



**Meeting of the Board of Directors
Via Zoom
Final Draft
March 11, 2023**

President Tony White called the meeting to order at 11:06 AM.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND ROLL CALL

First Name	Middle	Last Name	Title	Present	Absent
Tony		White	President	A	
Vacant			Vice President		
Ellen		Scott	Secretary/Director	A	
Ralph	Robert	Bitzer	Treasurer/Director		X
Scott		Andes	Director	A	
Kevin		Feeney	Director	A	
Eric		Fogg	Director	A	
John		Goodman	Director	A	
Skip		Waters	Director	A	
Charlie		Webb	Director		X
Vacant			Director		
Joe		Maloney	Director Emeritus	A	
Wes		Ross	Director Emeritus	A	
Bob		Ernst	Director Emeritus	A	
Walter		Zullig	Director Emeritus	A	
E. Steven		Barry	Director Emeritus		X
Larry		Dyer	Director Emeritus		X
Jack		Hillborn	Director Emeritus		X
Jim		Pahris	Director Emeritus		X
Harold (Smoke)		Shaak	Director Emeritus		X
Steven		Siegrist	Director Emeritus		X
Jeff		Smith	Director Emeritus		X

A = Attended X = Absent

Also in Attendance: John Simanton, John DeRoo, Dawn Holmberg, Val Hoski, Dave Baniewicz, Dan Meyer, Carl Jensen, John Fiorilla, Edward Itchon, Elizabeth Guentzler, Bob Brewater, Richard Shulby, Bob Leslie, Regan Rickson, Ken Eddy, Victor Varney, Rich Harrington, Cora Sowa.

John Goodman made a motion to accept the minutes as emailed, seconded by Scott Andes. The motion passed.

VACANCIES

President White advised that Assistant Secretary and Director Carol Ann Cornelius has resigned due to illness. Vice President Frank Cornelius has also resigned to care for her.

Jon Baake has agreed to fill the position of Director in her absence. President White asked for a vote, and it passed.

Joe Maloney agreed to assume the position of Vice President, the board voted to approve Mr. Maloney as Vice President.

FINANCIAL

Due to the absence of Mr. Bitzer, President White advised that there will be no financial report at this meeting, but one will be available at the next meeting.

He also advised that we are in need of an Assistant Treasurer. The person needs to have Quick Books knowledge. There is an ad in the newsletter. If you know of anyone in your chapters, please let him know. Kevin Feeney stated that if we have to hire a bookkeeper/agency it will be very expensive. They are paid approximately \$110 per hour and \$175 to prepare a statement. Some discussion followed. John Fiorilla advised that he will contact Bowers to see if they can recommend someone.

FUND

Bob Ernst advised that the Fund is in good shape. A report has been sent to the officers. Money has been transferred to Heritage Grants for payment of grants.

GENERAL COUNSEL

John Fiorilla reported that he has sent a letter advising RKL that we have engaged Bowers & Company to audit our consolidated accounts for 12/31/22 and would also like the prior years work papers. He requested that they allow Bowers & Company to copy any necessary files that they may need. Around the same time Bob Bitzer received an email from RKL advising that they would no longer be our auditors.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

A draft of the revised Conflict of Interest Policy was sent to all board members. The new document removed the limit on reimbursement. A motion was made by Kevin Feeney to accept the new document as reflected in the draft, seconded by John Goodman. Motion passed.

Ellen Scott advised she would send the revised policy to Elizabeth Guenzler to send to the Advisory Council members and she would send to all the board and committee chairs. All signed signature pages should be returned to her.

CONVENTIONS

All information regarding the convention was given at the Advisory Council meeting this morning. The 2024 convention will be in Harrisburg, PA. Looking into trips at East Broad Top and the Blue Mountain and Reading.

CONFERENCES

Twenty-three people have signed up for Sparks. There will be a full BOD meeting in Sparks. There was some discussion regarding the issues of finding chapters to sponsor conferences. There has been discussion regarding the NRHS assisting with the costs for these meeting. The Executive Committee or officers may have to meet to discuss this option. Another idea is to hold the meetings at an airport hotel similar to Philadelphia or BWI. The airport/hotels also have rail opportunities nearby.

REPORTS

Advisory Council- Chairman Richard Shulby reported that the Council has two items for the board:

1. They are requesting additional funds and a person to assist the editor of the film project. They want to be able to put the film library to use for the membership.
2. Chapter Engagement Committee – They have an update. By using the current chapter listing that is on the web, they have contacted 73-chapter representatives. The information was sent to Dawn for updating the web.

Mike Yuhas asked if NEON should be updated with the chapter information. The committee is also finding that many of the Chapter Officers and National Reps are not National members. They will try to current this by contacting those involved.

CONVENTION

A question was asked when the hotel reservations and convention link would be online. John Goodman advised that it will be May 15. Part of the delay is Brightline and when the opening will be. The deposits for the hotel have been made.

See Addendum 1 for the current schedule of events as stated at the earlier meeting.

NRHS NEWS

Val Hoski wanted to thank Eileen Weber and Elizabeth Guenzler for their assistance. They help in making it happen. We have two formats print and PDF. Al Weber handles the print side (Aloha Printing), Going forward we need to document the process, so we have it for future reference. The March issue is in the mail. April and June will be PDFs and there is no May.

President White advised that all reports will be online shortly.

ATTRACTIONS

Wes Ross reported that we currently have 150 attractions, and we are getting more every day. 9000 brochures have been sent to participants. There have been 8000 requests for brochures in new areas. He hopes to have the list out by mid-May and on the website.

PHOTO NEGATIVES

Joe Maloney reported we still have the Alco glass plate negatives and need to do something with them. John Fiorilla advised he has connected with someone in Schenectady who will work with us on this project. They will talk to the person currently doing the work and try to get a meeting together.

HISTORIC PLAQUE COMMITTEE

Walter Zullig reported that the committee is not active at this time. Contact him if you know someone who should have a plaque.

INSPECTOR GENERAL

Walter Zullig reported he heard from a Pennsylvania short line that is alleging that NRHS members/chapters are giving permission for photo ops. This is an ongoing problem, and they are claiming that the NRHS is giving them permission.

OTHER BUSINESS

John Goodman asked John Fiorilla about the convention insurance. John Fiorilla advised that he need the information in writing for insurance.

Cora Sowa advised she is having a problem with her registration for Sparks. She asked who she should contact out there.

All reports for this meeting are attached to the end of the minutes as Addendums.

There being no further business, Kevin Feeney made a motion to adjourn, seconded by John Goodman.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Scott

Ellen Scott
National Secretary

Addendum 1
Convention Schedule

John Goodman reported that the Fort Lauderdale convention, will be held September 1-6. The hotel is the Doubletree at Deerfield Beach. \$129 per night which is good two days before and two days after. Registration will open at 4:00; Elizabeth is leading the registration. There will be a seminar that evening.

September 2 is meeting day with Advisory Council (8:30 to 11:30), Board (1:00 to 3:00) and Membership (3:30) meetings. There will be a seminar that evening.

September 3, Sunday, is a trip on Brightline from Miami to (hopefully) Orlando. Boxed lunch will be available and return to hotel is planned for 6:00.

September 4, Monday (Labor Day), the buses will leave at 8:00 and go to Clewiston for U.S. Sugar steam trip to Lake Placid. U.S. Sugar 4-6-2 148 will be on rear and diesel on the front going up and there will be a run-by. Everyone is on their own for lunch. There will be two run-bys with 148 leading on the return to Clewiston. 1 hour 40 minutes back to hotel. Probably no seminar this day.

September 5, Tuesday, Henry Flagler home and museum tour, including rail car. Banquet that evening, 6:00 cocktails, 7:00 dinner and 8:00 guest speaker.

September 6, Wednesday, trip on Tri-Rail to Mangonia. Bus to Mangonia, ride from Mangonia to Miami. Large deli for lunch. Re-board and go to Miami Airport station where buses take us to Gold Coast Railroad Museum, home of the Ferdinand Magellan presidential car, two steam engines, amusement park train and SW1500 and coach train ride.

Addendum 2
Membership Committee Report
by Patti Webb
March 9, 2023

First and foremost, the Membership Committee extends its heartfelt appreciation to Hugh Harris for his many years as the NRHS Membership Chairman. His dedication to our number-one asset, the NRHS members, has been top-notch. Hugh was assisted by dedicated volunteer, Mary Birdsell. Thank you, Hugh and Mary, for blazing the trail for our committee in keeping our membership records straight.

As of October 2022, the NRHS Membership Committee has a new Chairperson, a new membership team, a new membership renewal process and a new membership card format (which has involved selecting a new printing company). Our membership database, Neon CRM, is not new however the Membership Committee has discovered many hidden treasures!

One of the major changes the members may have noticed is our push to renew NRHS membership online and communicate by email. The goal of the Membership Committee is to make the online renewal process as transparent and user-friendly as possible. No paper, no envelope, and no postage cost! While we have experienced some unique glitches, the Membership Committee counts the overwhelming response to online renewals as a victory! We are making great progress in bringing the NRHS membership into the virtual/electronic age!

There has been a flurry of behind-the-scenes activity by the Membership Committee to unwrap the full potential of Neon CRM. A few notable treasures are: Capability to accommodate multiple address for our “snowbird” members; automatically-generated emails to acknowledge membership renewal; automatically-generated emails to acknowledge donations; and recurring membership renewals and donations.

Members have access to two important resources right now:

- The NRHS online member portal, at <https://nrhs.app.neoncrm.com>. Log in with your username or email to confirm or renew your membership, donate to NRHS, update your contact information, and more.

- membership@nrhs.com. Write to us to provide an email address for your account, a seasonal mailing address, or to ask specific questions. We love hearing from you!

You can expect in the coming months and in 2024:

A few chapters still prefer to submit NRHS renewals for their members. The Membership Committee is in the process of developing a universal spreadsheet form for use by chapters which submit checks to the NRHS on behalf of their members for payment of their national dues. As noted at the beginning of this article, the Membership Committee encourages online membership renewal whenever possible. We do, however, understand that not all members wish to be part of our virtual/electronic membership renewal transformation.

Look for the capability to download a virtual membership card for 2024 membership renewals. The Membership Committee has been kicking around a few ideas to make the membership cards available to the members in an expeditious fashion by allowing a member to download their own membership card. More exciting news to follow on this project – stay tuned!

Last but certainly not least, the Membership Committee deserves a great deal of praise and gratitude for their dedication and hard work. We, as a committee, have made great strides in the overall renewal experience for our members. The list of these amazing volunteers are Mike Yuhas, Tony White, Becky Gerstung and Steve Siegerist. A special thank you to the Membership Committee for your commitment, knowledge and tenacity.

Your membership keeps the NRHS on track for the future!

Patti Webb
NRHS Membership Chairperson

Addendum 3

RailCamp Report March Meeting

Thank you to Dawn for getting the application posted January 1st. Unfortunately, we had to change the dates for both East and Northwest camps. Dawn, again thanks for posting the new dates. Applications are coming in from 19 states so far. The usual chapter sponsors have contacted me with candidates. All of our partners are onboard and ready to have us visit. It looks like both camps will be full for 2023

Becky Gerstung
RailCamp Program Director

Addendum 4

NRHS Heritage Films Report For March Advisory Council and Board Meeting

Submitted by Marlin Taylor
March 7, 2023

As for the Visual Digital Archival Project/Committee, I point to the launching on the NRHS website in December of the Photo Gallery of slides from the NRHS archives, now containing more than 1,000 images ... which has been promoted in the last two issues of the NRHS News.

Our endeavor continues to suffer from a lack of manpower, with Mitch Dakelman doing a yoeman's job of continuing to plow through the mountains of slides and piles of film reels, where each one requires meticulous attention to detail to meet professional standards. Mitch has the skill and patience to do and deliver this.

Back in 2019, the Society was donated a group of approximately 20 large reels from the Weible Collection ... each reel has required an immense amount of time to prepare them for to actual digital scanning process. So far, more than a dozen have been completed, with only four remaining for Mitch to work through.

Addendum 5

2023 List of Railroad Attractions

By Wesley Ross, Board of Directors, Emeritus; and Shirley Ross

We have been working on the 2023 Edition of the NRHS 2023 List of Railroad Attractions for the last several months. I am going to report to you some interim figures; but the list is still open for several days and attractions keep sending responses.

There are over 150 attractions on the list and those attractions have requested over 8,000 NRHS Brochures for distribution to their guests. This year, there are over 50 new attractions wanting brochures, indicating to me, that we may be tapping into a new market with our Brochures. Jon Bakke is handling the distribution mailing of the brochures.

We hope to have the 2023 Listing available to members by the middle of May.

We are sorry that we could not submit this report earlier; but unfortunately, we have been without heat and power for the last five days. Thankfully, the power lines were cleared of trees and power was restored last night.

I will be unavailable to attend the Friday night session, as I am presenting a program to the Bluegrass Railroad Club. I am planning on being at the Saturday meeting.

Addendum 6

Film and Photo Library Report

By Mitch Daklemann
Director of Media Services

March 8, 2023

During the last several months, work has progressed on the newly launched NRHS Photo Gallery, which can be accessed through the NRHS website. Without using the NRHS website, if one searches for a railroad subject / photographer / anything that was added to the description of the photo, etc., and we've added it, it will come up on the internet search. As of this writing, approximately 1050 images have been added. The subjects include traction, steam, diesel and electric power, trains and roster shots, equipment, and facilities including stations. The photos are scanned randomly by subject and format. It's also been an education for me as many subjects need to be researched. New scanning equipment will be acquired shortly.

We also received several slide collection donations, mainly from Robert J. Yanosey, President, Morning Sun Books, and Steve Timko, a well-known author who resides in western Pennsylvania. We thank them for thinking of us. Many collections get sold or discarded. We try to preserve what we receive. We also received an email from an individual regarding the donation of photographic material. In as much I replied to his email and specified the process, this information should be added to the web site.

As my colleague Marlin Taylor wrote in his report, a number of lengthy 16mm reels filmed by the late Walter Weible of Michigan, were donated, along with his VHS tapes, are in the process of being digitized. The transfer of 16mm films is sent to Spracklen Film and Video, in Texas, the same firm that digitized THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, presented at the convention several years ago, in Salt Lake City.

There are several other film collections to be worked on: George Meyer, Don Ball and Neil Moran.

With the addition of these collections, a number of storage racks will be required to be installed at our film/photo archive in Phillipsburg, NJ. I also make a suggestion that we make a monetary donation to the Friends of the Transportation Museum of New Jersey, who owns and maintains the former CRNJ/DL&W station on Main Street. While they do not charge us to store our archives, we made one donation shortly we moved the collection there in 2008. Aaron Coleman, a businessman from Phillipsburg, has spent a lot of his own time and money working to renovate the station. Occasionally, I have invited researchers to the station, to do their photographic research. Discussions with Aaron, suggest that transportation related programs can be made there when that work is completed.

Respectively submitted
Mitch Dakelman
Director of Media Services

Addendum 7

NRHS Heritage Grants Committee Report, March 1, 2023

- Grant Application acceptance period closed on 1/31/2023.
- 50 Grant Applications received requesting in excess of \$300,000.
- Applications distributed to the committee via Drop Box. George Hickok is our Registrar. He receives the applications sent via the NRHS Website. He compiles them and checks each group's nonprofit status with the IRS website. He then loads them to Drop Box granting access to each committee member.
- Committee members have downloaded the applications and are in the process of reviewing each application.
- Next meeting via ZOOM is scheduled for March 13, 2023.
- Prior to the next meeting committee members are to have developed their own list of "Top 20" applicants and be prepared to defend their list. In the past there have been remarkable similarities on each member's "Top 20" list.
- Our self-determined (or inflicted) goal is to have our finalist list ready for President White's review on or about April 1, 2023 (not an April Fool either!)
- As stated previously our committee's objective is to review and complete a list of finalists promptly in order to have the grant money in the hands of the successful applicant prior to the late spring and summer months when the most work can be accomplished.
- While working through the process the committee members have noted some areas where further streamlining can be accomplished. These ideas / suggestions will be discussed during our after-action review (AAR) expected to be scheduled over the summer.
- Each applicant is responsible to provide updates of their project's status periodically and also to complete a final report. This final report is then used to author an article for the NRHS News. We believe that by showcasing the success of our Heritage Grant recipients we will encourage additional donations the NRHS Heritage Grants Program, encourage more applicants and to provide national and international exposure to the work of the recipients.
- Recipients are tracked by the committee in order to confirm compliance with the terms and conditions of the NRHS Heritage Grants program.

The following are currently serving on the NRHS Heritage Grants Committee:

Ed Berntsen

Robert Brewster

Rick Davidson

Larry Dyer

George Hickok, Registrar

Carl Jensen

Patrick Molloy

Doug Scott

Walter Zullig, Counsel
Patti Webb, Executive Assistant
Charlie Webb, Chair