

Draft Minutes of the NRHS Advisory Council

Fall Conference
Johnson City, Tn
Saturday, November 15, 2014

Meeting Called to order by Chairman Scott Andes

Jim Pahriss of host Chapter was introduced and welcomed the group. He gave instructions on how to access the museum and model layout.

Phone attendee Ed Graham

Wes Ross, Smoke Shaak, Joe Maloney are the official Board representatives to the Council.

Motion by Jon Bakke, second by John Sweigert to approve minutes of the Summer meeting in Summerdale, AR. Motion approved.

Al Weber, National President addressed the council. Emphasized that all members of the council and all members of the NRHS are needed to carry the national through present crisis. He emphasized that many items on the agenda are ideas for future discussion. There will have to be many more volunteers due to present crisis. Jon Bakke raised question about dues renewals. There will be a letter requesting renewals and donations mailed. Chapters are being asked to ask their members to renew online. The fulfillment house has not been responsive. F&F owns the DB, in process of obtaining a copy. We do now own and control our email DB. F&F has no access to that DB.

Scott Andes asked status of convention 2015. Al stated that advance reservations are proceeding well. Currently in lull after initial surge. Need to begin actively promoting the convention.

Questions concerning upcoming conferences Winter Conf in Roanoke is a go, Spring Conference is scheduled for 4/16-18 in York, PA. This is a joint conference with ATRRM At the Yorktown Hotel in York.

No report from National Office.

Election of Chair and Secretary of the council. Becky Gerstung motioned that Scott Andes be elected Chairman for 2 year term. There being no other nominations. Selected by acclamation. Jon Bakke motioned Fred Kurtz. Approved by acclamation. Question, if members pay by PayPal will they still get the letter. Yes, they are separate processes. There is a dispute with F&F over the handling of the financial accounting. The current contract is a straight hourly contract. Becky Gerstung stated that AC members must immediately go back to chapters and push them to encourage renewals. Members can be instructed to go online and renew national membership. Dues and donations must be done as separate transactions since donations go to the NRHS Fund. Jon Bakke asked about acknowledgment letters for donations. There will be such letters but a new process is being instituted. There will be approx. monthly updates from National of

members who have renewed.

Volunteers are needed for RailCamp. Bud Thompson restated this request. Volunteers are needed on both coasts to reduce of transportation of staff across country. East Camp 7/5-10, West 8/2-8.

Re-emphasized the need for correct email addresses of the AC members. Skip Waters requests that AC members collect their respective chapter emails and then forward them to him.

Discussion of what portions of the NBM should be implemented tabled for future discussion. Motion to table approved.

The Most Endangered List is in need of a new Chairman and committee members. The MEL was intended as a means of bringing attention to projects of national significance. It was not intended to demean any chapter's previous and current efforts in preservation.

Composition of a Procedure Manual on railway history. Rich Shulby volunteered as a member of such a committee. Suggest that National go ahead with this project.

New membership categories for other organization such as historical groups, museums, companies, etc. would be beneficial. Al Baker, Pacific Northwest, Jon Bakke, Bill Kovacs volunteered as members of such a committee if established.

Grants committee needs a new chair and members. Don Bishop willing to serve. Rick Davison to serve. Becky Gerstung suggested change of timing to award grants earlier in the year.

Bulletin and News format. News is now in PDF format to be distributed electronically. This will allow more regular scheduling and more immediate distribution of news. Charles Williams recommends putting one or two issues of the News on the website to possibly attract new members. Jeff Smith is being re-appointed as Bulletin Editor. It is a positive record of the society. Currently it is a single topic each issue. Publication of the Bulletin has been temporarily suspended. A member of the audience asked if designating the bulletin as a separate cost item may be feasible.

Affiliate membership in Chapters. National owns the name "NRHS". Greg Molloy did, during the open microphone session, state that the National By-Laws and most Chapter By-Laws do require Chapter members to also be National members either through a chapter or a member at large. Chapters may be ill-advised to act in contradiction to these by-laws.

Open microphone:

Sheila Dorr asked if a new membership form is forthcoming. Skip Waters' committee is working on one. Skip is asking chapters to accept single payments of dues and then forward national's portion to national.

Question: Is National bankrupt? Is it going in this direction. There is no intention to declare

bankruptcy. Declaration of bankruptcy would immediately stop all outstanding fund raising efforts. Since the NRHS Fund is a legally separate body those funds are protected. Not for profits cannot be forced into bankruptcy but they can do so voluntarily. Question was asked about what would happen to the convention if bankruptcy should occur. The convention is protected. Wes Ross asked how many know about and use the NRHS discount list. He asked for members to consider making donations to the NRHS Fund designated to the operation of the discount list.

Mark Lazur presented proposal of the Utica & Mohawk Valley Chapter to host the Fall 2015 Conference 10/23 - 25, 2015. This is subject to Board approval. Whether AC will meet if Board approves will be discussed in Roanoke.

There are convention items on sale.

Meeting adjourned at 12:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted;
Fred Kurtz, Advisory Council Secretary