating Committee shall report the committee's nominations to the Region Secretary at least 45 days prior to the Fall regional BOD meeting. The Committee report shall then be distributed to the membership via US Postal mail or via electronic means, and said distribution shall invite nominations by petition. The deadline for submission of nominations by petition shall be 30 days after the date of the distribution to the membership. The complete nomination process should be completed prior to the Fall regional BOD meeting.** The Region Nominating Committee may use the petition process for their own nominations. The Committees shall obtain enough information for a short biographical sketch about each nominee containing his background, age, family, interests, model railroading experience, and qualifications. These sketches shall be included with the ballot mailing.

Change proposed to allow alternate means for voting in any election:

Section 6. Election for Mid Central Region officers and Division Superintendents shall be conducted by mail ballot. Other Division elective offices or issues may be included on the Division ballots. If after a diligent effort/search, only one candidate is nominated for any Region Officer position, the sole nominee may be elected by a motion to have an Election by Acclimation. In instances where the entire slate of candidates for Region or Division Officers are running unopposed, mailing of ballots will not be necessary if a motion to have an Election by Acclimation is proposed and passed.

Updates: **Election for Mid Central Region officers and Division Superintendents shall be conducted by ballot distributed via US Postal mail, or conducted via electronic means.** Other Division elective offices or issues may be included on the Division ballots. If after a diligent effort/search, only one candidate is nominated for any Region Officer position, the sole nominee may be elected by a motion to have an Election by **Acclamation**. In instances where the entire slate of candidates for Region ~~or Division Office~~ is running unopposed, **distribution of ballots** will not be necessary if a motion to have an Election by **Acclamation** is proposed and passed.

Change proposed to allow distribution of election information using alternative means:

Section 10. Ballots for Mid Central Region officers shall be included in the appropriate issue of the *KingPin* as required in Article VII, Section 2, above. Ballots for issues and Division officers requiring mail voting and sketches of nominees for office in both the Region and in the several Divisions shall be sent by mail either in the *KingPin* or Division Newsletter or by a separate letter not less than thirty (30) days (forty-five (45) days if mailing is by third class) before the latest date for return of the marked

ballots. Nominations by the Committee, by petition or both shall be indicated on the ballot. The name and address of the Teller and the latest date for return of marked ballots shall be clearly indicated. Nominees receiving the largest share of votes for each office and votes on issues shall be certified by the Teller to the Region Secretary not less than three (3) days before the installation meeting. The Teller shall give advance notice to the winners of their election at the earliest possible time to permit their preparation for assumption of the new duties and shall present the ballots and tabulation to the Audit Committee for review before public announcement of the results. Region Officers and Directors elect shall be invited to participate in the Board of Director meeting discussions.

Update: Ballots for Mid Central Region officers shall be included in the appropriate issue of the *KingPin* as required in Article VII, Section 2, above. Ballots for issues and Division officers requiring mail voting and sketches of nominees for office in both the Region and in the several Divisions shall be sent by mail either in the *KingPin* or Division Newsletter or by a separate letter not less than thirty (30) days (forty-five (45) days if mailing is by third class) before the latest date for return of the marked ballots. Nominations by the Committee, by petition or both shall be indicated on the ballot. The name and address of the Teller and the latest date for return of marked ballots shall be clearly indicated. **If conducting an election via electronic means, the sketches of officer nominees, voting deadline, and means of submitting ballots shall be included with the electronic election notification.** Nominees receiving the largest share of votes for each office and votes on issues shall be certified by the Teller to the Region Secretary not less than three (3) days before the installation meeting. The Teller shall give advance notice to the winners of their election at the earliest possible time to permit their preparation for assumption of the new duties and shall present the ballots and tabulation to the Audit Committee for review before public announcement of the results. Region Officers and Directors elect shall be invited to participate in the Board of Director meeting discussions.

The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Long Range Plan – At the Salt Lake City board meeting Jack Hamilton MMR was charged with updating the NMRA’s long range plan. He asked for the Region presidents or their designees to be on the committee, I designated Dick Briggs MMR as the MCR member. The draft plan was reported to the board in early March at its Atlanta meeting where it was favorably received. It still needs some work and the idea was to adopt it at the St. Louis board meeting. The plan calls for a significant emphasis on the Regions and Divisions to make things happen. The plan was to introduce it to Region presidents at a weekend program in Atlanta in June but that was scrubbed by COVID before it could even be announced. The current thought is to have a series of video meetings. The plan also includes a considerable Education portion with the need for a much stronger Education Committee on the Region and even Division level that we have traditionally had.

Steve Zapytowski volunteered to participate in the education efforts. Bob Weinheimer recognized Tom Miller for taking this newly-planned educational initiative on.

2023 Convention – Division 2 has offered to host the 2023 convention in Pittsburgh. The cancellation of the 2020 convention due to COVID-19 created this opportunity. Bob Weinheimer asked for BOD approval of this plan.

Fred Soward moved for approval, seconded by Jim DiPaola.

Motion passed unanimously

For the Good of the Order:

Don Wilke noted the Coshocton, Ohio club is featured in the current issue of *Model Railroader*.

Mike Buehner expressed thanks for codification of a smoother process for selection by acclimation.

Bob Belt congratulated Division 2 for their efforts on this year's cancelled convention.

John Shields asked about members who have been affected by COVID-19.

Jerry Doyle noted that virtual meetings are the way of the future for the next few months at least, possibly longer.

Lee Sheffield expressed concerns about members who are not tech-savvy being lost moving to a virtual format. There was some discussion about attrition when divisions moved to electronic distribution of newsletters.

Fall BOD meeting and Annual Membership meeting; location to be announced – Sunday, October 25, 2020.

Plans for this meeting are subject to change due to uncertainties regarding COVID-19.

Adjourned 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Jerry Doyle, MCR Region Secretary