Plenary Session
NRHS Spring 2026 Meeting
May 30, 2026
Minutes Approved September 21,2026

See Addendum 1 for list of attendees.

President Tony White called the meeting to order at 9:05AM. He then requested moment of silence for those members no longer with us.

Safety Briefing – Larry Pearlman gave directions to the exits; an AED is available at the front desk; in case of an evacuation everyone will follow him.

Convention – Mike Yuhas. See Appendix #1 for report. Mike reported that we had a great convention in Michigan. Our Fall Convention will be in Cleveland Ohio the end of September. Currently looking at a few hotels. We have no contracts yet. We will be visiting the Age of Steam Museum. It was decided that there was not enough to do in the Cincinnati area to go there. The dates are September 20-25. We will have 4 active days and one meeting day. Registration will begin on 9/20. The Friday trip will have limited attendance.

Conference – Bob Bitzer. Locations are not forthcoming from the chapters. There is nothing scheduled so far for next year.

Grants – Charlie Webb. See Appendix #2. Charlie advised that $187,000 was given in grants this year. He then thanked all committee members for their work.

Film Preservation – Mitch Dakelman, Tony White. They have received 5 or 6 donations so far this year. Mostly timetables, books, etc. There are approximately 44,150 stills on the web.

Membership – Mike Yuhas. They now have a new terminal for credit card payments.

Brochures – Jon Baake. Jon received 3-4 requests at the conference. He has more at home waiting to be mailed.

RailCamp – Becky Gerstung. See Appendix 3. The current fee is $1575. Chapters get a $575 discount.

Historic Preservation – Mike Yuhas. See Appendix 4. Railway Age is the sponsor this year.

2027 Convention – Mike Yuhas. The convention will be held in Baltimore as they will be celebrating 200 years of the B&O railroad. The Washington, Baltimore and DC chapters will be assisting. Contact convention@nrhs.com. In 2027, Bart Jennings will be part of the convention committee.

Inspector General – Walter Zullig. See Appendix 5.

Historic Plaques – Walter Zullig. See Appendix 6. He is currently reviewing applications from the Roanoke Chapter, Susquehanna Chapter, and the Williams Grove Historical Association. Contact Walter if interested in joining the committee.

Rail Attractions – Wes and Shirley Ross. See Appendix 7. He is sending the final draft to Val for publication. They have two new additions to the list. They are also having issues with the post office.

Chapter Development – Skip Waters. He has had a few inquiries but nothing to follow up on. Wichita Valley continues to be active, but Hub City is a banner chapter. They are very active in the community.

Finance – Bob Bitzer, Ward Wells, Kevin Feeney. Ward gave an overview of the reports. More details will be given at the Board of Directors meeting.

NRHS Fund – Bob Ernst. See Appendix 8. There was no additional information given.

Announcements – The banquet will be held at 6:00PM. The room is next door to the one we are in.

There being no further reports to be given, this session was adjourned at 10:25AM.

APPENDIX 1

CONVENTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Convention Committee Report

To: NRHS Advisory Council and NRHS Board of Directors
From: Mike Yuhas
Subj: Report of the NRHS Convention Committee
Date: May, 2026

By nearly every measure, the 2025 NRHS Convention, headquartered at East Lansing, Michigan, was a huge success.

The 2026 convention, to be held around Cleveland, Ohio, in September, is shaping up to be another memorable event. Hotel details and day trip itineraries are still being finalized.

Full information will be shared with all NRHS members after the contracts are signed. In the meantime, this is a tentative outline of the convention structure:

The convention welcome center will open on the afternoon of Sunday, September 20. NRHS Advisory Council, Board of Directors, and Annual meetings will be held on Monday, September 21, followed by a gala opening reception that evening. The next four days feature trips to railroad-related sites around Cleveland – including some venues where public access is limited or unavailable.

Ideas and questions are solicited: myuhas@nrhs.com.

Steel whispers call where autumn glows,
In northern Ohio, where memory flows.
Historians, dreamers, enthusiasts meet—
Where past and present rhythmically greet.
Beyond the gates, where few may tread,
Through yards and shops where legends spread,
Come share the rails, the lore, the thrill—
A gathering of hearts that time can't still.

APPENDIX 2

HERITAGE GRANTS COMMITTEE

NRHS Heritage Grants Committee, report for spring, 2026 Conference.

1. 2026 Program deadline was January 31, 2026
2. Committee received, collated and responded to 46 applicants.
3. Applications are under review by the committee.
4. Total requested $334,168.
5. Total budgeted $175,000

There is an incredible and urgent need for railroad historical preservation funding. to beat the rust….

Our committee members are in the process of reviewing the applications. Awardees expected to be announced at the spring BOD meeting.

Committee members:

- Joe Maloney
- Bob Brewster
- Val Hoski
- Kevin Feeney
- Walter Zullig
- Patti Webb
- Patrick Malloy
- Charlie Webb

APPENDIX 3

RAILCAMP

RailCamp Report

RailCamp at both locations has not happened yet. I can tell you that we are ready with full schedules for both camps. This year we have 36 campers from 15 states and one young man from England. Scholarships and financial assistance have been awarded to 18 of these boys. No girls applied this year.

I am happy to report that starting this year Chapters wishing to sponsor a camper received a $575.00 discount in tuition. Money donated with dues renewals and from individuals is paying the difference.

We have a need for counselors, support staff and directors to keep this popular and very successful program going strong. I have information on the responsibilities and qualifications. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Becky

APPENDIX 4

NRHS PRESERVATION AWARD COMMITTEE

To: NRHS Advisory Committee and NRHS Board of Directors
From: Mike Yuhas
Subj: Report of the NRHS Preservation Award Committee
Date: May 2026

The Outstanding Railroad Historic Preservation Award was conceived as an annual program to recognize a common carrier railroad for its historic preservation efforts. We reasoned that there isn't a compelling business case for railroad companies to invest in preserving their history – and when preservation is undertaken, NRHS should celebrate those accomplishments.

This award honors *only* common carrier railroads that have completed significant preservation projects. Railroad museums, scenic railroads and preservation societies are not eligible for this award, because they are served by the long-running NRHS Heritage Grants program.

The 2026 award will be presented in a brief ceremony at the Railway Interchange trade show in Omaha on June 3. The honoree will be publicized immediately thereafter. Although Railway Age Editor William Vanutono is retiring at the end of the year, we have been assured that the magazine will continue partnering with us on this important NRHS initiative. Railway Track & Structures, however, has stepped back.

In addition to Bill Vantuono, NRHS members R. Victor Varney, Edward M. Berntsen, Larry Pearlman, Tony White, and Mike Yuhas comprise the preservation award committee. We gratefully acknowledge the support of Dawn Holmberg for help in publishing the nomination forms on our website, and the enthusiasm of NRHS members who submitted nominations.

Previous honorees
2023 – Iowa Traction Railway, in recognition of their daily use of century-old electric locomotives and infrastructure
2024 – Union Pacific Railroad, recognizing the railroad's preservation and operation of historic steam and diesel locomotives to promote the railroad's heritage
2025 – Reading & Northern, honoring their use of steam engines and other historic equipment for public excursions
Ideas and questions may be directed to myuhas@nrhs.com.

APPENDIX 5

REPORT OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Chair of the Heritage Grants Committee sought the IG's assistance regarding a $4000 grant that had been awarded to the LI Sunrise Trail Chapter for restoration work on a former Boston & Maine "American Flyer" pre-war lightweight coach.

Although the Chapter members had done some work on the coach, the project work had stopped because some of the members had moved out of the area. After discussions, we learned that about $2000 worth of work had been carried out so asked for return of the remaining $2000. The Chapter leadership agreed and the money was returned to NRHS.

This was the only function carried out by the IG since the last Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter E. Zullig Jr.
Inspector General

APPENDIX 6

REPORT OF HISTORIC PLAQUE COMMITTEE—May 2026

Although no new plaques have been dedicated since the last Board of Directors meeting, the Committee has been working with sponsors interested in obtaining NRHS plaques.
As in the past, several organizations lost interest after the process and costs involved were explained to them. At present we have three “live” candidates:

(1) The Roanoke Chapter is considering a plaque for the former Virginian Railway station in Roanoke.
(2) The Susquehanna Valley Chapter is considering a plaque for the former Lackawanna Railroad passenger station in Binghamton, NY.
(3) The Williams Grove Historical Association in Mechanicsburg, PA, is interested in a plaque to observe the 125th anniversary of their former PRR B4a (0-6-0) locomotive which is operational. They are considering the station building or engine house as potential plaque sites.

Feel free to get in touch with me if you have any thoughts about these three proposals or are aware of any other potential candidates for NRHS Plaques.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter E. Zullig Jr.
Chair, Historic Plaque Committee

APPENDIX 7

REPORT TO THE ADIVSORY COUNCIL AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS, NRHS

By Shirley C. Ross and Wesley F. Ross, NRHS Board of Directors, Emeritus

The 2026 Edition of the ***Directory of Rail Attractions for NRHS*** **Members** has been completed and sent in for publication. This marks the 26thyear that Shirley and I have produced this document. The Directory, this year, contains over 155 attractions, located in 43 states. The list began as a Discount List for NRHS members, but the Board of Directors decided to allow the listing of an attraction, whether or not they offered NRHS Members a discount. This year, over 60% of the attractions, are either free museums or offer a discount to NRHS Members. By listing all attractions that respond to our letter, offers the benefit of letting our members know that there are railroad attractions out there, that they might not be aware of, plus the opportunity to distribute more Brochures.

Six years ago, we began asking attractions if they would display our NRHS Brochure. If they responded positively, Jon Bakke would send them the number that they desired. Over the 6-year period, the Society has more than doubled the number of Brochures sent out. This year, 84 of the attractions asked for over 7,000 brochures. Many of the attractions that did not order Brochures, this year, had ordered a large-number last year.

APPENDIX 8

NRHS Fund Report – 2026 Spring Conference

May 30, 2026

Trustees and Officers
Bob Ernst, President,
R Victor Varney, Vice Pres.
Wes Ross
Jeff Smith
Mike Walker
Bob Bitzer
Charles Webb
(Non-voting)
John Fiorilla, Secretary & General Counsel
Christopher Buckley, Comptroller

The NRHS Fund Trustees have been meeting quarterly. The last meeting of the NRHS Fund Board was held via Zoom on Friday, April 24, 2026. The next meeting the NRHS Fund Board will be held as Zoom meeting on July 24, 2026.

As of May 8, 2026, the Wells Fargo Advisors investment portfolio was valued at $1,474,157. The Wells Fargo Checking account was $73,017.

Year to date as of May 8, 2026, the investment account has produced 4.21% investment growth. Since inception in March 2020 the account has produced a growth of 9.94%.

The NRHS Fund is anticipating two transfers to the NRHS within the next three months. Approximately $157,000 for the 2026 Heritage Grants program and $13,000 for the RailCamp program.
The NRHS Fund has a new Comptroller, Christopher Buckely. He takes over from Kevin Feeney.

The NRHS Fund has not received any major donations in 2026.

Information for the 2025 audit will be supplied to Bowers when requested by the auditors.

The NRHS Fund is seeking in coordination with the NRHS a person that can approach Foundations, Trusts and Railroads for grants.

Respectfully,
Robert Ernst

APPENDIX 9

Current status for the 2026 News issues:

- February, March, and April: Completed and delivered.
- May: Currently underway and will be distributed as a PDF.
- June: We will produce the annual Members Rail Attractions Guide. Wes and Shirley are writing it, and the news team will handle the review and PDF production.
- July: This issue will cover the Spring Conference and provide an update on the upcoming 2026 election. It will also likely be a PDF.

Four more issues are estimated from August to December for a total of nine issues in 2026.

Members and Guests
Attendance

John Wright	NC Railway Museum
Doug Scott	Cape Cod Chapter
Jon Baake	Washington DC
Ted Itchon	Promontory Chapter
Jim Perry	Washington DC
Cliff Kierstead	St. Louis
Mike Yuhas	Wisconsin
Ken Eddy	Arkansas-Boston Mountain
Al Weber	St. Louis
Mark Reynolds	Portland
David Mimerly	North Texas
Larry Pearlman	At-Large
Elizabeth Guenzler	Central Coast
Chris Guenzler	At Large
John Fiorilla	Tri-State
Bob Brewster	Intermountain
Cora Sowa	New York
Skip Waters	North Texas
Doug Scott	Western Connecticut
Robert Ernst	At Large
Daniel Meyer	Northstar
Dawn Holmberg	Northstar
Richard Shulby	Piedmont Carolinas & Baltimore
Stephen Sievert	Promontory
David McGowan	
Mark Reynolds	Portland
Jack Barbier	Northstar

Via Zoom:
Bob Bitzer
Tom Gallagher
Patricia Johnson
Smoke Shaak
Ken Katta
Regan Rickson
Wes Ross

William Welk
Jerry Hardwich
Charlie Webb
Richard King
Ken Mosby
David Foster
Ward Wells
Tom Posatto
Scott Andes