

National Model Railroad Association
Mid Central Region
Board of Directors Virtual (via Zoom) Meeting
Winter 2025 Meeting
January 17, 2025, 7PM
Minutes

Attendance:

Dave Neff, President; Jerry Doyle (absent), Vice President; Bruce DeMaeyer, Secretary; John Shields, Treasurer; Jim DiPaola, Division 1; Dennis Coglianese, Division 2; Eric Zimmerman Division 3; Ron Morgan, Division 4; Bill Osborne, Division 5; Bob Baker, Division 6; Tony Valerius as proxy of Chuck Endreola, Division 7; Ron Ellison, Division 8; Sam Delauter, Division 9; Larry Smith, Division 10; Al Crate, Division 11; and Mike Hauk, Division 12.

Also in attendance were Jim Heary, Kingpin Newsletter Editor; Paul Novak, Membership; Bruce DeMaeyer, T-TRAK N; Bob Shreve, Nominations; Don Wilke, Webmaster; Susan Warner, Contests; Frank Koch, AP; and Steve Zapytowski, Education

Upcoming Officers: Frank Trocchia and Barbara Soward

National Visitors:

Bob Weinheimer, NMRA RAC Director; Fred Soward NMRA Central Region, Mike Hohn, National Education

The meeting was called to order by President Dave Neff at 7:00 PM. David Neff, President who initiated a roll call to check the attendance of the board of directors and committee members.

David then led a discussion on recruitment, retention, and events among existing superintendents.

Jerry Doyle, Vice President was not attending the meeting, so no report was made by the Vice President.

John Shield, the treasurer, assured the group that the Region finances were in good order.

Bruce DeMaeyer, Secretary, also mentioned that he was facing difficulties with the process and rules for the secretary's job, and he planned to resolve these issues in the next year. Bruce DeMaeyer proposed that the minutes from the last meeting in May be recorded and approved.

Prior to the meeting the Division and Committee Member Long Reports were submitted to the Webmaster who entered them into the MCR Office Archive. The members were asked to read the material before the Meeting.

Motions were made to do so, and the Minutes of the Spring 2024 BOD Meeting were approved.

David then asked for a short report from the Division superiors and the committee heads

Jim DiPaola from Division 1 reported a successful regional convention and upcoming event at the Age of Steam Museum.

Dennis Coglianese from Division 2 shared their increased membership and new modeler assistance program.

Eric Zimmerman from Division 3 discussed their recent activities and outreach program with disadvantaged kids.

Ron Morgan from Division 4 reported their financial stability and upcoming events

Greg Short covered Division 6 for Bob Baker who was having audio problems and highlighted their steady membership and successful train show.

Tony Valarie's was proxy for Chuck Endreola from Division 7 and shared their financial stability and new member orientation event.

Sam Delauter from Division 9 discussed their steady membership and upcoming events.

Larry Smith from Division 10 reported the loss of a few members and purchase of t-track modules.

Al Crate from Division 11 mentioned their steady membership and financial status.

Mike Hauk from Division 12 reported their financial stability and successful presence at the Blue Meadville depot festival.

Paul Novak from the membership committee reported a steady membership of 1,288 members.

Donald Wilke from the website committee reported working on the upcoming convention website and making small changes to the region website.

Donald instructed everyone to review and correct their email addresses from a provided list and mentioned that he had made payments to GoDaddy and would send a combined receipt to the treasurer soon. David Neff emphasized the importance of having up-to-date email addresses for receiving kingpin newsletters. David also discussed the progress of the clinician database, with Steve Zapytowski still awaiting approval from some clinicians. Susan reported on the Buckeye Express contest, which had 180 entries.

Frank Koch encouraged members to pursue the AP program and MMR requirements.

The technology committee, led by Jerry Doyle, discussed focusing on technology that can help divisions.

Bruce DeMaeyer presented T-TRAK N plans for the Columbus convention, including a clinic build and a contest.

Convention Website Progress and Clinic Planning

Greg Short discussed the progress of the convention website, which is now operational and accessible through the region website or by visiting Buckeye express website. He praised Donald Wilke's work on the website and mentioned that registration is functioning well, with Reg Fox being used. However, banquet registration is not yet available due to uncertainty from the hotel regarding pricing and menu options. Greg also mentioned that the hotel website and registration are operational, with a link to be added to the convention website soon. Greg discussed the progress of various projects, including the organization of clinics, hands-on clinics, operations sessions, and off-site trips. He mentioned that Ken McDonough was leading the clinics and that there were around 15 of them lined up. The hands-on clinics were planned with three master model railroaders, but the details were yet to be finalized. Mike Wolf was heading the operations sessions, with around 10 layouts planned. Operations were scheduled for Thursday and Friday night. At least 15 layouts had agreed to be open for visitors as they left. The banquet plans were still being finalized. Greg also requested everyone to send him an email with a good time to visit each division to publicize the convention.

Greg Short and Bruce DeMaeyer discussed the organization of the T-TRAK layout at the convention, with Bruce stepping up to help due to a change in the original Division 6 T-TRAK coordinator's circumstances. They discussed the layout of the Modules Room, which will be mostly occupied, and the need to plan for T-TRAK clinics. Bruce expressed confidence in the plan and the ability to communicate with module builders.

Greg mentioned that they have enough registrations to cover initial costs and are now focusing on the details. They also discussed the logistics of the clinics, with multiple sessions planned for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, and the possibility of limiting attendance to Mill Creek to around 28-30 people due to transportation costs.

Greg and Bruce discussed the importance of listing clinicians for their project. Bruce emphasized the need to post the clinicians as soon as possible to avoid delays and to encourage public registration. He also suggested using Reg Fox to keep the public updated on the convention's progress. Susan Werner added a point about holding spaces for contest administration and judging, with Greg agreeing to include this in Ken's schedule. The team decided to prioritize the contest administration on Thursday and the judging on Friday.

National Board Updates and Membership Program

David expressed gratitude towards the National Board members, particularly Bob Weinheimer and Fred Soward. Bob then discussed the new membership program, set to become effective at the end of the first quarter next year, which would simplify the renewal process and provide access to the membership database. Bob also mentioned the introduction of automatic membership renewals and subscription memberships. Bruce DeMaeyer asked about the automatic membership renewal system, to which Bob responded that it would be implemented at the end of the first quarter of the next year. Bob also shared that the medical program, a new project, is still in its early stages and has not yet secured any of the big insurance companies.

The conversation then shifted to the upcoming National Convention in Novi, Michigan, which was being organized by some of the same people who ran Indy Junction 2022. Fred Soward highlighted that the convention was shorter, less expensive, and had more affordable hotel options compared to the previous event in Long Beach.

Fred Soward also discussed the changes in the Member retention program, the upcoming 90th anniversary of the NMRA in 2025, and the new rack cards created using the Canva application. Ron Ellison expressed interest in the open membership policy and the self-guided layout site visits but questioned the change in policy regarding membership requirements. The discussion was deferred to Bob Weinheimer for further insights.

Convention Success, Future Events, and Host Selection

The team then discussed the success of a convention in Indianapolis and its potential as a model for future events. They also considered the potential for generating new members through such events but noted the lack of data on the number of new members generated from the recent conventions.

David Neff then asked if there were any other questions, and hearing none called for an adjournment of the meeting

All approved

The next meeting will be at the Columbus Convention on Friday night, May 16 starting at 9PM.