

NPRHA Board of Directors (BOD) Combined Minutes / Actions of 2008

BOD eMail Action - January 15, 2008

There has been ongoing discussion with then GNRHS about the need for improved computer system support at the joint archives of the Jackson Street Round House (JSRH). Both organizations agree that archive data should be available digitally to users in the outside world. This requires cataloging, scanning, and management of collections per the donor's request (for example, BNSF donated use of its materials under certain conditions). Work needs to be done to establish goals, system architectures, and project plans to determine hardware and software requirements. Initial observations include the need for high-bandwidth Internet connectivity, easy website and host computer administration, group data upload capabilities, terminals/workstations for data input, wireless support, and common search keys/hooks for easy database access. Optical scanning resources include flatbed scanner with document feeder, wide-format roller scanner for maps/technical drawings, and a film scanner for multi-format film and transparencies. Archival storage supplies for acid-free paper protection would also be necessary.

It was recommended that a joint committee of 6-7 members be established to design a project plan that will:

1. Set the user interface points and their requirements.
2. Select the software packages that will provide the required functionality.
3. Select the hardware systems that will run the software to meet the user requirements.
4. Document the system architecture.
5. Set the schedule and costs for the project implementation.
6. Publish the final report to the GNRHS and NPRHA Boards.

Motion to establish a committee to address a project plan and timely reporting needed for development and support of an effective Jackson Street Round House digital archive system for the NPRHA and GNRHS groups - Dick, Taylor 2nd, carried.

BOD eMail Action - January 17, 2008

James Dick reported that he approached the Minnesota History Center with a request to scan into digital form, two volumes of crossing contracts at over 500 pages each. The Crossing contracts show right of way, former and current rail lines, contain text of the history and the rights of the crossing, and record definite dates of land acquisition. Many interlocking agreements refer back to these contracts. Since photocopying produced poor detail and loss of information recorded in color, the next option was to approach the MHS for an experimental scanning project provided the data was attributed to the MHS. (Scanners, in general, are forbidden at the MHS and other historical institutions, so this opportunity is a great privilege on behalf of the NPRHA to perhaps grow a closer relationship with the MHS and the NPRHA resulting in a greater and faster flow of information between the two organizations.)

Motion to approve a maximum of \$400 to purchase a legal-size (8.5" x 14") flatbed scanner (either HP ScanJet 8300 or Epson Perfection 4490 Office Scan) for the purpose of pursuing the Crossing contracts project described with the cooperation of the Minnesota Historical Society. The scanner would support this and any other pending projects after which the scanner would move to the NPRHA archives for further use - Dick, McCoy 2nd, carried.

BOD eMail Action - May 7, 2008

In early May, the boards of the GNRHS and NPRHA were approached with the possible donation of Burlington Northern Railroad microfiche records covering buildings (depots, roundhouses, service structures - approx 10,000 records), yards (city overviews or maps - approx 4,500 records), right-of-way engineering drawings (approx 8,000 records), and bridge drawings (approx 26,000 records). The former BN employee would contribute the records, the storage cabinet, and microfiche viewer for lifetime memberships in the GNRHS and NPRHA. The records were from the "West-End" line segments west of Missoula and Kalispell. Discussion on NPRHA board covered the current available documentation, the merits of these records, and the endorsement of a NPRHA 1883 membership for this donation in kind.

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Motion for the NPRHA to work with the GNRHS to secure the BN Records Donation offered under the conditions specified. Any expenses incurred by the NPRHA beyond \$200 are to be approved by the Board - Taylor, Dick 2nd, carried.

BOD Tacoma WA - July 16, 2008

Called to order by President Tarbox at 7:37 am.

Members in Attendance: Duane Durr, Bill Kuebler, Dave Hillard, Warren McGee, Jerry Pickell, Tim Repp, Larry Schrenk, Bill Taylor, Gary Wildung. **Board:** Jack Christensen, James Dick, John Fujii, Allan Manson, Bob McCoy, Gary Tarbox, Jan Taylor. **Absent:** Chris Frissell, John Lubetkin. **Guests:** Vita Dick

Agenda - reviewed and approved.

Motion to accept last minutes - McCoy, Dick 2nd, carried.

Finance

McCoy covered the financial report for 2007 that was previously mailed to the Board. 2006 and 2007 reports were sent for review. As of December 31, 2007, the NPRHA held \$174,190.16 in assets, up from \$145,754.01 for 2006. The 2007 figure was substantially up because of 3-year memberships that were paid in advance. McCoy reported that money would be moved to cover this advance membership liability should anything happen to the NPRHA.

Membership

Hillard reported our membership remains about the size it was last year (as of July 12, 2008, this was 1,885). Half-price membership continues to attract memberships. Over 500 people have multi-year membership. Over 90 individuals responded to the renewal notice on the Mainstreeter mailing labels. This has proven very effective. The most recent issue included return envelopes and notifications on their labels - the response was over 100 renewals. About 20 individuals had difficulty with duplicate renewals, so the system is not perfect yet. Still, the renewal initiatives have been very successful. One concern, however, is that members are not renewing at their previous rate, e.g., started out as *Sustaining* but forgot and renewed again at a lesser category. It was noted that the issue shorthand (27-2) was confusing to individuals. Durr suggested perhaps different colors on their notifications or simply assume they wish to continue at their previous rate and notify them of that amount.

Publications

Repp reported that *The Mainstreeter* is an important way to share information for the NPRHA. It is available in hobby shops, museums, libraries, etc. The goal is to provide this information in a well-balanced, high-quality, entertaining, visually attractive, and literate format. It also serves as a good recruiting tool. The first two issues for the past year went out on time with the latest issue rushed due to schedule. The latter two issues are more difficult to produce due to vacations and holidays. This simply is the fact of our quarterly. The printing costs remain largely in line with expectations, and the change to thicker papers make the publication competitive in quality with similar publications. The Northwest Publishing Center remains convenient to quality control for Repp and the relationship is very good. The editorial board includes the proofing inputs of Ed Sherry, John Phillips, and Gary Tarbox, who all provide a good diversity of feedback for the overall consistency of the publication. Dave Cooley provided a great deal of additional help such as contributing excellent maps and grade profiles.

Past issues have used limited color (due to the printing process and balance in costs), but issues from the Milwaukee Magazine, Union Pacific, and Rock Island use much more color (something we will look at as opportunities arise). It is heartbreaking to not have enough space for great materials, so we are staging additional resources on the website. Discussion followed about electronic back issues in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) for members - there are pros and cons for releasing them on the web - a topic for continued discussion. Additional discussion occurred around editorials and critique of manufacturers' products - proactive and constructive feedback helps produce better models than remarks after the fact.

One final topic was a question about how to encourage more contributions to *The Mainstreeter*. It seems many people are willing to present at conventions but not write articles for the publication - why is this and how can we

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improve here? Many sources of photos such as Museum of the Rockies et al have been very supportive of our publication (including gratis use). Repp concluded that he would be available for another year as Publisher.

Company Store

Tarbox reported for Dave Cooley that the Company Store continues to do well. The report included a distribution of merchandise divided into convention and online sales. Items of note include 1/4th of our renewals take place online. The largest sales are in the modeling category followed by book sales. Gary noted that since we receive 220 new members per year, they often have to create new libraries and will purchase many of the back issues for reference. All of our *Mainstreeter* reprints are digitally reproduced by a commercial printer. Video and DVD sales are strong and the third largest component of business. Overall, \$33,358.12 sales were reported. Dick noted that he would prefer to purchase all back issues as PDF - that would be great and he would purchase the entire series.

NPRHA Calendar

Tarbox noted that the calendar is an excellent recruiting tool. Kuebler reported that the committee strives for a good balance between steam/diesel, old/new, etc. It was noted that newer eras are better represented only because of the available photographic record in these eras. Overall the effort continues well and the result is an excellent introduction to many people of the NP. Durr noted that the committee is already half way through selecting images for the 2010 calendar. Repp also added that the Milwaukee and UP membership have to purchase their own calendar separately, so the inclusion of ours is a member benefit.

Modeling

Dean O'Neill was not able to join the meeting, so Tarbox offered the committee's report. It was formatted as successes, challenges, feedback, and futures. In terms of successes, three new kits for this year - NP Bay-Window Caboose, a Side Door Add-on kit to the Bay-Window Caboose, and a N scale version of the NP depot. In particular, there is growing interest in N scale, so this release should be well received. For challenges, the committee recognizes the need for greater diversity of contributors to avoid burn out of key individuals. In terms of feedback, in general, the committee welcomes feedback, especially in the areas of what is going well, what could improve, what still needs to be done, and how can they improve communication with NP modelers? Finally, the future area of the report mentioned that the Red Caboose mechanical reefer is still not complete yet. 1 or 2 new projects are under way for late 2008 or early 2009. There are also 1 or 2 committee seats still in need of filling and the need to continue to connect with manufacturers is very important.

Conventions

2009: Dick started the convention reports with a status of the 25th convention in St. Paul, Minnesota (July 15-18). The convention hotel is the Best Western White Bear Country Inn (4940 State Hwy 61, White Bear Lake, MN 55110 - phone (651) 429-5393, fax (651) 429-6342). This location is 11 miles north of St. Paul. The Stillwater Branch of the NP left the St. Paul to Duluth mainline here. The hotel rates are still in negotiation. We have tentatively locked in their banquet facilities but they would not sign a contract until calendar 2009. There are not many choices for hotels in the area. The agenda will be roughly two days of traditional presentations (Wed, Thu), followed by a Friday bus tour of the Jackson Street Roundhouse (morning) and a visit to the Thompson Brothers farmstead where much NP history and perhaps train rides can be found. Saturday would hold the swap meet, membership meeting, a possible veterans panel, and banquet. (The banquet raffle should be discussed further as the current committee will retire in 2008.) Activities for spouses and families are available in White Bear Lake and the downtown is three blocks from the hotel. The opportunity of visiting Como Park Conservatory for guests who wish to relax in an air-conditioned indoor garden is also there (annual attendance is almost as great as the Mall of America).

2010: Taylor reported for chairs Mike Applegate and Mike Lustig. The Spokane, Washington convention is scheduled for July 14-17, and they are busily working on the details. Maryann Applegate is working on the hotel arrangements with the Mirabeau Park Hotel (formerly a Red Lion hotel). It is 10 miles outside of downtown and 18 miles from Spokane International Airport. They are hoping for a train ride, but there is no guarantee that it will materialize.

2008: Jerry Pickell reported that the registration total for the Tacoma convention was 180. This was below the goal of 200, but we will likely break even for the event. The committee tried to get the train ride of 10 years ago, but it was cost prohibitive in the end. The current one is a flat \$5K, so we will likely do okay - some people are just

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signing up for the train ride and that is going well. Allan Manson is handling the box lunches for the trip (180 ordered) and plenty of bulk bottled water in coolers on the train. Allan reported that a fellow engineer was helping him to coordinate this ride with the Tacoma Rail organization (formerly the Tacoma Eastern). We are all looking forward to a great week and experience.

Archive Report

James Dick reported for Mike Borkan that the Jackson Street Roundhouse (JSRH) group has been busy. With the help of Larry Schrenk, planning and execution for a number of special events (100th anniversary of the JSRH, 150th anniversary of Minnesota statehood, etc.) were successfully completed. Several cabinets complete with NP labeling were installed. Digital archiving continues but the current collection of computers is a bit underpowered for the task. Larry Schrenk's enlarging- and reducing-copier donation was repaired and continues to soldier on. The recent JSRH break-ins are now considered a one-time event - a vagrant living close by was recently removed. Things have improved.

Tarbox noted that the BNSF has donated some 90 boxes of maps of various vintages - a tremendous collection. The details are types of information unavailable elsewhere. It was reported that the BNSF has located even more resources they are preparing to donate to the JSRH Archive.

NPRHA Website

Tarbox reported that our service continues on with the same ISP (X-Factor) at \$99/month. Their service has been excellent. We are reaching the limit of our server's hard drive capacity (15.2GB of data on the site currently). We've added some of Jim Fredrickson's images to the site - about 125 per week. Walt Ainsworth is scanning the data at high resolutions.

Nominations

Dick reported that the nomination committee has confirmed that Taylor, Lubetkin, and Manson would be interested in standing for the next slate. Bob McCoy, who has given us many years of great service, will not join the slate.

Motion to recognize and thank Bob McCoy for his outstanding years of service - Taylor, Fujii 2nd, carried.

New Business

The new business items below were introduced at this meeting to gather initial comments and consideration at our second Board meeting on Sunday, July 20.

West-End Archive

Tarbox discussed a proposal to establish a West End archive as a joint project between the NPRHA, GNRHS and other interested railroad history groups. Several major railroad collections in Washington will become available in the future and their owners would like to have them in an archive in the Puget Sound area. The concept is that the archive would house material from any railroads that served the Pacific Northwest states, not just the NP. The West End archive would be an expansion of the JSRH archive concept. The West End material would likely not be publicly available, although digital images would be. The goal is to quickly digitize as much material as possible. It was noted that the broader community would be better served by using the power of the Internet in the future. Not everything would be posted, but making catalogs available would help researchers continue with their interest in the topic. The amount of money required to support this (for equipment) is smaller than the actual hours required to make it available and searchable. Taylor noted there could be many hidden costs, too.

Digital Archive

The joint Digital Archive Committee members include Mike Borkan (NPRHA), Bill Sornsin (GNRHS), Stu Holmquist (GNRHS), Jeff Otto (GNRHS), Dean O'Neill (NPRHA), Hudson Leighton (NPRHA), John Thomas (GNRHS), and Cliff Salmon (GNRHS). The Museum of the Rockies project experience suggests that we should digitize the archive material and then catalog it, making it easier to involve people from throughout the country in the work. The cost to initiate the Digital Archive project requires the acquisition of two dual-core PCs, upgrade hardware to support the existing computers and software at a cost of \$4510. The NPRHA would contribute half of this number to fund this. We might also need to hire a contractor to do the SQL database coding.

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Schrenk offered that the previous joint effort at the JSRH worked as an agreement between the GNRHS (providing hardware) and the NPRHA (providing software). The estimated cost was a \$2K software budget. The organization, TechSoup.org, provides non-profits with software products from major suppliers as a consortium and would be instrumental here.

Microfiche Scanning Project

Tarbox reported that the NPRHA and GNRHS have acquired a collection of approximately 50,000 microfiche cards from the early BN era (close to post merger). It includes all of the BN line segments west of Montana out to the coast. These are original drawings (although if a building was torn down, it was not included). There was a proposal to scan these cards (about 15,000 have important details for stations, right-of-way drawings, culverts, bridge drawings, etc.) The proposal would amount to about \$0.28/card by a local business at a standard of 200 dpi in 1-bit black-and-white (architectural plans are done at this resolution). A life membership to the contributor was given to both the NPRHA and the GNRHS for this contribution. The final cost for digitizing would be about \$4,300 split between the groups.

Ron Nixon Album

The Taylors showed an album of 160 images donated by Ron Nixon to a Dr. Irwin (Polson, MT) as thanks for care he received. The work was presented to the Museum of the Rockies but they did not accept it. The internal captions were done by Ron in typical typewriter style. It is a nearly complete specimen. The images cover more than the NP.

The NPRHA cannot assign any valuation to such an item for donations. Several noted that the IRS sees this as a conflict of interest and a few individuals had insights around this from other societies. The NPRHA can give a letter of receipt, but the donator must determine their own value that they must then justify to the IRS (not us). The book itself is more of a historical document than anything else. We cannot place a valuation on it.

Raffle Acquisitions

There was an opportunity as a one-time request to get \$2K to pick up brass models to serve as grand prizes for future raffles. This would be requested at the Sunday board meeting.

Jerry Pickell welcomed the members in attendance to the 2008 convention. A lot of hard work by a great group of volunteers would be enjoyed in the next few days.

Adjournment at 9:15 am.

Annual Membership Meeting Tacoma WA - July 19, 2008

Called to order by President Tarbox at 2:42 pm in the auditorium of the Washington State History Museum.

Tarbox welcomed the members in attendance and noted that this was our yearly opportunity to review the business of the NPRHA. With that, he led quick review and report of the organization.

Financials

Bob McCoy reported that the 2006 and 2007 statements were available. The NPRHA finished 2007 with nearly \$175K in the bank.

McCoy also noted that yellow pledge cards were distributed to the membership in attendance to collect funds to restore NP 3617, an EMD SD-45 unit (donated by Canadian National) to her original NP livery. This unit is owned by the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth, MN. The project would require about \$12K of which \$3K had been donated so far. Durr reported that a future goal was making NP 3617 operational. (The NPRHA charter bars the organization from owning equipment.)

Membership

Tarbox reported that about 220+ new members were added each year for the past two years. This is great news, but the balance of this is that renewals are slower, so the net effect is that our membership numbers are staying about the same. Ideas for improving our renewal rate included inserting return envelopes into the Mainstreeter issues,

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improving the text on the mailing envelope, and increasing awareness of online renewals, etc. The current membership stands at 1,920 - the goal is still 2,000. Renewal at sustaining membership rates was also encouraged.

Calendar

Bill Kuebler briefly mentioned that the calendar committee strives for balance in the publication for issues such as steam/diesel, historical/modern, etc. The group is always interested in new sources of photographic images to include in the work. Please contact Duane Durr, Gary Wildung, or Bill Kuebler if you would like to contribute.

Publications

Tim Repp reported that there is a constant desire to grow the content and variety of the Mainstreeter issues. If you need help with words or images, we can help build an enjoyable article. Our magazine shines with personal accounts such as stories on troop trains or Jack Christensen's articles. Contact Tim Repp and he can work with you on your ideas.

Company Store

Tarbox summarized store activity for 2007-2008 as approximately \$33K (store sales) and almost \$17K (membership and convention registration processing). The interesting statistics on the store sales were that 37.6% was for modeling, 27.5% books, and 19.3% for video. The modeling stuff is helping to attract newer members, especially for younger members. The store is basically a service for the membership, especially new members who need to start their libraries with back issues of the Mainstreeter and important reference books.

Modeling

Dean O'Neill reported that a lot of research is currently focused at new and upcoming kits. The three released kits for this year were the Bay Window Caboose, Bay Window Caboose Side Door Add-On kit, and the NP 2-Story Depot model in N scale. The modeling committee is very excited about the new kits in the year to come. Contact Dean for further information and ideas.

Recruitment

Tarbox mentioned that the gift membership program is still active. The NPRHA is running continuous ads in "Classic Trains" - two issues with ads featuring the future calendar and two issues with ads featuring for the Mainstreeter. This is the 3rd year of this initiative and it is showing great response.

Conventions

2009 - James Dick reported that the St. Paul, Minnesota convention (July 15-18, 2009) would be at the White Bear Lake Country Inn (Best Western). It is 11 miles north of St. Paul, MN. We will try to support shuttles if we can plan this from the train station and airport - but we will need to know commitment before we can see what's possible. (*We are very sympathetic to those not wanting to rent a car.*) There will be a traditional schedule of presentations with a trip also to Eric Thompson's farm (train loop), Jackson Street Roundhouse and the Minnesota History Museum. The 2009 convention is still looking for presenters. The room rates will be approximately \$100 per night.

2010 - Tarbox reported that Mike Applegate and Mike Lustig were co-chairs for the Spokane, Washington convention (July 14-17, 2010).

2011 - Location to be determined at Sunday's Board meeting.

Archives

Tarbox reported that the archives continue to grow. The most recent contributions include a huge shipment of drawings from the BNSF. 90 boxes of rolled drawings ranging from the 1870 to merger were donated to the NPRHA - fantastic stuff! The NPRHA has appreciated the great working relationship with Sally King of the BNSF for these contributions. The stipulation for the donation is that they be catalogued and made available for use. Larry Schrenk noted that people are welcome to come out and help the JSRH archives group with their archive work. If you are going to be in St. Paul (especially before the convention), then contact Mike Borkan for details on how to help the JRHS.

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Website

Tarbox reported that we're at 15.3GB of digital material on NPRHA.org. Half of Jim Fredrickson's photo collection is posted as a catalog.

Nominations

James Dick reported that the Nominating Committee needed to fill a slate of four positions. Jan Taylor, Allan Manson, John Lubetkin were offered as candidates. Dick noted that Bob McCoy was stepping down after many years of wonderful service (his wife is retiring). There was applause and thanks to Bob on this note. Tarbox noted that Ken Vogel has volunteered to be the new NPRHA treasurer and was willing to stand for this election. With this addition, nominations from the floor were invited three times per procedure.

Motion to close nominations and approve slate of candidates - Horne, Byrd 2nd, carried.

2007 Minutes

The minutes were posted and available from the website with copies available at this meeting for review.

Motion and second to accept without reading - Franz, Wildung 2nd, carried.

Treasurer's 2007 Financial Report

Motion to receive the financial report as reported - Berntsen, Durr 2nd, carried.

Archive Digitization Project

Tarbox reported that there were several projects under discussion for digitization of archive materials. This included discussions on a West-End Archive and a project to digitize 50K worth of microfiche records of the BN (right after merger that covers BN/GN areas west of Montana to the coast). Tarbox also reported a Ron Nixon album from Dr. Steven Irwin of Poulson, MT that included 160 photographs and captions.

Adjournment at 3:36 pm.

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Called to order by President Tarbox at 9:07 am.

Members in Attendance: Mike Applegate, Ed Berntsen, Duane Durr, David Franz, Mike Lustig, Jerry Pickell, Tim Repp, Larry Schrenk, Gary Wildung. **Board:** Jack Christensen, James Dick, Chris Frissell, John Fujii, Allan Manson, Bob McCoy, Gary Tarbox, Jan Taylor. **Absent:** John Lubetkin, Ken Vogel

Tarbox opened the meeting by mentioning that Jack Christensen generously donated all of his painting proceeds from the 2008 convention to the NPRHA, a contribution of \$1,700.

NPRHA Officers

Motion to appoint 2008-2009 NPRHA Board Officers as follows:

- *President - Gary Tarbox*
- *Vice President - Jan Taylor*
- *Treasurer - Ken Vogel*
- *Secretary - John Fujii*

Taylor, Christensen 2nd, carried.

Tarbox proceeded with the previous issues discussed during the week.

Membership

Work was progressing on the per-issue renewal envelopes approach to improve return rates. The cost would be \$600/issue, so there would be more consideration to ensure return on investment.

Mainstreeter

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There was an expressed desire to use the website to post supplementary information from articles with more information than could be printed. Repp noted that we must take care that photos licensed to us for one-time use as a non-profit could not go out on the website. Dick noted that the Minnesota Historical Society gave permission for images in the slide presentations but not beyond that - we would be required to request additional permission to post them. In general, information posted to the Internet must be carefully monitored.

Calendar

The calendar is in great shape with color used on every page (not necessarily the image itself but the overall graphic design). The cost is not substantially higher for this production improvement - and it improves the shelf life of the offering.

Company Store

We will need to look at better support for transfer of the store to the St. Paul convention. In general, a dedicated individual will need to focus just on this. If Bob McCoy transfers this, we will need to cover gas.

Motion to reimburse gas to transport the store inventory to the convention site for 2009 - Taylor, Manson 2nd, carried.

Christensen expressed concern that the company store doesn't have smaller shirt sizes for women and children. We need to consider gifts beyond the membership - smaller sizes - so we should consider extending the inventory. Durr concurred - he would have purchased 4-5 small sizes had they been available. Repp also suggested that we consider augmenting our ads for the store to be more appealing (we have grand-parent aged members).

Modeling

No real issues besides the need to further integrate the modeling group into the structure of the organization. It is one of our major recruiting and connection functions for the NPRHA.

Recruitment

The recruitment project started with local groups is not making progress. There are results for a few strong groups, but it takes of effort outside of these bodies (Auburn, St. Paul and Billings groups mentioned). There is still great potential for this to grow membership. We may need to give NPRHA memberships greater visibility at other meetings.

Conventions

2010 - Lustig noted they were looking at a Spokane to Paradise train ride, but nothing is certain yet (Sandpoint to Paradise is one of the most scenic segments of the NP mainline) - perhaps we will need to look into BNSF employees' special equipment. Schrenk suggested that Mr. Downing of Spokane would be an important resource here. Repp threw in that the SP&S 700 can be had for \$10K per day, but you supply the train. Nothing is certain and it might not even happen.

Tarbox noted that the need to get presentations in development was something to focus on - the need for a program chair for this would be key. Durr and others also noted the need for non-attendee alternative activities (women/spouses) at this location. Repp noted that the Things-To-Do-in-Tacoma was really helpful in the Mainstreeter for 2008.

Some discussion occurred around dates outside of July. If a September date were considered, it would impact families with school-aged kids and seasonal sports people such as hunters.

2009 - Dick posed a question about stipends to help run key functions such as the store (for something like \$40/day). Also, for the Best Western White Bear Lake property, he would like to be able to investigate a negotiation to get the price under \$100 (perhaps a lump-sum consideration). Transportation will also be a challenge since the distance from the airport / train station is not small (and the hotel has no shuttle). From a train ride perspective, he's not sure yet and the cost is high/risky for such a venture. The morning visit to the museum and roundhouse is important since there is no air conditioning in the latter building. The Thompson Brother's farm only has a 1.5 mile loop of track. The day could end with a paddleboat ride on the St Croix River, but just ideas right now. Also a keynote speaker and veteran panel is being investigated, but no commitments made at this point.

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Alternative activities such as the conservatory and Como Park (St. Paul, MN) and even Stillwater might be options. Dick recommended that the idea of making the week prior to the convention available for volunteer work at the JSRH would be valuable.

2011 - Butte, MT, is a possibility - it has a restored depot there that is amazing. Bill Taylor is on the board of directors for that facility. It has first-class convention possibilities (the depot has hosted wedding receptions and such - two stories).

Motion to accept Bill Taylor's proposal to hold the 2011 Convention in Butte, MT, with Bill serving as chair - Dick, Frissell 2nd, carried.

Tarbox also noted that there is interest and proposals for holding the 2012 convention in either Toppenish, WA, or Portland, OR.

Archive Business

It was suggested that \$2,500 be contributed by the NPRHA to start this joint project (half of \$5K) for archive digitization with the GNRHS. Schrenk noted that there are additional costs beyond just those discussed - rent, boxes, and consumables come to mind as a starting point for the cost of running archives.

Motion to approve \$2,500 to initially support the archive digitization costs as proposed - Dick, Frissell 2nd, carried.

There is also a cost to support the materials received from the BN (maps) such as boxes and other materials. McCoy noted there was \$17K in the BN endowment funds for such work. The roundhouse rental agreement would also require support for its anticipated cost-of-living increase.

Motion for the JSRH archives that up to \$4,500 be allocated for continued archiving support plus additional concerns caused by addition to the BN endowment/gifts - Dick, Frissell 2nd, carried.

Ongoing concerns about display space, semi-permanent installations, and traveling exhibits will also require support. Exhibits such as "We Came By Train" for the 150th anniversary for Minnesota (covering immigration into the state) should have future consideration.

Website

FYI - we may need a future authorization for growing the hard drive space for our website. It may also cost us more than \$99/month.

West-End Archive

Tarbox asked the board about its opinion on the west-end archive concept. Recap - this would be an archive supporting storage and cataloging space only - not display space - for external exhibits, traveling shows, etc. We would not need money yet, but we would need to incorporate to look at buildings for possible space. Jim Fredrickson's collection (which comprises a basement, upstairs bedroom and single car garage) would be a lead candidate for the start of this work. The work here would tie in with the work being done at the JSRH systems through online catalogs.

Schrenk fully supported the idea of a west-coast archive. It would not be competitive (east vs. west) but staffing would be a concern (you need bodies to get work done). The proposal is on the right track, but credibility would also be important to establish (people do not want to see their collections dissipated or at swap meets).

Tarbox noted that this would be for all railroads to improve interest and viability (NP, GN, SP&S, SP, UP, and even the BN). It would likely require about 10,000 square feet to house. Berntsen suggested that the NRHS/PNW chapter also be considered - along with issues of appropriate climate controlled spaces.

Motion to pursue investigations for development of the West-End archives - Taylor, Manson 2nd, carried.

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Microfiche Archive

Tarbox requested authorization for \$1,600 be spent on 200-dots-per-inch, 1-bit scanning of the structures and station maps of the BN microfiche cards. The plan is to scan and then catalog. \$1,600 would cover half of the proposed initial scanning (GNRHS would cover the other half of the cost to scan 14,500 cards - \$3,200 total).

Motion to pursue the proposed joint scanning project of the 14,500 card BN microfiche at a cost of \$1,600 to the NPRHA as half of the total cost with the GNRHS - Taylor, Dick 2nd, carried.

Restoration of NP 3617

Tarbox asks the board if there is interest in making a contribution to the cosmetic restoration of the SD-45 back to its NP livery (and perhaps make it operable in the future).

Motion to support this restoration project given its historical precedence at the amount of \$2,000 - Dick, Manson 2nd, carried with Frissell vote no (only \$1,000 should be contributed).

Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy

The NPRHA should look at its 501(c)-3 status and consider a COI policy to protect the group and its personnel. The NRHS has a COI policy for sign offs. Berntsen noted that non-profits should consider both conflict of interest and confidentiality procedures. 501(c)-3 organizations have become political, so the IRS now needs to monitor them.

W&R Brass Raffle Funding

Bill McKown is retiring from his brass model import business which has donated models each year for our raffle. There is an opportunity to buy future raffle pieces that come available over the year. Wildung recommended \$2,000 be allocated for this purchase. Our raffle is second-to-none (Durr noted that we did close to \$3,000 last night).

Motion to provide \$2,000 allowance to support Wildung's acquisition of brass models for future convention raffles - Dick, Taylor 2nd, carried.

Tarbox said that items should be shipped to Cooley for storage. Berntsen noted that we should also be concerned about local and state gambling laws for the location of our conventions.

Book Publishing Support

Schrenk inquired about the use of our non-profit status to purchase/license photos for his book project. The NPRHA would become a co-producer of this book. Repp cautioned how the sponsorship was handled (on the title page and how it was generally executed). It would be cleaner to have a list of photos instead and to donate to the purchase of the photos. It was also noted, however, that other authors bear these ongoing costs as well - a policy should be established on how to assist authors with things like grants.

Schrenk indicated that the book would be 400 pages with 400 images (not over \$1,000 for the total). Frissell said we'd need to look at this for conflict of interest in authorizing it. Tarbox agreed, we have not pursued this before and would likely need to form a group to look at this (such as grant proposals and such). Berntsen noted that in order to do this, you need to consider:

- fairness - who and why
- benefit - review who receives the support (especially for perception and even more so for Board members)

The NRHS has a grant committee for review of projects. It was recommended to have a separate committee and that a legal review be conducted for any policies to establish fairness. It is also important to review how information is made available and its purpose - it has to be established both as a policy and how it is tied to revenue (or not).

Tarbox suggested that we needed further review of this topic (and a group leader to investigate the issues and help put together a policy). Repp suggested we even might contact Martin Hansen, lawyer.

BN Veteran Collections

Berntsen asked if there was any outreach to BN veteran groups to identify any known significant collections? The JSRH archive has an accession form for such contacts but a general packet is needed. It was suggested to put this material online for access.

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Schrenk cautioned that the NPRHA cannot ever provide any type of valuation in these transactions. The IRS will not allow this and it is a conflict of interest (COI) for us to do so.

Mainstreeter PDFs

Repp asked if electronic copies of the Mainstreeter would ever be available on the website. This was deemed a topic for future discussion.

Convention Issues

The topic of pro-rating the convention charge for late arrivals was brought up. This is hard to administer efficiently. This would be discussed further via email.

Repp also noted that he needed better scheduling so that model photography for the Mainstreeter could happen (a few models came and went before they were photographed). The general meeting should also invite general input from the membership (since it is our only real chance for general input from the membership). This would need further development and guidance.

Motion to adjourn - Christensen, Dick 2nd, carried.

Adjournment at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted August 31, 2008 - John Fujii, Secretary