



**Northeastern Region, NMRA**  
**BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**  
**11/08/2020**

Meeting conducted over Internet via Zoom.

**Attending:** John Doehring, NER President; Bob Dennis, NER Vice President; Jeff Paston, Secretary; Roger Oliver, NER Treasurer; Ed O'Rourke, Western Director; Greg Williams, Eastern Canada; Chris Carfaro, Green Mountain and Coupler editor; Tage Erickson, Seacoast; Scott Russell, Metro-North; Chuck Diljak, Garden State; Dennis DeAngelis, Sunrise Trail; James Van Bokkelen, Hub; Jeff Hanke, Nutmeg; Bob Verkuyl, Central New York; Irwin Nathanson, Hudson-Berkshire; Joe Lecaroz, Hudson Valley; David Durr, Lakeshores; Robert Peterson, Southern Tier; Mike Bowler, Membership Chair; David Abrames, NER Webmaster; Al Oneto, Op Sig Coordinator; David Insley, Convention Chair; Gerry Covino, Convention Registrar & Treasurer.

**Not present:** Kevin Katta, Southern Director; Larry Cannon, Northern Director; Barbara Hoblit, Eastern Director; Sue Osberg, Little Rhody; Kaylee Zheng, Nutmeg.

Meeting called to order at 7:35 pm EST by President Doehring.

**APPROVAL of PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Cannot locate copy of 8/16/20 minutes. Jeff will transcribe and send them to BOD.

**TREASURER's REPORT:** Roger reported that the BOD voted to reduce the dues reimbursement to the divisions several meetings back. Of the total amount received from National \$987.50 was paid out to the divisions, and \$364.50 (27%) was retained by the region. Also received \$208.55 donations for NERx.

Roger noted that Coupler is pretty much self-sustaining. With less concern about convention, Region income is more dependable right now. Roger noted he needs to focus on getting corporate funding from such places as Amazon, eBay, etc.

# Northeastern Region Treasurer's Report

Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 Budget - Current Status of Accounts

6-Nov-20

REVENUES	Budgeted	Actual	% ±	YTD
Coupler Subscriptions	7500.00	2209.13	29%	Coupler Fund 2,354.53
Coupler Sponsorship	325.00	0.00	0%	
NMRA Dues Rebates	2190.00	987.50	45%	\$30.00 held for Allouettes
NMRA Dues Rebate AP 27%	810.00	364.50	45%	
NER Board Designated Reserve	1247.00	1247.00	100%	
Convention Distribution Share	0.00	0.00	0%	
Donations	0.00	208.55	0%	Held in PayPal Account
Prepaid expense (GoGeek)	593.40	296.70	50%	Prorated 3 year subscription
Interest Income	0.00	0.00	0%	
Other - Spate Award funds	75.00	0.00	0%	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>12740.40</b>	<b>5313.38</b>	<b>42%</b>	

EXPENSES	Budgeted	Actual	% ±	YTD
Coupler	8000.00	400.00	5%	
NMRA Dues Rebates	3000.00	987.50	33%	
Achievement Program	750.00	0.00	0%	
Director Name Tags	0.00	0.00	0%	
Office Expenses	100.00	0.00	34%	
NJ Business Registration	30.00	0.00	0%	
<b>Communication Expenses</b>			0%	
Constant Contact	400.00	0.00	0%	
GoGeek Hosting	880.74	296.70	34%	Prorated 3 year subscription
Annual IP Reg. Fee <sup>1</sup>	121.65	0.00	0%	
Joomla Tools (annual)	200.00	0.00	0%	
SG Site Scanner [included below]	19.80	0.00	0%	
Dedicated IP address fee	54.00	0.00	0%	
Other -	0.00	0.00	0%	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>11692.15</b>	<b>1684.20</b>	<b>14%</b>	

TD Bank Checkbook Balance	\$	5431.47
TD Convention Account Balance	\$	3821.78
NER Board Designated Reserve Fund	\$	56536.29
PayPal Account	\$	5173.43 includes \$208.55 NER Donations

Operating Fund Balances	
General Fund	2682.44
Coupler Fund	2354.53
NMRA Rebate Fund	30.00
	<b>5066.97</b>

NER Board Designated Reserve Fund		
	10/30/2020	~ %
Invested Gen'l Operating Fund	97.7%	55143.02
Life Member Equity Fund	0.0%	74.00
Spate Award	2.3%	1319.27
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>56536.29</b>

<sup>5</sup>\$30.00 held for Allouette Division

**David Durr moved to accept, DeAngelis seconded. Carried.**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** Priority on virtual convention.

**CONVENTION COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Dave Insley reported NERx will be Dec. 1-4 and will be mixture of video layout tours and clinics. The virtual contest has openings for entries. Committee is seeking video layout tours. NERx is in good shape for clinics. John Doehring noted that members can seek help from James VanBokkelen or Pete Watson to help take videos. Bob Peterson said Southern Tier will submit photo PowerPoint presentation. Tage Erickson said he has video of Victor Hand's layout (in Bar

Harbor, ME). Dave Insley says Gordy Robinson will collect and configure videos and PowerPoint. Dave Durr said Ned Spiller is working on a layout tour video. John Doehring noted that much of video work can be done with Smart Phone. Dave Insley pointed out that videos and PowerPoints should be 10-15 minute timelines. Irwin Nathanson questioned about hearing back on layouts nominated for presentation.

James Van Bokkelen said he has forwarded two videos and a PowerPoint. Pete Watson is placing videos on a spreadsheet created by him and Gordy Robinson.

**Current Highlights**

1. 2020 Virtual Convention – December 1 – 4 from 6:30pm EST until 10:30pm EST
2. 2021 Convention – Mill City 21 Reset
3. 2022 Convention – Nutmeg – Contract updates for dates
4. 2023 Convention – Sunrise Trail is onboard. Planning on hold.

**2020 – Mill City 2020, Westford MA**

Convention is postponed. New dates will be October 8-11, 2021  
 Hotel Contract addendum is signed, just dates changed  
 Room block was cancelled and all corresponding reservations on the block also cancelled.  
 New room block will be opened one year prior to the event (October 8, 2020)

Refunds or Credits processed as follows

Option	Total	Impact
Option 1 - Full Refund	8	\$24.30*
Option 2 - \$10 Refund	7	\$70.00
Option 3 - \$20 Future Credit	11	\$220.00
Option 4 – Leave as is	20	
No response	5	

Proposal to the BOD would be to pay the impact out of the regional allocation from the 2021 convention proceeds. The \$220.00 for credits in 2022 should not impact Nutmeg potential profits. Proposed to authorize the convention treasurer to make appropriate accounting and disbursement in 2021 and 2022 accounting for the \$94.30 expense for HUB and \$220.00 expense for Nutmeg.

**2020 – Virtual Convention**

Dates and Time: Evenings, 6:30-10:30 Tuesday Dec. 1 through Friday Dec. 4  
 Technology: Working with NMRAX to stream via Facebook/YouTube  
 Activities:

- Clinics – 30-45 minutes
- Layout tours: Video or Live; 15-minute duration
- Contest – Judged
- Awards – AP Awards, Spade, Shoneman, etc to be presented between clinics
- Master Schedule to be divided into 15-minute segments

- Annual Meeting – recommendation to move this to a different time. The team is meeting weekly, alternating weeks with the NMRax team and the clinic lineup is now on the website. The master schedule should be released soon.

**2021 – Mill City 21 – HUB Division**

No updates since last report.

**2022 – Nutmeg - Farmington CT**

No updates since last report

**2023 - Long Island**

No updates since last report

**2024 –** Maybe Seacoast, no confirmation yet.

**2025 Lakeshores**

The Lakeshores Division is looking to host a convention in the Rochester area in 2025.

**NER COUPLER REPORT:**

Chris Carfaro reported that he has received submissions and is pretty much done with next issue. He questioned flexibility on deadline times.

**WEBMASTER REPORT:**

David Abrames said he had to put off working on Website temporarily and is working on issues with mail forwarding on hosting site. He said he fixed Coupler editor forwarding. Now he plans to focus on getting new Website up. John noted there is nothing on existing Website on how to link to NERx. David said he will put info to redirect to convention site. He asked Dave Insley to provide link info. David A. hoped to have first pages up in a week or so.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:** 2021 is an election year. John said that consideration for candidates will have to be started by January BOD meeting.

**INVESTMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. T-Trak project:

John said he is seeking T-Trak module kits to offer NER members so they may take part. He will have a report for the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Spate Award coming up in January.
2. Discussion on whether to have an annual meeting. Checking bylaws to see how membership could be notified to take part.
3. Gerry Covino asked about Barbara Hobblit position. She has stepped down. John asked for **nomination of Gerry Covino for Eastern Director. Ed O'Rourke nominated, David Durr seconded. Carried.**
4. Golden Spike Challenge. John asked to consider another Golden Spike Challenge in 2021. John noted that with 1500 members, he can't understand why we can't gain a hundred Golden Spikes. It was noted that perhaps we should shoot for 75 Golden Spike Awards in 2021, given that it is the 75th Anniversary of the Region.

Bob Dennis noted that elected Southern Area director has not been in attendance at many meetings.

### General comments:

Much discussion on utilizing Zoom style meetings.

Irwin Nathanson relayed his Division's plans to hold virtual meeting, including a number of members who are not computer savvy.

John Doehring suggested "adopting" another division to take part in virtual events of interest. John noted that there is a lot of content and events taking place. Tage Erickson noted some meetings that he has attended virtually. Tage stated that due to pandemic issues and because of the success of Seacoast Division's Virtual Zoom Meeting, the Division is considering changing the interval of events/meetings from once per quarter to possibly every 2 months.

John shared how he is doing dispatching via virtual means to run a layout in Namibia Africa to gain credit for a AP Dispatcher certificate. James Van Bokkelen noted that many families are using Zoom to stay in contact. He said HUB is paying a \$99 license fee for up to 100 participants, but a free account can still offer contact for a core group.

Roger Oliver noted that Region could get a Zoom licensed account to have larger numbers of attendees for virtual meetings. Gerry Covino asked about Region getting its own Zoom account instead of using free account. John noted that Zoom sells a license to an individual, which means that the individual must be in attendance.

### **AREA DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

#### **WESTERN:**

#### POSITIVES

- Most Divisions seem to be meeting either virtually or outdoors in person with some regularity. (See Division reports)
- CNY, Lakeshores and Hudson Berkshire divisions will have layouts represented in the NERx layout tours
- I have attended meeting of CNY, Lakeshores and Hudson Berkshire, both in person and virtually
- I have also participated in virtual meets with the St. Lawrence Division and Western NY Division of the NFR, promoting the convention
- Southern Tier Division was brought into the NER officially by the NMRA board

#### CHALLENGES

- Attempts have been made to bring Cayuga County into the CNY Division. Still a challenge.
- NMRA website still shows Lakeshores as part of NFR.
- Oswego and Jefferson County along Lake Ontario in Northern NY could possibly be brought into CNY Division. There are some "Region 0" members there. These two counties are in the NFR St. Lawrence Division. No progress.
- The issue of Southern Chenango and Delaware Counties being "orphans" was raised in the Coupler article on the Southern Tier Division. It appears there is only one member in Delaware county, a Life Member, over 90 years old
- With upstate NY winter closing in, virtual meetings will be necessary until at least April. Maintaining members interest and participation is challenging

Respectfully submitted, Edward J. O'Rourke, NER West Area Director

### **DIVISION DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

#### **GARDEN STATE:**

#### 1. GSD Board meeting

- a. Two GSD board meetings were held since the last NER board meeting: 8/29 and 10/10
- b. Focus of the meetings were three items:

- i. Future GSD meets
  - ii. NERx
  - iii. GSD Board elections
- 2. Achievement Program
  - a. AP certificates were presented to Alexis Nawotka for the following categories:
    - i. Scenery
    - ii. Civil
    - iii. Electrical
  - b. List of known members working on other certificates.
    - i. Tom Wortmann – Cars
    - ii. Jim Homoki – Civil
    - iii. Mark Moritz – Cars
    - iv. Chuck Diljak – Cars
    - v. Bob Dennis - Scenery
- 3. Membership Events
  - a. Fall meet
    - i. Held on October 24 using FreeConferenceCall.com
    - ii. Agenda:
      - 1. JMRI Operations Pro clinic by Chuck Diljak
      - 2. Bring 'n Brag
      - 3. "Ghosts of Gasoline Alley" clinic by Richard Wehr, from the NMRA Pacific Southwest Region
    - iii. Attendance
      - 1. Better than the summer meet with 35-40 people joining
      - 2. Advertised it in the NER News Constant Contact e-mail and on NMRA and NER Facebook groups in addition to the GSD's *Whistle Post*, Constant Contact, and Facebook page.
      - 3. Participants from New Brunswick, Canada to Northern Virginia
  - b. Winter 2021 meet
    - i. This will be a virtual event
    - ii. Potentially a Make-and-Take clinic
      - 1. Construct a building by ITLA
      - 2. May have multiple M&T sessions, each focused on an activity in the construction of the kit
      - 3. Investigating recording each segment prior to the events

#### **HUDSON-BERKSHIRE:**

##### **Membership Figures and Requirements:**

Currently at about 145 members, a decrease of about 5 members pre-COVID.

##### **Meeting Types, Frequency:**

We normally hold monthly HBD Meetings from January through June, and then from September through November. However, we suspended meetings starting in March due to the pandemic. We held our first M2M (Mask to Mask) meetings in September and October. Both were outside and on both occasions the weather was great and the turn-out worth the effort. In November, we are going to test-drive our first virtual meeting.

Again due to COVID-19, we had to cancel our annual December train show: The Great Train Extravaganza (GTE).

##### **General Financial Status:**

The HBD is in very good financial status. Most of our yearly revenue comes from

the proceeds of the GTE. So this year, due to COVID, these proceeds will be zero. But again due to COVID, our expenses have also been very low.

The HBD prepares an annual budget that is approved by the Board of Directors (President, Vice-President and the two Board Members make up the Board of Directors).

A recent Financial Review has determined that all our financial records are in excellent order.

**Publication Name and Circulation:**

The HBD publishes a monthly newsletter called the **Form 19**, now edited by Mark Sklar and Assistant Editor Bert Pflagl.

The **Form 19** is published both digitally and on paper and is distributed to all HBD members via the media of their choice. We also send a copy to the NER officers, NER Division Officers, and a select group of NMRA National members. We also send a copy to the Editor of **The NER Coupler** with permission to reprint selected articles from **Form 19** therein.

The **Form 19** is also posted on the HBD web site ([www.hudson-berkshire.org](http://www.hudson-berkshire.org)) on a one month delay and most past issues are also available on the web site.

**Any Other Information or Problems:**

The HBD has its own web site – [www.hudson-berkshire.org](http://www.hudson-berkshire.org)

Each year we use some of the proceeds from the GTE for our Marine Corps Toys for Tots Fund. Even though there won't be any GTE proceeds this year, through the generous donations of our members, we will still be donating some train sets this Christmas.

One of the highlights of the HBD activities is our annual bus trip to the Springfield/Amherst Train Show in January. Again, due to COVID, this is cancelled for January, 2021.

Elections are held each November. This year the following positions are open: President and one Board Member. The incumbents, Irwin Nathanson and James Lauser, respectively, have agreed to run again. Both are running unopposed.

Respectfully submitted, Irwin D. Nathanson, President Hudson Berkshire Division of the NER / NMRA

**LAKESHORES:**

Per the NER files dated 9-21-2020, the Lakeshores Division had 84 members.

As of 10-31-2020 the Division's bank account balance was \$3,041.79.

Petty cash on-hand was \$35.00. Total funds were \$3,076.79.

Several AP Awards have been earned by LSD members.

- Jim Fairbanks--Master Builder-Cars; Master Builder—Structures; Association Volunteer
- Jim DeMarco--Master Builder-Cars; Model Railroad Engineer--Electrical
- Mike Pyszczek--Association Official; Association Volunteer
- Ed O'Connell--Model Railroad Author

The Division has had two in-person outdoor meets in late summer and early fall.

1. The first on August 29 was a combined meet with the Genesee and Ontario Model-N-Gineers at Dave Durr's home; there were 24 attendees. The GnO had a T-TRAK layout which included modules supplied by Lakeshores members. There was also a members-only swap meet.
2. The second meet was held on October 17 at the Widener Park Pavillion in Chili, NY; there were 16 attendees. Jeff Faust gave a presentation on building and operating his Inglenook switching layout, and Dave Durr reviewed the final years of Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey rail operations.

The final business meeting of the year was held in conjunction with the October 17 meet. The current slate of officers--Dave Durr, Superintendent; Ray Howard, Assistant Superintendent; and John Becker, Treasurer--were re-elected for two year terms. There were no nominees for the Chief Clerk position.

Also, at the October 17 business meeting Ed O'Connell pitched the sale of Lakeshores Division apparel from Daylight Sales, an NMRA partner. An initial order of 26 items has been placed.

Four LSD members have volunteered to give presentations for the NERx Virtual Convention: Jeff Faust--Just Build an Inglenook; Jim Fairbanks--Using Paper to Build That Model for Your Railroad; Ned Spiller--layout tour; and Gordon Spalty--layout tour.

Most train shows and swap meets in the area have been cancelled for 2020. The only activity planned by the Lakeshores Division for the remainder of the year is to display our T-TRAK modules with the Genesee and Ontario Model-N-Gineers layout at the American Legion Hall, Avon, NY on Saturday, December 5 and Sunday, December 6.

To help maintain contact with the members during the pandemic, the Division Editor, Ray Howard, has published eight EXTRA editions of our newsletter, the *Lake Shores Limited*, in addition to the year's six regular editions. Focus of the EXTRAs has been the model railroading projects of the members. The "What's on Your Workbench?" theme even has drawn submissions from outside the Lakeshores Division.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Durr, Superintendent

#### **LITTLE RHODY:**

The Little Rhody Division continues to hold our monthly meetings as well as our monthly board meetings virtually via Zoom. This format has been very effective with members from both Hub and Nutmeg divisions joining in. Our latest meeting was this morning with a power point and video of the Old Colony Model Railroad Club layout and a power point presentation from a Hub member on asphalt roadways. Our next meeting will be on 5 December with our "holiday special" that will include a Show and Tell of our Pandemic Projects, a tour and a "Secret Santa" exchange.

Even though we are not able to get together in person (except for our annual board planning meeting (mentioned in my last report), it is good to see everyone on the computer screen and catch up on what all of us are doing.

Our presentations on Zoom have been recorded and will be uploaded to our web site so other members are able to see them.

Our Facebook page continues to be updated with new photos and announcements.

Submitted by Sue Osberg, Superintendent, Little Rhody Division; 11/07/2020

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm EST.

Next meeting scheduled via Zoom at 7:30 pm Eastern/8:30 pm Atlantic on Jan. 17, 2021.

11/10/20