

NRHS Advisory Council
Denver CO Meeting
July 20, 2016

Chairman Scott Andes called the meeting to order at 7:40PM. Secretary Fred Kurtz attended via conference call. Ellen Scott will be taking minutes in his place.

Welcome/Housekeeping-Scott requested that everyone use the microphone before speaking and identifying themselves. It's necessary so the people on the phone can hear, and for the minutes.

Roll Call- Del Kittendorf passed out the attendance sheets. Scott requested that everyone check his/her email address to make sure it is correct.

On the phone- Fred Kurtz, Lancaster; Tim Hensley, CP Huntington; James Badgely, NRHS Fund Board of Trustees; Richard Silverman, Western MD; Frank Fowler, Board of Directors, District 3; Liz Patterson, Bluewater Michigan.

Alternate National Representatives- Mike Bergman representing the Tacoma Chapter.

Discuss and Approve Agenda –The agenda was posted on the Admin Site and is also shown on the screen. John Simon moved that we accept the agenda; seconded by John Baake. Motion was approved.

Directors assigned to meeting – Per the Bylaws it is required for three (3) members of the Board of Directors be assigned to the meeting. Those directors are: Steve Barry, Smoke Shaak, and Jim Pahrís.

Minutes of spring meeting (Cumberland MD) – Minutes were distributed earlier and are also displayed on the screen. Scott asked for any corrections or additions to the minutes. There being none, Carl Jensen moved that we accept the minutes of the Spring Meeting; seconded by Al Baker. The motion was approved.

Report from the Advisory Council Chair– Scott had nothing to report.

Board of Directors Report – Al Weber, NRHS President, thanked everyone for coming. He reported that things are steady. We're in the middle of an election and ballots are coming in. Joe Maloney, NRHS vice president, reported he had a phone conversation with Tom Moss of the Intermountain Chapter. Tom will be undergoing surgery tomorrow to remove a cancerous growth from his cheek. He feels pretty good right now but not sure what the next few days will bring. Tom is 95 years old. Scott stated we would keep him in our thoughts and prayers.

Report from the National Office –_Since there is no longer a National Office, we will remove this placeholder from future agendas.

Nominations for AC Chair and AC Secretary (Election at Fall Conference) – These are 2-year terms and coincide with the incoming Board of Directors. We will be voting at the fall meeting in Portland OR. Del is the chairman of the Nomination Committee assisted by Roberta Ballard. The nominations to date are 2 for Chairperson and 1 for Secretary. If you have any additions please contact Del or Roberta. The nominations so far are: for Chairperson-Scott Andes and Del Kittendorf. The nomination for Secretary is Ellen Scott. Nominations are open up to the last minute.

Old and New Business

Dues renewal status – Skip Waters will report on the 2017 renewal process. On 9/1 a list will be pulled from Amilia and converted to a direct mailing. The mailing should hit by 10/1. Also on 9/1 an email will go out with a link for 2017. He reminded everyone that the email address used in

2016 to sign in to Amilia must be used. You must use this even if your email address has changed. When the mailing arrives, those paid through Amilia will be advised not to pay from the mailing but to keep the membership card. Skip advised that they want as many people as possible to pay via Amilia as this is the most cost effective way for us to process renewals. If necessary, chapters can send an Excel spreadsheet with a check. This is for National dues only. Chapters should note that this method takes longer to process since volunteers do it.

Skip advised that he would be offering all chapters a read-only option to Amilia. He is looking for 1 person per chapter and he/she must have an email address. He was passing around a sign-up sheet. Fred Kurtz (on phone) requested his name be added to the list. If you do not know whom to add, you can email the information at a later date to info@nrhs.com and they will be added.

Membership Brochure – Skip showed a print proof of the updated membership brochure. He advised there is a misspelling that has already been corrected. It's at the printer now but not started. He needs a count before printing starts. The initial run will be 5000. A clipboard is being passed around for a sign up by chapter. He needs a shipping address as well as the number being requested.

John Baake suggested that the brochures be used to try to get affiliate members to join NRHS. They can also be passed out at railroad shows, placed in museums, libraries, or if you run trips, have available to riders.

Cora Sowa questioned how to contact NRHS. Skip explained that John Fiorilla's address is on the form; there is nrhs.com, and Facebook. All the information is there and most people can figure out where to send it. A comment was made to make it easier for people to send directly to NRHS. Discussion followed. Skip advised his committee would take all comments under advisement and work on changes.

Bob Bitzer explained the mail in process used through Wells Fargo and the lock box. Any new procedures going through them will need to have a process set up. This will incur new charges.

RailCamp – Becky Gerstung stated that RailCamp East was completed and West was coming up. We had 24 campers at East and will have 12 at West. All the campers had either full or partial scholarships. She will have the financials at the fall meeting. She then asked Ellen Scott, a first time counselor, to speak about her experience. Carl Jensen reported that the focus of RailCamp has shifted in some ways. The committee feels that RailCamp is an educational experience. We need input from the members on how to handle this. Becky reported that an article about RailCamp East has been sent in. Also the dates for applications are changing. Chapters need to keep this in mind if planning to sponsor a camper.

Liz Patterson reported that the Bluewater Chapter had sponsored a camper. They received a letter from him saying "RailCamp was mind blowing" and the last phrase was "All I can really say is THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart".

Some one asked what is the new deadline schedule and fees for 2017. Becky advised that fees can't be figured out until we get all the bills and talk to our partners about next year. Plus we were hit with an insurance bill that doubled this year. She hopes the application will be online by January 1 but will make sure the information about fees and deadlines is out before then.

John Fiorilla explained about the insurance fees and getting a quote. Also, the accident didn't help matters any. He's hoping to have a new agent for next year.

A question was raised about a video of RailCamp to show to the different chapters. Becky advised there is no shortage of photos and can probably work something out.

NRHS Fund – President Al Weber reported that the Fund now has a new president and trustees. The fund is there to protect our assets. He expects them to do some fundraising in the future.

Railroad History Procedure Manual – Richard Shelby was not present or on the phone. Del suggested we table this until the Portland Meeting.

Affiliate Membership & Bylaws Proposals – Scott asked Bob Ernst to take the microphone to discuss both these items.

The motion to create an Organizational Member category to be called an “Affiliated Group” was posted on the Admin Site and is displayed on the screen in the meeting room. This is basically setting up a flat fee for an organizational much as museums, non-profits, corporations, etc. This is not a bylaw change so can go into effect immediately. Need to decide whether to have one fee for non-profits and one for a for-profit. Still need to get the procedures in place to accept this type of membership. Jim Hensley asked what is the flat fee? Bob replied 5 times the current membership rate. We’ll have to see if the board wants to go with a flat fee or a tiered fee. Carl questioned that this doesn’t take into consideration of chapters having non-NRHS members. Bob answered that this has nothing to do with that.

Jim Hensley replied that we need to deal with chapter members who don’t want to join NRHS. CP Huntington is having a big problem with this. Bob replied that this is a big problem. Bob stated that this is a start to this type of membership. We need to determine if it works or if it is needed. Then can determine how to charge fees or even keep this type of membership. At this time just want to keep it simple. We still have to address how the back office work will be done.

Chapter definition-It was decided to leave this as is for now. We need to determine how to proceed. There was discussion as to all members of a chapter being members or NRHS, then just have officers be members. There are many different opinions on this issue. The committee is looking for guidance from both the Advisory Council and the Board of Directors. The new Bylaws dropped a lot of this information. Discussion followed regarding definition and handling at the local level.

Before moving on, Scott had two announcements:

1. Eileen has advised that the Silent Auction winners of the cab rides have been posted outside the Registration Room. Please check if you are a winner to make sure of the time of your ride.
2. Refreshments are in the back of the room. Please avail yourself of them.

Members who don’t use email or web – Ron Gawedzinski questioned what are we doing with this item. It’s been around for some time and needs resolution. Skip Waters replied that it is very costly to mail. Local chapters should explain to members why we need to use email in place of mail. They will receive more information from NRHS if they use email.

NRHS member Open Microphone – Skip Waters thanked everyone for signing up for Amelia. There are several sign ups with no email listed. For access, he needs email addresses.

Carl Jensen – The board was presented with a financial report saying finances are OK. Never received any numbers. President Al Weber advised that there would be numbers at the Board of Directors meeting. Very close to posting last year’s audited financial report. There will be numbers at Friday’s meeting. After audits are all done the 990 and financial statements are on the Admin Site. John Baake said he would like to see the financial statements and have them shared with the Advisory Council. Bob Bitzer replied that the structure of distribution of quarterly financial statements is after the board approves them. These are un-audited reports.

Ron Gawedzinski, St. Louis Chapter – Thanked Bob and team for all the work they have done. However the last report he has been able to find is from 2013. He can’t find the report for 2015. Al Weber asked if someone could check the Admin Site to make sure it is there. It was reported that 2014 is on the site.

President Al Weber again thanked everyone for coming. He also asked that everyone please avail themselves to the refreshments.

Sheila Dorr – Chapters are trying to get members to use email. However there are members that do not use email and don't wish to.

Fred Kurtz – was humbled by the number of people who said they would keep him in their prayers when he told everyone about his medical problems. He appreciates it as he feels this has been beneficial in helping him. He's still not out of the woods. He's been through a bunch of tests and still has more to go. He appreciates everyone's support.

Tim Hensley – At the Cumberland meeting the Bylaws Committee suggested a reduction in the number of board members. John Baake replied that no changes are being made to the make up of the board.

Feedback to the Board from the Advisory Council – 3 items

1. Financial transparency – quarterly financial reports be made available to the Advisory Council
2. Re-working the brochure
3. Affiliate groups

Upcoming Conference – Al Baker, Pacific Northwest Chapter. The fall conference will be in Portland OR, October 14-15, 2016. He won't go into detail since it will be discussed at the Friday meeting. He has a two-sided information sheet with details that he can provide. He also has sign up sheets. All forms are also available on the Admin Site. Bob Bitzer is currently working on the spring and fall 2017 conferences. The 2017 Convention will be in Nashville TN. The dates look like 6/9-12. Doug Scott of the Cape Cod Chapter is working on the fall 2017 conference. It would probably be the last weekend in October. He is asking for first refusal for that conference.

Skip Waters reported on the June 2017 Convention in Nashville TN. We need to make a decision on the hotels. The committee has looked at 2 properties. One is the Sheraton. It's a very nice southern hotel. The room rate is \$149. The other hotel is the Holiday Inn Airport. That room rate is \$129. Nashville is a year round travel location. The Sheraton will give us 4 buses for 4 hours. The Holiday Inn has a free shuttle to and from the airport plus a shuttle to Opryland.

John Goodman added that there are no meals included at either hotel. The Sheraton dates would be June 28-7/1 and the Holiday Inn is 6/20-6/24. He has been asked to look into 4-day conventions. The Sheraton has no walkable restaurants but has in house dining for all 3 meals. The Holiday Inn has a walkable Waffle House and also serves breakfast and lunch. They are set up similar to this Holiday Inn. You probably need a car for both locations. They did look into the Inn at Opryland. They charged \$30 for the shuttle and much more for the rooms. The Tennessee Central and the Nashville & Eastern will be providing excursions over a total of 108 miles. All excursions are all day. John Baake questioned why change to a 4-day convention. If travelling to a location he'd rather see 5 days. Becky advised that the Sheraton dates correspond to the RailCamp dates this year. Several people wouldn't be able to attend the convention if those dates correspond with the 2017 RailCamp dates. Skip noted that this is a lot to bring to the board. Please talk to your board members if you have a strong opinion.

Announcements

On 8/22 the Inland Northwest Rail Museum will be opening. It will be open weekends until the end of October.

Make sure you sign in. Sheets are at the front of the room.

There being no further business Scott Andres asked for a motion to adjourn. Becky Gerstung moved that we adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Simonton. The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40PM.

Respectively submitted,

Ellen Scott
Acting Secretary