



GATSME Model Railroad Club Minutes of the General Business Meeting Held February 1, 2007

This meeting was held in the club's meeting room, with 17 in attendance. 2 more arrived during the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:37 PM by Jerry Anderson, President.

REPORTS

The minutes of the previous meeting were read by Frederick Monsimer, Club Secretary, and approved as read on a motion made by Jay Pastelak, seconded by Charlie Woodward.

Vice President's Report – Tim Wells reported that we had two probationary members who would be up for a vote in the next couple of months, and that he would be working on planning the banquet in a little while. Jerry mentioned that we would be continuing the cleaning schedule as we have been doing it, with three people assigned each month. This seems to be working well.

Treasurer's Report – Rich Barlow reported that we had \$630.59 in the checking account and \$8087.13 in the savings account.

Car sales in January were \$380.00.

Raffle train totals for December 2006 and January 2007 were:

\$350.75 gross income
-\$72.08 expenses
\$278.67 net income

Income from the January shows was:

Dates	1/6-1/7	1/20-1/21	Total
Fishbowl	\$778.90	\$1117.84	\$1896.74
Raffle	\$152.00	\$141.50	\$293.50
White Elephant Table	\$172.83	\$113.70	286.59
January Club Cars	\$70.00	\$31.00	\$380.00
Total			\$2856.77

The report was accepted unanimously on a motion made by O'Brien, seconded by Pastelak.

Rich offered a comparison with the previous year's shows (January 2006)

Dates	1/7-1/8	1/21-1/22	Total	Compared to Jan. 2007
Fishbowl	\$736.00	\$781.50	\$1517.50	-\$379.24
Raffle	\$125.00	\$136.75	\$261.75	-\$31.75
White Elephant	\$123.00	\$52.00	\$175.00	-\$111.59
Club Cars	\$155.00	\$120.00	\$275.00	-\$105.00
Total			\$1954.25	-522.52

Alan Frame from the Miniature Railroad Club of York was introduced; his club would like to come and run with us. He was a GATSME member in the 60s when he was in High School, and he had some slides from that era, which he left with us.

General Superintendent – Doug Baer said that he was working on preparing a master project list; he had begun putting together a list of projects for each committee. Some major projects, and numerous smaller tasks. The major projects for each committee will be:

Track – Greenville & Shenango areas.

Electrical – Staging Loops, Transfer, signal gaps, lights.

Scenery – Grover and the Quarry area; later also the city area at Southport.

DCC – Booster redistribution and switchtender boards.

Narrow Gauge – This is still under discussion.

Chris said that members don't need to be part of only one committee; they should be involved with more than one thing.

Operations – Chris O’Brien reported that he would be meeting with some of the key operators (Gateway West, Union, etc.) to make sure that everyone was on the same page. He and Mike Logan were looking at redoing the call board to make it easier to read and use. The trains also had been assigned a color code to indicate how difficult each train was to run. The easiest ones are coded in green, the difficult ones are coded in red, and ones in the middle are yellow. Someone pointed out that if there wasn’t a green-level train on the schedule for another half hour, some operators may be standing around in the club room, and Chris said that these operators could “ride along” with another operator and learn the railroad by observing how they run their trains. He also mentioned that lists of cars due for inspection are being prepared, and will be given to the owners of those cars, so they know which cars are due for maintenance and re-inspection. Chris also asked that any show trains still on the layout be removed as soon as possible, to clear room and facilitate the staging of the operating session.

OLD BUSINESS

Youth Visit – Jerry mentioned that we had gotten a nice letter from a young man who had come to the club on a Thursday night, and appreciated being given the chance to run a train on the railroad. The club also had received a donation.

Open Houses – Ed Wilson said that we had had an excellent show season. The advertising was good – the Inquirer article brought in new visitors, and the friendly atmosphere brought return visitors, as well as encouraging word-of-mouth publicity, which is invaluable. He also had a few comments on the White Elephant table; either price your items as individual items or as a box-full; not both. Complications arise when someone buys part of the box and then someone else wants the rest – do we charge the second person the “box-full” price, or scale it down to account for the items that aren’t there any more? Either take the 90/10 split, or donate the items to the club; having a variety of different percentages causes confusion. Remember that the person keeping track of the money is also manning the front table (and sometimes answering the phone, too.) Ed also suggested having more small stools for the kids, so they can see the layout; the four we had were appreciated, and helped the kids and their parents enjoy the show more. People are more likely to come back (and tell their friends) if they have a good time. The display of scales and gauges was a good idea – interesting and informative. Having someone doing work, and demonstrating modeling techniques would be good also. People like to see what is involved in constructing a layout like ours. A modular display could also be good – Bob Rule had a single module set up last year, but a small modular layout could also work, if we have the room needed to display it. Jerry said that there should be at least two people at the front table at all times, and also said that if we can have Henry Sullivan in his conductor’s uniform, that would be great also. Interacting with the visitors and explaining things is a good thing. Ed mentioned that the club video had been turned off, since it was distracting people from the front table and displays. Darryl Rule said that at Schuylkill Valley, they give out a free raffle ticket to each show attendee, and asked if this was something that we might want to try. There seemed to be some reluctance to this idea, but Jerry said that we might try it one weekend, on a trial basis, if the club wanted to do so.

NEW BUSINESS

DSL Connection – Val suggested thinking about getting an internet connection for the club. We could get a DSL connection for \$17.95 per month, which would allow us to do historical research, download programs such as JMRI, and work on the web site.

Gift Baskets – Darryl Rule mentioned that Dave Palmer’s child had been born, and it was mentioned that Rob Raggi had also recently become a father. He suggested getting a gift basket for each of them, as had been done for some other members recently. It was suggested that we contribute toward a gift certificate instead; this would give more options to the parents, who may prefer certain brands or products over others.

Club Radios – Chris asked whether we were going to get a couple of FRS radios that could be used as “loaners” for guests who don’t have their own radios. Jerry said that this purchase had been authorized during 2006, and told Chris to go ahead with it.

S-Gaugers – Francine mentioned that the North Penn S-Gaugers were looking for a new meeting space.

Cantilevered Ladder – Val reminded us about the “Topside Creeper” which was mentioned the previous month, and asked if we were going to purchase this tool. On a motion made by Jay, seconded by Val, we voted to make the purchase.

CDs – There was a discussion of Certificates of Deposit, which we had been rolling over, and on a motion made by Charlie Woodward, seconded by Chris O'Brien, we voted to authorize the Treasurer to purchase additional ones as he deems advisable.

Long-Range Plan Committee – Members of this group had met with the Township Manager, but there was no definite information yet. We are trying to make sure that we know as many of the facts as possible, so we can be part of the process, and preserve our current location, or create a moving plan if it comes to that. Val suggested that with the S-Gaugers and Keystone N-Trak looking for meeting space, we should pool our resources and buy the building. Mike Logan asked if the Township representatives had seen what we have here, and George said that they had. Jerry said that we should keep a positive attitude – we are not down, and definitely not out.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Doug Baer, seconded by Bruce Sergeant, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 PM, a duration of 69 minutes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frederick Monsimer,
Club Secretary