

MINUTES - CAROLINA SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS MEETING

Saturday, December 13, 2008

The meeting was held at 12:30 at the Hickory Tavern, Charlotte, NC.

Attendees:

Steve August, Superintendent
Joe Howard, Asst Superintendent
Dick Bronson, Paymaster
Jack Haynes, Clerk
Fred Miller, Director
Roy Becker, Director

Steve opened the meeting at 12:35.

Bylaws:

Steve passed out copies of the bylaws and an email from Jack Monette indicating he thought there were some issues with the bylaws that might cause them to be out of compliance with MER guidelines with respect to some checks and balances. In the email, Jack said he will contact MER to get any template they have for Division bylaws. Steve suggested we wait until we hear back from Jack with details. Everyone agreed.

Nominations:

Roy Becker gave an account of the process that the Directors went through to develop a list of nominees for the offices up for election at the Annual Meeting in January. The Directors suggested two candidates for Director 2011 and one for Assistant Superintendent. Roy contacted each of the possible candidates. One nominee for Director declined nomination. The Directors nominations are: Joe Howard for Assistant Superintendent, and Fred Miller for (reelection) Director 2011.

Membership:

Jack Haynes reported that the latest update from MER listed 80 members and there are 5 NMRA members who are listed as "Visitors". These are primarily NMRA members who live outside the boundaries of the Division, mostly in the Fort Mill, Rock Hill area. Steve and Jack will develop letters and procedures for contacting "Lapsed", and "New" members to help increase our membership. There was discussion on the process for adding York and perhaps Lancaster counties, SC in the Division (and in MER). They are currently in SER. Fred will see if he can get a roster of NMRA members in the county to see if a petition to move to MER is feasible.

Survey:

Steve reviewed the results of the membership survey that was sent out in October. We received 18 responses or about 22%. Steve highlighted the strengths and weaknesses the survey identified. Several officers offered their views of the issues and suggested steps to remedy them. Steve will take the suggestions into consideration as he moves forward as Superintendent. He will also try to plan activities that respond to the areas of interest expressed in the survey responses.

Paymaster:

Dick Bronson presented the current Paymasters report. Our balance for last year and this is higher than previous years, but this year is down a little. Jack pointed out that some expenses for 2007 were not submitted until 2008, which would account for the apparent decrease. There was discussion about the Director's audit called for in the bylaws. In the past this has been an informal process where one or more of the Directors reviewed the Paymaster's documentation. Roy and Fred will arrange for such a review with Dick and report at the Annual Meeting. It was suggested that "audit" might imply a very formal accounting process and we might want to substitute the word "review" in the bylaws to avoid being out of compliance with the bylaws by not hiring a CPA or other outside professional.

Plans 2009:

Steve suggested that we target having a meeting every other month in 2009 to allow time between meetings to adequately plan the next one. Everyone agreed that was a good objective. For meeting format, it was agreed that there should be a meeting Saturday morning with a business session and a clinic or other modeling activity. The afternoon should then have a layout visit or prototype tour.

Steve asked for suggestions about layouts that might be available for visits.

For the January meeting, there was discussion about trying to set up a tour of the new Trolley Museum which is not scheduled to open until spring. Fred has loaned them four of his trolley modules and will contact them to see if a private tour could be set up for the Division following the Annual Meeting.

The subject of having a raffle or White Elephant sale was brought up and discussed. It was decided to develop a combination that would work something like the raffle at the Regional convention. Members would bring items they want to sell. At the meeting, attendees would buy tickets and put them in a can for the item(s) they want. At the end, a ticket is drawn for each item and the ticket holder gets the item. The seller and the Division split (to be determined) the money represented by the number of tickets in the can. Dick will write up details of the procedure and we will print them in the next BP. Roy Becker will see if the Division already has some two-part tickets to use or if we have to purchase some.

Award:

Joe Howard suggested that the Division present an award of appreciation to Rick Knight for his leadership for the past four years as Superintendent. There was discussion on cost, wording, and related issues. Fred moved that the Division make the award, Jack seconded. It was approved unanimously. Steve will work with Joe to get a plaque with appropriate wording.

Web Site:

Steve opened discussion on the Division web site. Jim Allen has obtained the rights to the domain name CarolinaSouthern.org. He is willing to lend his expertise in web site design to help update the Division site. There was also discussion about using other services to host the site and incorporating email addresses for Division officers (elected and appointed) that could be forwarded to the current holder of that position. Steve will contact Gil, Martin, and Jim to discuss this and work toward an update of the site.

RMU 2009:

Roy Becker have been working on an RMU. They are targeting sometime in February. They don't feel there is sufficient time to organize one for the January meeting. They envision having at least two tracks of clinics. One track would cover the basics for people just getting into the hobby. The other tracks would cover intermediate topics for modelers who want to improve their work. They had looked over the survey for topics that would draw interest and asked the other officers for suggestions of people and topics that they should pursue. They were given several suggestions to look into.

Op Session Weekend:

Steve presented a letter he prepared to send to layout owners in the area to see if they would be interested in participating in an Operating Session Weekend. This would be a weekend where several layouts would hold operating sessions that were open to participants from anywhere. These events are held regularly in other areas and draw people from across the country. He will send the letter to layout owners who he thinks might be willing and see what the response is. If there is sufficient interest, he will try to schedule it for the fall 2009.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00

Respectfully submitted
Jack Haynes
Division Clerk