



**Northeastern Region, NMRA
BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING
06/13/21**

Meeting conducted over Internet via Zoom.

Attending: John Doehring, President; Bob Dennis, NER Vice President; Jeff Paston, Secretary; Roger Oliver, NER Treasurer; Ed O'Rourke, Western Director; Bob Henry, Eastern Canada; Drew James, Central New York; Chris Carfaro, Green Mountain and Coupler editor; Peter Watson Hub and Convention Committee; Tage Erickson, Seacoast; Jim Homoki, Garden State; Chuck Diljak, Garden State; Dennis DeAngelis, Sunrise Trail; Jeff Hanke, Nutmeg; Joe Lecaroz, Hudson Valley; David Durr, Lakeshores; Robert Peterson, Southern Tier; David Insley, Convention Chair; Al Oneto, Op Sig Coordinator, Sue Osberg, Little Rhody; Mike Bowler, Membership Chair; David Abrames, NER Webmaster.

Not present: Gerry Covino, Eastern Director, Convention Registrar & Treasurer; Larry Cannon, Northern Director; Kevin Katta, Southern Director; Scott Russell, Metro-North; Irwin Nathanson, Hudson-Berkshire.

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

APPROVAL of PREVIOUS MINUTES: 3/21/21 minutes. Ed O'Rourke moved; Sue Osberg seconded. Passed

TREASURER's REPORT: Submitted June 10, 2021 by Roger Oliver NER Treasurer

As this will be my last report to the Board, other than a final summary at the end of FY 2020-2021 which my successor may deliver, I will keep my comments brief. You should have received a copy of the Current Status of Accounts which details the Revenues and Expenses year-to-date as well as the balances of our bank and investment accounts and operating funds.

I also included a copy of the Adopted Budget for FY 2021-2022 with a few emendations. First I adjusted the FY 2020-2021 Revenue and Expense figures and account balances to reflect those changes since the budget was approved in March. Then I added an Expense line for Bank/PayPal fees to project/account for this expense related to the Region processing donations through our website via PayPal which assesses a fee.

In parting I would offer two recommendations: 1) The Region would benefit from outside corporate donations from programs such as Amazon Smile, eBay, TD Bank (and other banks). 2) I would suggest that the Region establish a robust Membership Development program. About 2000, Tom Mathews, Tom Wortmann, Mel Ponton and I helped resurrect the Garden State Division which had been defunct for almost fifteen years. We started our treasury by passing the hat. Also, because this was before National's "Long Range Plan" we were able to charge membership fees. It was hard at first to be able to afford simple things like a fire house hall to hold a meet or get a bunch of donuts and coffee, pay for postage and government filings, but we

managed. Our smaller divisions now don't have these simple resources and that is what I suggest the BOD establish with a Membership Development program.

- Create "grants" with required planning, budgeting, venue selection and relations, check points towards meeting the goals in their budget and planning with oversight and mentoring.
- Provide resources from neighboring divisions and the Region such as staff, speakers, workshops, clinics, door prizes, contacts with local hobby shops or hobby manufacturers, advertising, Constant Contact access and so forth.
- These "grants" would not be available to all the divisions as many of them are quite self-sufficient. But there are a few that are small and struggling and at least one that is inactive. These should be the beneficiaries of this program. That doesn't mean that our more self-sufficient divisions cannot benefit from some assistance from time to time by means of staff, speakers, workshops, clinics, door prizes, contacts with local hobby shops or hobby manufacturers, advertising, Constant Contact access and so forth. They just don't need the grants as they have a decent* treasury. *+\$1000.00

Roger indicated funds could come from the Edward Jones Account to provide the "grants." John Doehring noted that this proposal was in previous meeting and Ed O'Rourke had suggested setting up a committee (see *Old Business* below). Roger discussed issue of using TD account for donation program where corporate or individual opens account, TD would donate \$50 to our account, then \$25 each following year to that account. So, if four people had such an acct, TD would end up donating \$100.

Roger submitted a second report showing actual vs budget line items. John Doehring asked about the Coupler. Roger said the Coupler account is slowly growing. Roger also submitted approved budget for 2022 in his report.

Moved by Bob Dennis; Ed O'Rourke seconded; to approve Treasurer's Report. Carried.

John Doehring made "presidential appointment" asking Gerry Covino to take over as new NER Treasurer as Roger officially retires. Since Ed O'Rourke is taking over as president in the fall, John asked for this appointment to be formalized.

Ed O'Rourke moved; Bob Dennis seconded. Carried.

Roger is retiring after 20 years as a treasurer of GSD, the convention and then Region. John thanked Roger for his service. It was noted that Gerry has served as the convention treasurer and HUB treasurer, so he has much experience. Ed O'Rourke said Gerry told him that so far he does not see a problem being both convention and Region treasurer. Roger thinks it may turn out to be appropriate to again have two treasurers.

Northeastern Region Treasurer's Report

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

11-Jun-21

REVENUES	Budgeted	Actual	% ± YTD
Coupler Subscriptions	7500.00	6798.85	91%
Coupler Sponsorship	325.00	0.00	0%
NMRA Dues Rebates	2190.00	1945.99	89%
NMRA Dues Rebate AP 27%	810.00	756.57	93%

Northeastern Region NMRA, Inc.

Budget for Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

PROPOSED BUDGET Approved 3/21/2021

updated 21-Mar-21

REVENUES	Budget for FY 2021-22	Budget for FY 2020-21	Actual* FY 2020-21	line item Variance	*as of 6/10/2021
Subscriptions - Coupler	7500.00	7500.00	4957.58	66%	
Sponsorship - Coupler	325.00	325.00	0.00	0%	
NMRA Dues Rebate Divs.	2300.00	2190.00	1966.43	90%	27% reduction started
NMRA Dues Rebate AP 27%	900.00	810.00	756.57	93%	FY 2020-2021
NER Board Desgnd Reserve	0.00	1247.00	1247.00	100%	
Convention	1500.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Donations	1000.00	0.00	975.00	740%	NERx Donation button
Prepaid expense (GoGeek)	593.40	296.70	296.70	100%	\$296.70 annually for
Interest Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	trienial \$890.08 GoGeek.
Other - Spate Award	75.00	75.00	69.09	92%	dedicated fund
Total Revenue	14193.40	12443.70	10268.37	83%	

EXPENSES	Budget for FY 2021-22	Budget for FY 2020-21	Actual* FY 2020-21	line item Variance	
Coupler	7000.00	7000.00	4988.38	71%	
NMRA Dues Rebates	2200.00	2190.00	1945.99	89%	\$20.40 Souhern Tier
Achievement Program	900.00	750.00	866.11	115%	
Membership Dev. Program	2000.00	200.00	0.00	0%	
Spate Award	75.00	75.00	69.09	92%	dedicated fund
President's Awards	50.00	50.00	0.00	0%	Per President
NJ Business Registration	35.00	35.00	30.00	86%	State business Reg. fee
Contingency Fund	100.00	100.00	221.74	222%	estimated
Regional Banner	150.00	100.00	0.00	0%	
Office Expenses	100.00	100.00	0.00	0%	estimated
Bank/PayPal fees	100.00	0.00	32.55	0%	estimated
Communication Expenses					
Constant Contact	400.00	400.00	378.00	95%	Annual fee
GoGeek Hosting	300.00	296.70	296.70	100%	\$890.08 3 years/prorated
Annual Domain Reg. Fee ¹	150.00	121.65	160.17	132%	Annual fees (see attachmnt)
Joomla Tools (annual)	200.00	200.00	211.64	106%	Annual fee
SG Site Scanner	19.80	19.80	0.00	0%	Annual fee
Dedicated IP address fee	54.00	54.00	54.00	100%	Annual fee
Other - Election Expenses	200.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Other - Webmaster Fees	1000.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Total Expenses	14737.10	11692.15	9254.37	79%	

Northeastern Region NMRA, Inc.
Fiscal Year July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021 Budget

Budget versus Actual for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021 updated 6/11/2021

REVENUES	<u>Budget %</u>	<u>Budget \$</u>	<u>Actual \$</u>	<u>Variance</u>	
Coupler: Subscriptions	60.3%	7,500.00	6,798.85	(701.15)	
Coupler: Advertising	2.6%	325.00	-	(325.00)	
Sub-total: Coupler	62.9%	7,825.00	6,798.85	(1,026.15)	
NMRA Dues Rebates	17.6%	2,190.00	2,691.00	501.00	
NMRA Dues Rebate 27%	6.5%	810.00	756.57	(53.43)	
Convention	0.0%	-	-	-	
Donations	0.0%	-	975.00	975.00	
Funds from Ed. Jones Acct.	10.0%	1,247.00	1,247.00	-	
Prepaid Expenses (GoGeek)	2.4%	296.70	296.70	-	
Other (Spate Fund)	0.6%	75.00	69.09	(5.91)	
Interest Income	0.0%	-	-	-	
Total Revenue	100.0%	12,443.70	12,834.21	390.51	
EXPENSES	<u>Budget %</u>	<u>Budget \$</u>	<u>Actual \$</u>	<u>Variance</u>	
Coupler	56.3%	7,000.00	4,988.38	(2,011.62)	
NMRA Dues Rebates	17.6%	2,190.00	1,945.99	(244.01)	
Achievement Program	6.0%	750.00	866.11	116.11	
Membership	1.6%	200.00	-	(200.00)	
Spate Award	0.6%	75.00	69.09	(5.91)	
President's Awards	0.4%	50.00	-	(50.00)	
NJ Business Registration	0.3%	35.00	30.00	(5.00)	
Contingency Fund - Election	0.8%	100.00	221.74	121.74	
NER Banner	0.8%	100.00	-	(100.00)	
Office Expenses	0.8%	100.00	-	(100.00)	
Bank & PayPal Fees	0.0%	-	32.55	32.55	
<u>Communication Expenses</u>				-	
Constant Contact	3.2%	400.00	378.00	(22.00)	
GoGeek Hosting Plan (3 years)	2.4%	296.70	296.70	-	296.69/yr
Domain Annual Reg. Fee*	1.0%	121.65	160.17	38.52	
Joomla Tools (annual)	1.6%	200.00	211.64	11.64	
SG Site Scanner	0.2%	19.80	-	(19.80)	
Dedicated IP address fee	0.4%	54.00	54.00	-	
Other -	0.0%	-	-	-	
Total Expenses	94.0%	11,692.15	9,254.37	(2,437.78)	
	<u>Budget %</u>	<u>Budget \$</u>	<u>Actual \$</u>	<u>Variance</u>	
Projected excess over revenues	6.0%	\$ 751.55	\$ 3,579.84	79.15%	

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: John Doehring recognized Chuck Diljak as a new MMR.

John noted that many Divisions going to in-person meetings, and many Divisions have new leadership.

This is John's last meeting as NER president. On July 2, he becomes NMRA Eastern District Director, so as outgoing president, he has authority to appoint VP Bob Dennis as the interim president until the fall convention.

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT: Submitted May 5 and June 11, 2021 by VP Bob Dennis

Since our last meeting two issues surfaced that needed immediate attention, and John and I felt that an email canvas of the voting members of the board was in order.

1. The first e-vote was for an election backup plan that would have been run by Election Buddy. A few voting members were not happy with the cost estimates I provided so I had to get firm figures from Election Buddy's representative. The cost for an electronic only election is \$299.00 for up to 2,500 participants (our membership is less than 2,000). There were additional costs for the paper ballots (envelopes, and stamps) that amounted to approximately \$200.57. It should be noted that the only incremental cost for the Election Buddy over our in house system is \$299.00 – paper ballots will still have to go out.

Of the 20 members 18 voted in favor, two abstained. – Backup plan is in place

2. The second issue was to have established health guidelines in place for the 2021 Convention. Those guidelines would be for all individuals to wear masks (except when eating/drinking), maintain social distancing where possible, and to have been fully vaccinated.

The actual wording is below:

“All attendees at the Mill City 21 NER Regional Convention agree to abide by all health and safety guidelines as specified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Town of Westford, and the Convention venues at the time of the convention as it relates to capacity limits, maintained distance, mask wearing, or other safety procedures. Further, all attendees of the convention and the convention events must be fully vaccinated by the start of the convention.”

The last part was further clarified by Dave Insley. He stated “We will ask of each member to attest to the fact that they are fully vaccinated or will be at the time of the convention on the registration form and we will take them at their word that they have complied with this request.”

The vote for this request was 16 in favor, 1 no and 3 abstentions.

3. The Triannual Election of Officers and Directors is well underway and it appears that Ed O'Rourke (President) and David Insley (Vice President) have captured their respective office.
4. The Director positions for the Northern, Eastern and Southern Regions are shoe-ins. However, the Western Division Director's position is hotly contested and is “too close to call”.
5. The Spate Award is now set and ready to be presented, as is the National President's Award to the Division.
6. There was no Superintendents Meeting as the election has taken up a great deal of my time, in both preparation of the manual mailed ballots and their return for counting.

The Election results will be announced at the Face to Face Convention in October.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE REPORT: Submitted June 8, 2021 by Committee Chair Dave Insley

Current Highlights

- 2021 Convention – Registration is open
- 2022 Convention – Hotel Contract received, see attached. Approval needed.
- 2022 Convention – Sunrise Trail is onboard!! Full steam ahead

Ed O'Rourke moved; Dave Durr seconded; that medical and religious grounds can be exempted by NER for vaccinations. Ed asked to amend motion. Drew James seconded; to include **medical exemption, but not religious**. Dave Insley said the convention committee is willing to enact whatever everyone wants. He said there will be a communication to those who already registered regarding vaccinations. Mill City Committee had already voted to follow Massachusetts policies, but would allow application for exemption from the NER. Dave said this was because individual homeowners might have concerns. Jeff Hanke noted that convention hotel follows Commonwealth policy, but layout owners are in their own homes and subject to making own decisions. Jeff said it seems silly to have a restriction and then have exceptions to the restriction. John Doehring said what we are simply trying to do is to have a policy that would protect the layout owners. David Abrames suggested just to have everybody wear a mask. Dave Insley noted homeowners insisted that guests be vaccinated.

The wording of the convention policy follows with amended addition:

All attendees at the Mill City 21 NER Regional Convention must agree to abide by all health and safety guidelines as specified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Town of Westford, and the convention venues at the time of the convention as it relates to capacity limits, maintained distance, mask wearing, or other safety procedures. Further, all attendees of the convention and the convention events must be fully vaccinated by the start of the convention.

*Members or guests that have a legitimate **medical reason** for not being able to vaccinate must submit such exceptions in writing to the NER Convention Chairperson. Waivers will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Any individual granted such a waiver must agree to be masked at all times during the convention events.*

Motion to approve accepting Convention committee recommendation with amendment: Yes=8; No=4 (Tage, Jeff Hanke, Jim Homoki, Dennis DeAngelis). Carried.

John noted that if the state guidance changes, the Board can be polled. Peter Watson noted that it is a no-brainer that NER must follow changes in guidance by the state. Roger noted that we are only advising and we cannot exempt anyone beyond state guidelines.

Board Actions

Authorize the Regional Convention Chair to execute contract for 2022 in Windsor, CT.

Summary:

- 75 Room Block, 80% attrition clause
- \$109 per night room rate
- \$3000 charge for convention space, \$1500 due at signing
- Catering Minimum \$7500

2021 – Mill City 2021, Westford MA

Registration is open

Dates – Friday, October 8 through Monday, October 11.

Hotel – Westford Regency Inn and Convention Center

Website: <http://www.millcity21.org/>

Prototype Tours:

- Friday – Lowell Art Gallery Crawl
- Friday/Saturday – Lowell National Park Walking tour

Clinics

- Theme for the Convention will be Operations
- o Signaling options

- o Car Forwarding

Layouts/Operations

- Over 200 operating slots available
- Introducing an Operations Mentoring Program to encourage new operators

Numbers as of 6/7/2021

Item	Carry Over	6/07/2021
Total Primary Registrations	42	62
- Early	12	18
- Early Combo Registration	30	44
- Regular Registrations		
- Regular Combo Registrations		
- At Door		
Spouse Registrations	19	19
- Regular	6	8
- Combo	8	11
Non-NMRA Member Fee (Registrations included above)	1	2
Banquet	0 (38 total)	2 (57 total)
Friday Evening Welcome Reception	2 (40 total)	2 (57 total)
Monday Awards Breakfast	1 (39 total)	1 (56 total)
Building Bar Mills Magee's Tire Repair Shop	2	3
High End Oak Trees	8	10
Stone Walls	3	9
Oragami Wreath	-	0
Soldering for Model Railroaders	-	4
Oragami Cube	-	0
Digital University	4	7
Gallery Crawl	-	0
Friday Lowell Tour	2	3
Saturday Lowell Tour	17	18
Operating Slots Available	200	192
Operations Requests	25	38
Operators Requesting 2 or more	16	23

2022 – Nutmeg – Windsor Connecticut

Original hotel, Marriott Farmington has been sold and is not re-opening as a hotel.

Local team has a **quote from the Marriott Windsor**. Need to get meal pricing, also need to work some of the details with the hotel but would like approval to move forward with this contract as a worse case.

Highlights

- \$109 room rate
- 75 room night committed block
- \$3000 for convention space
- \$7500 food minimum banquet/breakfast pricing is TBD)

Dave Insley said he plans to go back to the Marriott Windsor to get some fees lowered. But, he said he is asking the Board for permission to sign the contract.

Bob Dennis moved, Jeff Hanke seconded; to allow signing contract. Carried.

John Doehring noted this has a slightly higher level of risk. Dave said he will negotiate similar to Syracuse where if you booked certain number of rooms, we could get a little the price off per room. Mike Bowler asked about how those who already registered could move ahead and re-register. He had not received the info yet.

2023 - Long Island

Planning is kicking back off now that hotels are starting to open

Spring 2023 – Eastern Canada would like to host another joint MFMR/NER Convention. More details to follow This is in addition to 2023 NER convention. There is no Region expense outlay. Bob Henry stated that ECD not prepared to have a Fall NER convention. The major change is that the Eastern Canada Division now exists and is able to participate with the MFMR.

2024 – Open

2025 Lakeshores

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

WEBMASTER REPORT: Submitted June 7, 2021 by David Abrames, NER Webmaster, webmaster@nermra.org

I am pleased to report that I have published the new NER Website in time for the Triannual Election. I have some additional items I am working on but Phase 1 of the Roll out plan is completed. This includes the following:

1. New web page design
2. New Home Page
3. Elections page available
4. New Meeting Minutes pages
5. New NER Region Maps
6. New Calendar
7. New User Login and Logout pages
8. New Site Map
9. New Regional Magazine page
10. New pages for NER Handbook and Style Guide
11. New COventions page
12. Links to NERx and NER Facebook pages
13. Faster access and access for Mobile Devices (phones, Tables, etc)

I also created detailed instructions for Bob Dennis for logging in as a User and resetting or creating an account on the NER website.

I created an initial article for the NER Coupler. My plan is to create more articles reviewing all the changes and all the new features of the new website.

To date I have had 10 Members of the NER need assistance with their NER Accounts all of them have been helped successfully.

I am continuing to update the site, correct minor errors and revisit some page designs.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. President Doehring was to check with Mark Harlow on Coupler subscriptions to see if there were any multi-year subscribers (which affect overall annual income reports) **Tabled.**
2. Membership Development Program (as recommended by Treasurer Roger Oliver)

A. Dave Durr clarifies that the intent of his comments was as follows:

This is a worthwhile program, and funds should be allocated for it. However, before any funds are released, the Committee and its Chair should be created, AND the policies by which the Committee conducts its business must be developed and approved by the BOD. (Such policies might include how requests are made; is there a dollar limit for a single request?; is a unanimous vote, 2/3 vote or simple majority of the Committee required for approval?, etc.)

B. Western Director Ed O'Rourke proposes the following:

In support of the NER Treasurer's recommendation, I propose the NER form a Membership Development Committee, chaired by the Vice President, and composed of the four Directors-at -Large, the NER Treasurer, and the Membership Chair. The Committee will review requests for funding of member Development and retention initiatives.

Such initiatives may include (but are not limited to) event costs (clinics, picnics, trips and tours, etc.), promotional materials, registration fees for shows and community events, or any other activity designed to promote membership in the NMRA, NER and the Division. Of particular interest are innovative ideas than can be replicated by other Divisions.

Procedure:

1. The Division must apply for the NMRA Division Retention Event Matching Fund* using the form found on the NMRA website. <https://www.nmra.org/news/nmra-division-retention-event-matching-fund-program>
2. Submit a copy of this form to the NER Committee, including as much information as possible about the proposed activity.
3. The NER Committee will evaluate the proposal independent of the NMRA.
 - a. If funds are granted by the NMRA, the NER will fund additional costs to the Division, up to \$100.00 beyond the \$50.00 NMRA Grant. (This amount may be increased at the discretion of the Committee.)
 - b. If funds are not granted by NMRA, or if the Division has already received such funds for a different initiative, the Committee will consider funding the initiative up to \$100.00.
4. Upon completion of the initiative, NER funds will be released upon receipt by the NER Treasurer of required receipts and a description and evaluation of the initiative.
5. Divisions receiving NER funds agree to provide an article (including photos or copies of materials) for publication in the NER Coupler, and for the NER website.
6. Divisions may apply for more than one grant per year. Total Grants for any fiscal year (July-June) are limited to the amount budgeted for this initiative. (\$2,000.00 in FY2021-22)

*NMRA Division Retention Event Matching Fund--

Is your Division looking to retain its members? Are you planning a special Division event like a hands-on clinic, a Division picnic, maybe a Division tour to a railroad facility, or other event that will help your members understand what's so great about the NMRA? If you are, National NMRA would like to help defer some of your expenses with our Division Retention Event Matching Fund Program. Just fill out the simple application form for approval, hold the event, then turn in some receipts and paperwork, and you'll be reimbursed up to \$50! This is an ongoing program so take advantage of it every year.

AREA DIRECTOR REPORTS:

WESTERN: Submitted June 9, 2021 by Edward J. O'Rourke, NER West Area Director

1. I have attended meetings of CNY, Lakeshores and Hudson Berkshire, both in person and virtually. Hudson Berkshire, Lakeshores, and CNY are planning outdoor, in-person meets, some of them as joint picnics.

- a. I have also participated in virtual meets with the St. Lawrence Division and Western NY Division of the NFR, promoting the convention
- b. STD is considering a meet at the Binghamton Model RR Club when that becomes possible, possibly with a clinic.
- c. In-person events planned for later this year
 - i. Op-toberfest" planned for Sept. 17 -19 in Albany area
 - ii. Western NY Layout tours October 23-24
 - iii. Ops 'til You Drop and Syracuse Train Fair Nov. 5 – 7
 - iv. Albany "Great Train Extravaganza" December 4 – 5 - Planned subject to NYS decision

2. CHALLENGES (unchanged from March)

- a. Attempts have been made to bring Cayuga County into the CNY Division. Still a challenge.
- b. 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.
- c. I would like to have better contact with Hudson Valley Division and, if possible, attend a meet or show.

DIVISION DIRECTOR REPORTS:

CENTRAL NEW YORK: Submitted June 11, 2021 by Drew James, CNY Superintendent

After several virtual meetings over the winter, the CNY division has resumed in person meetings held outdoors. We plan to continue to hold outdoor events through the summer and into the fall when we hope to be able to begin to meet in members homes again.

In May, we met in person for a train watching event and modeler's showcase in Syracuse. We will have another train watching event in Utica in June followed by our annual picnic in July which will be held at the Finger Lakes Live Steamers in Clyde, New York.

Several members from the division traveled to Amsterdam, NY, to participate in a train watching outing with the Hudson-Berkshire division.

The division had strong participation in the NERx event. Three of the division's layouts were video toured during the event and several members participated in round tables and clinics.

We have started the process of updating our division's constitution and bylaws in order to bring them up to date with current processes and technology. In the coming months we will be pursuing legal incorporation of the division.

We mourned the passing of long-time member Brian Curry. Brian was the division's first MMR, past superintendent, outstanding modeler, and a great friend to the division.

EASTERN CANADA: Submitted June 10, 2021 by Greg Williams, ECD President

While the pandemic has curtailed many events, the Eastern Canada Division has managed to maintain communications. We recently had our annual general meeting. Many in the division who had not previously participated were able to attend via Zoom. We had a phone campaign to make sure each member had a personal invitation to the meeting. It was good to touch base with the membership.

At the meeting, the roles of President and Vice President were filled by acclamation by Greg Williams as president and George Jarvis as Vice. Bob Henry was appointed secretary. Lou McIntyre continues his role as editor of the newsletter. Dave Gunn MMR has been joined by James Whaltesy as AP Co-Chair for New Brunswick.

Several members are working on various AP certificates. We look forward to more virtual events and of course, with luck, this Fall will see a return to in person train shows.

GARDEN STATE: Submitted June 6, 2021 by Mark Moritz, GSD Superintendent

1. GSD Board Meeting
 - a. A board meeting is scheduled for June 26.
2. Achievement Program
 - a. Two individuals completed requirements and submitted paperwork for achievement program certificates
 - i. Chuck Diljak - Cars and Association Official
 - ii. Mark Moritz – Cars
 - b. Chuck Diljak was awarded MMR status
 - c. List of members known to be working on other certificates
 - i. Tom Wortman – Cars
 - ii. Jim Homoki – Civil
 - iii. Bob Dennis - Scenery
3. Membership Events
 - a. Spring Meet
 - i. Held virtually on May 1.
 - ii. Annual joint Garden State/ New Jersey Divisions meet
 - iii. More than 50 in attendance.
 - iv. Two clinics, model photos and a layout tour were the agenda.
 - b. Summer meet
 - i. Scheduled for July 24.
 - ii. Probably the last virtual meet before returning to in-person meets.
 - iii. Two clinics and other events tbd at the upcoming board meeting.
 - c. Fall meet
 - i. TBD at next board meeting.
4. Community activity
 - a. Northlandz, a model railroad exposition attraction in Flemington, approached the board to discuss developing a model railroad club activity at the site.
 - b. Mark Moritz and Jim Homoki met with Christina Zambri and the owner of Northlandz to discuss.
 - c. It is TBD whether the GSD can work with Northlandz on a mutually beneficial project. Northlandz and national NMRA have signed a contract to partner.
 - d. Will be subject of discussion at the next board meeting.

GREEN MOUNTAIN: Submitted June 9, 2021 by Chris Carfaro, GMD Superintendent

On May 16th, the Green Mt. Division met for our annual meeting. Meeting was conducted by Zoom. 35% of membership participated. Elections conducted. Clinic: Jeff Hanke's vehicle presentation from NERX with Jeff in attendance for a question and answer session following the video.

Other matters: Superintendent Chris Carfaro appointed two members to fill vacant Board of Directors positions. Ben Elmore has been appointed as the Asst. Superintendent; Max Brisben has been appointed as a Director at Large.

Membership has expressed a desire to be more visible at the Mill City convention, and as such have offered to bring our Bellows Falls switching layout to the convention. The offer appears to have been accepted by Peter Watson who has said he can make space for it.

The membership appears to be energizing and a number of new people are excited about starting on the AP path. Glenn Glasstetter (AP Chair) has been informed. With a full Board of Directors on board and youth joining our ranks, there is a positive feeling stirring about the division.

HUDSON-BERKSHIRE: Submitted June 12, 2021 by Irwin D. Nathanson, HBD President

Due to the lockdowns, our Form 19 newsletter was published every month during 2020 to better keep in contact with our members. Now that matters are getting somewhat back to normal, we are going back to our traditional schedule of publishing 10 times a year, taking July and August off.

For the first time since the Fall, we had our first in-person event in May. This was outside, train watching along the Mohawk River outside Amsterdam, NY. Turnout was good, in-line with HBD meeting attendance before COVID-19. Five members from the Central New York Division joined us. Kevin Surman and Bob Hamm presented several Achievement Awards to our Treasurer, Benjamin Maggi. Kevin and Bob also presented several Achievement Awards to Joe Kavanagh, our most recent MMR. Presentation of the actual MMR award has been held for a more formal venue.

For June, we will again be meeting in-person, outdoors. This time at Thatcher State Park near Albany and a meet & greet and show & tell. The latter will feature models members have been working on, prototype memorabilia, and anything members think would be of interest to other members. We have rented a covered pavilion so the event will be held rain or shine. (Normally, we hold our annual family picnic in June. But due to continuing cautions due to the lingering pandemic, this event will be members-only.)

We will continue our tradition of taking off for the Summer, so our next meeting will be in September, again likely outdoors. Our Leadership Team will convene before then to plan for the Fall. Based on the COVID situation at that time, we will make plans for outdoor events, and possibly indoor events (perhaps live-streaming them so members can attend remotely if desired).

During July we will make our Go/No-Go decision regarding our Great Train Extravaganza (GTE) model train show. Although the event is held the first Sunday in December, we need to start committing significant funds soon. GTE is held at the NY State Convention Center in Albany. This venue is managed by the New York State Office of General Services (OGS). As of today, OGS has not announced its plans for re-opening the Convention Center and what rules would then apply. Moreover, OGS cannot tell us when they can tell us.

LAKESHORES: Submitted June 12, 2021 by David Durr, LSD Superintendent

Membership--Jim Fairbanks

As of April 21, 2021, the Lakeshores Division had 83 members with dues up-to-date and 2 members past due.

Finance--John Becker

As of May 31, 2021 the Key Bank account balance was \$3,159.46.

There was \$26.23 in petty cash. Total Division funds were \$3,185.69.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee has met monthly mostly via Zoom; an in-person meeting was held on Saturday, May 29. Summer in-person activities for the general membership were scheduled. Fall events, including a *Modeling with the Masters* series, a train watching meet, and a roundtable meet were tentatively planned. Design specifics for the Harold Russell Award have been discussed.

Achievement Program--Ned Spiller

Jim DeMarco received the AP Master Builder--Motive Power Certificate and MMR #678.

Communications--Ray, Howard, Ed O'Connell

The *Lake Shores Limited* has been published in March and May; *EXTRA* editions and *Member Marketplace* have been emailed to membership in April and June. The Division's Facebook site, Webpage, and calendars are up-to-date.

Member Publications

Dave Durr published "Paint as a Detail" in the *NER Coupler*, Apr-Jun 2021.

General Membership Meets

A general membership meet was held on Thursday, April 22, via Zoom. Barry Hensel of the NCR gave two live presentations--one on 3D printing and the other on his layout expansion in a closet. A prerecorded video tour of the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum in Hamburg, PA was also shown.

The confirmed schedule for summer in-person activities is as follows:

Saturday and Sunday, June 19 and 20--N-scale modular show with the Genesee and Ontario Model N-Gineers in Avon, NY;

Saturday, July 17--Picnic with CNY at Finger Lakes Live Steamers, Clyde, NY;

Saturday, July 24--Picnic with WNY-NFR at Mud Creek Central Railroad, Lockport, NY;

Saturday, August 24--Lakeshores Picnic and Member Swap, Kendall, NY.

Other Activities

One of our older members is in the unfortunate position of arranging for assisted living. Several of our members volunteered to help dismantle his layout and remove sections for possible "recycling."

LITTLE RHODY: Submitted June 10, 2021 by Sue Osberg, LRD Superintendent

Little Rhody continues to stay busy during the pandemic with monthly zoom meetings and monthly zoom board meetings.

During the past several months, LRD has viewed virtual layout tours, held virtual clinics via Zoom, shared videos from the NMRA collection, and shared our work during a meeting called "Pandemic Projects".

In March, Tom Staton of CNY Division kept the membership completely enthralled with his realism and creative scenery techniques as he treated us to a virtual tour of his layout. Also in March, Little Rhody lost a long-time member and mentor. Henry Pierce, past Superintendent and past Vice-President of NER, passed away early in the month. Little Rhody is currently completing the details for an award to be presented in Henry's honor and memory each year. Henry was a mentor to so many of the LRD members, encouraging them to expand their knowledge base and their abilities by participating in the Achievement Program and earning a variety of AP awards over the years. He will be long remembered and sorely missed by many.

For our April meeting, Tony Koester of New Jersey presented a virtual tour of his Nickel Plate Model Railroad.

Our own Justin Maguire, MMR, showed three of the lightweight modules he has constructed for the European Train Enthusiasts group for our May meeting.

Little Rhody will hold its first in-person meeting in 15 months later on in June when it holds its Annual Dinner and Elections at a local restaurant. The nominating committee has a slate of officers ready for the meeting. The excitement over seeing members in person instead of on a computer screen is catching.

In July, LRD will once again hold its annual picnic at the home of a friend of LRD who will be showcasing his garden layout. Our annual board of directors retreat and planning meeting will be at the beginning of August at the home of another member with a garden layout for our amusement during breaks.

In September we will resume our regular membership meetings with a hybrid model during which we will have an in-person meeting that will be live streamed for those who wish to view and participate in the meeting from a distance. Our technology committee is working on the details of the most efficient way of accomplishing this.

Coming events include the postponed trip to a local library with our N-Scale Rhode Island & Old Colony modular layout plus two other modular layouts members take on the road with us. Planned as well is the postponed LRD Model Railroad Expo in November to showcase modular layouts in a variety of scales.

NUTMEG: Submitted June 12, 2021 by Jeff Hanke, Nutmeg Superintendent

The Nutmeg bi-monthly membership meeting is June 19th. We haven't had a meeting since our last NER board meeting. Nothing else to report.

SUNRISE TRAIL: Submitted June 12, 2021 by Dennis DeAngelis, STD President.

The Sunrise Trail Division has continued its weekly video – Zoom - presentations on a variety of prototype and model topics. For the most part these are one a week, but occasionally there are two.

We had one unfortunate instance where someone hacked into the meeting to control of the screen share and put up highly objectionable content. Despite our best efforts we were unable to take this person down and had to cancel that presentation. We hope that was a one off incident. [David Abrames offered to help correct Zoom hacking problem.](#)

We have formed a Membership Committee to see what we can do to increase membership. The numbers of NMRA relative to the general population of our Division is very disappointing. That Committee is also scouting locations for the resumption of ace to face meets, the first to be held in late October as we have traditionally done.

The Region Convention Committee has begun to organize. The convention will be held in September or October, 2023. We have reviewed the current Convention Handbook and are dividing up tasks. Graphics, Website and location are on the top on the list at this time.

[Jim Homoki asked about decreasing attendance at Zoom meetings. Jim said he was optimistic that numbers will increase once people meet in-person. John Doehring commented that many folks are "zoomed" out. John also noted that many clinics had been done previously. Jeff Hanke noted success in his Division with hybrid meeting where in-person event is streamed like a conference call.](#)

[Bob Dennis and Dennis DeAngelis thanked John Doehring for his service these past 6 years.](#)

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 pm EDT.

Next meeting scheduled via Zoom at 7:30 pm Eastern/8:30 pm Atlantic on Sunday, Aug. 22.