

January 8, 2021—NRHS Wisconsin Chapter Annual Business Meeting Minutes

All of the agenda item numbers below refer to the agenda published on our Chapter web site, and forwarded via e-mail to all members on Thursday, January 7, 2021.

Agenda Item 1—Call to Order

President Mike Yuhas called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm. We had 65 computers connected then. A few of those had two people watching. Others arrived later.

This is the annual formal business meeting. It is longer and more formal than our usual monthly meetings. We try to keep the business meeting brief. As always, business meetings are for members only. Only dues-paying members of NRHS National and the Wisconsin Chapter are allowed to vote on or discuss Chapter business. While we appreciate the subscribers support, National rules state that they are only receiving copies of *Sparks & Cinders*, and are not members. Subscribers and guests were asked to only listen to and observe the business meeting.

Agenda Item 2—Confirmation of Quorum

We had 49 paid-up dues-paying members as of Friday, January 1, the latest record that is available. A quorum is 5 per cent of that number, which works out to 3 members. We had well in excess of that number present.

Agenda Item 3—Minutes of Last Meeting

The last previous formal business meeting was held on Friday, January 3, 2020, at the North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point. The minutes were published on our Chapter website. No one offered any discussion. Keith Schmidt moved that the minutes be approved as published. Dave Nelson seconded the motion. It was approved by unanimous vote (by waving of hands or use of Zoom reaction symbols).

Agenda Item 4—President's Remarks

President Mike Yuhas started with a recap of our activities in 2020:

Long-term Treasurer Tom Hoffmann retired after the business meeting of Friday, January 3, 2020. Tom had served as our Chapter Treasurer since the sudden death of Don Reck in July 1986, a total of 33 ½ years. There was a display of appreciation for Tom, who was in attendance tonight. Tara Grudzielanek took over on February 7. She continues as our current treasurer.

We had only three in-person meetings—on January 3 (official business, Tom Hoffmann, 50 Years Ago-1969), February 7 (Jim Wades, Morse Telegraphy), and March 6 (Fred Hyde, Milwaukee Road east of Aberdeen, South Dakota). Then Covid-19 restrictions forced the entire cancellation of the April 3 meeting.

All through this time, we had been planning to conduct supplemental and / or satellite meetings away from our SE Wisconsin Fox Point site. These would allow people in other parts of Wisconsin to participate in person without having to drive for hours. They would allow us to

fully live up to our name of “Wisconsin Chapter.” We thought that Covid-19 had forced us to put that plan on hold. We may have instead found the basis for carrying it out.

We came back with on-line virtual meetings, using Zoom, on May 1 (five digital presentations) and June 5 (A Night at the Museum—three presentations from three local railroad museums, at East Troy, Green Bay, and North Freedom). The last was in place of the Saturday, June 6 banquet—postponed due to Covid-19. There were no monthly meetings in July and August, which is normal. We came back with more virtual Zoom meetings on September 4 (Favorite Slide Night—with digital images only), October 2 (Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad—Trego, Wisconsin—featuring restoration of Mark Twain Zephyr), November 6 (Eric Hendrickson, CSX, Special Paint Jobs Honoring Military and First Responders), and December 4 (Larry Eastwood, Montreal to the Maritimes).

In the process, we gained 26 new members, many of them from remote parts of Wisconsin, and from other parts of the United States. Mike introduced the most recent 12 of them tonight:

- Steve Glischinski, Shoreview, Minn.
- Rich Hawthorne, New Berlin
- Dave Rasmussen, Glendale
- Mike Raia, Chicago, Ill.
- Matt Diestler, Fort Atkinson
- Tony White (NRHS National Vice President), Stamford, Conn.
- George Chiasson, Rockland, Mass.
- Steve and Jenny McCarthy, Mukwonago
- Courtney Aubrecht, Oak Lawn, Ill.
- Mark Lynn, St. Paul, Minn.
- Todd Taylor, Richfield (joined today)

We also held three board meetings, on February 15, July 23, and December 10. Mike expressed his appreciation for the hard work being done by the officers and directors to move the Chapter ahead despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We held two virtual slide shows, with 5 presentations each, on the third Tuesday of each even-numbered month, on October 20 and December 15. The next one will be on February 16, 2021.

Mike then turned to new projects and other initiatives—upcoming in 2021:

PayPal renewal is not available yet. We are getting very close. Once it is ready, you will be able to renew your membership from our website, via PayPal or credit card. Or you can e-mail Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek to request a PayPal invoice. We expect to charge a \$1.00 convenience fee to recoup our charge from PayPal, which would bring your total cost up to \$21.00. Or you can still send a check for \$20.00, payable to “Wisconsin Chapter, NRHS,” to Wisconsin Chapter NRHS, PO Box 070758, Milwaukee, WI 53207.

We are planning to publish a poster-size wall map of Wisconsin railroads from 1893 to 1970, based on Secretary Tom Marcussen’s research of that subject. Mike presented a preview of the

NW quarter of the state. It included the 7 abandoned branch lines covered in tonight's presentation—see below.

We are also planning to publish a Chapter wall calendar for 2022.

We are planning a joint virtual meeting with the North West Illinois Chapter in May. It will not be on the usual first-Friday schedule. The date and time have not been established yet.

Agenda Item 5—Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek presented a preliminary treasurer's report for 2020. Some year-end statements are not in yet. The following numbers are, at the worst, very close to correct:

<u>Opening Checkbook Balance</u>	\$7,427.84
----------------------------------	------------

Receipts

Dues	\$2,230.00
------	------------

<u>Interest</u>	<u>1.85</u>
-----------------	-------------

Total	\$2,231.85
-------	------------

Expenses

Sparks & Cinders	\$1,954.83
------------------	------------

Web Site & Internet	129.05
---------------------	--------

Zoom Meeting License	15.81
----------------------	-------

Protective Bag for Digital Projector	71.17
--------------------------------------	-------

Post Office Box	106.00
-----------------	--------

North Shore Church-Donation—Use of Space	500.00
--	--------

Church Custodians	50.00
-------------------	-------

<u>Insurance</u>	<u>695.00</u>
------------------	---------------

Total	\$3,521.86
-------	------------

Ending Checkbook Balance (statement)	\$6,835.67
--------------------------------------	------------

<u>Less Checks Not Cleared Yet</u>	<u>-697.84</u>
------------------------------------	----------------

Ending Checkbook Balance (calculated)	\$6,137.83
---------------------------------------	------------

There was no banquet income or expense, because there was no banquet due to Covid-19. There were no sales and no sales tax payments. A more complete report will be provided later in 2021, probably in February.

Tom Hoffmann moved that the above preliminary report be accepted, subject to later review when more complete information is available. Bob Joyce seconded the motion. It was approved by unanimous vote (by waving of hands or use of Zoom reaction symbols).

Agenda Item 6—Banquet Committee Report

Banquet Committee Chair Ralph McClure said that the 2020 Chapter Banquet has been postponed twice due to Covid-19. The original date was Saturday, June 6. That was moved back to Saturday, October 10. It was then postponed again. It is currently on hold, with no

specific date. The plan was and is to return to Pallas Restaurant on 108th Street in West Allis. They have always given us good food and service in the past. They have agreed to hold our \$100.00 reservation deposit until they re-open. That date is unknown. We would then have to establish a banquet date, which is also currently unknown. Ralph advised us to expect a cost of approximately \$25.00 per person. He asked for questions. There were none.

Agenda Item 7—Old Business

President Mike Yuhas was not aware of any old business. No one else suggested any.

Agenda Item 8—New Business

The first sub-item (8A) on the published agenda was the election of Chapter Officers and Directors (the Chapter Board) for 2021. All incumbent (2020) officers and directors (see list below) are running for re-election in 2021. President Mike Yuhas was not aware of any other candidates. He asked for nominations from the floor and received none. Tom Hoffmann moved that the 2020 incumbent slate:

- President—Mike Yuhas
- Vice President—Keith Schmidt
- Treasurer—Tara Grudzielanek
- Secretary—Tom Marcussen
- At-large Directors— Dan Grudzielanek, Ralph McClure, Andrew Roach, Cathy Wegner, and Neal Wegner.

Be elected by unanimous vote. Rich Hawthorne seconded the motion. Members (only) were asked to vote by waving of hands or using Zoom reaction symbols. All voted “aye.” There were no “nay” votes. The motion carried. The president then called for a vote on the entire slate. All voted “aye.” There were no “nay” votes. The above slate was declared re-elected for 2021.

President Mike Yuhas then asked if there was any other new business, which was sub-item 8B on the published agenda. Keith Schmidt offered a motion to move the annual business meeting to February starting in 2022. Our treasurers have rarely been able to present a full report, due to lack of year-end statements, on the first Friday in January. President Mike Yuhas and current Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek both thought that was a good idea. Ward Wells seconded the motion. Dave Nelson pointed out that the current by-laws state that the annual business meeting can be held in either January or February. There was no further discussion. Mike Yuhas called for a vote. All but one voted “aye.” There was one “nay” vote. The motion carried.

Agenda Item 9—Miscellaneous

Mike Yuhas asked if there was any other discussion “for the good of the order.” There was none.

Agenda Item 10—Adjournment

Dave Nelson moved that we adjourn the formal business meeting. Tom Hoffmann seconded the motion. All voted “aye.” There were no “nay” votes. The motion carried. The official business meeting was declared adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Presentation

Arlyn Colby took over at 8:03 pm. Arlyn joined our Chapter fairly recently, after we began offering virtual meetings via Zoom. He lives in Barron, in the NW part of Wisconsin, where he had a long career as a math teacher.

Arlyn treated us to a tour of some very rare mileage, on seven abandoned branch lines in NW Wisconsin, covered in his seven books. The “Blueberry line” consists of the two Soo Line branches from Barron south to Ridgeland, and north from Cameron through Rice Lake and Birchwood to Reserve. “Blueberry” is the tower at the level crossing of CStPM&O’s main line from Eau Claire to Superior, about 3 miles south of Rice Lake. He moved on to the Milwaukee Road’s Chippewa Valley line, from Wabasha, Minnesota, across the Mississippi River on a pontoon bridge, and then NE up the Chippewa River Valley to Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls. That line included a branch to the north up the Red Cedar River from Red Cedar to Menomonie. There were five more Omaha Road (CStPM&O, a subsidiary of the Chicago & North Western) branches. These went from Fairchild west to Mondovi, from Norma (Chippewa Falls) NE to Cornell and Hughey, from Tuscobia NE to Park Falls, from Woodville SE to Spring Valley and Weston, and (book is in progress) from Hudson SE to Ellsworth.

Attendance held at 72-73 computers throughout the presentation.

The main presentation ended at 8:47 pm. The following question and answer session gradually transitioned to an informal discussion group. That covered a wide range of railroad topics, lasting until about 10:00 pm.

Railroad News

- Long-time member Jerry Hilton joined us today. This is his first virtual Zoom meeting with us.
- The Soo Line depot in Barron has been re-purposed as a coffee shop and artisan bakery.
- There is a restored Soo Line wood caboos on display in Barron.
- The Wisconsin Great Northern plans to re-open on May 1. They reconfigured their dining car to offer private rooms. These give greater distancing as well as privacy.
- Richard Carpenter, author of the popular series of hand-drawn 1946 US railroad maps, passed away in May 2020. He completed five volumes, from New England west to Iowa and Minnesota. Wisconsin is in Volume 4.
- Reprints of the popular Steam Powered Video series of US and Canadian railroad atlases are available at railfandepot.com. I think I saw all volumes there.
- Detailed aerial views of many yards, terminals and junctions, as they were when still active, can be found at historicaerials.com. They require a pricey subscription of \$39.00 per month for up to 100 views per month, or \$195.00 for 6 months.

Respectfully Submitted
Thomas W. Marcussen
Wisconsin Chapter Secretary