

Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association

General Membership Meeting

Baxter, Minnesota

September 17, 2022

Board Members Present: Don Golde, Steve Joyner, Bob Makins, Doug Shearer, Jim Woodward, Bill Zidel, and Ken Zieska.

Board Members Not Present: Dave Hillard did not attend the 2022 Convention due to a back ailment.
Dean O'Neill did not attend the 2022 Convention due to recent knee surgery.

Meeting called to Order at 3:14 PM

Printed Copies of the Meeting Agenda, NPRHA Balance Sheet, NPRHA Membership Report, NPRHA Grants Summary Report, and NPRHA Modeling Committee Report were available to Member attendees.

President Zidel introduced those members of the current NPRHA Board who were present at the Convention.

President Zidel asked attendees if they had any housekeeping issues with the current convention. The only item mentioned was that one attendee had left a picture of the Duluth depot on the bus that brought us back to Baxter after the September 16 trip to Duluth. Later in the evening it was reunited with its owner at the Banquet.

If members have issues, contact information for the members of the Board can be found in *The Mainstreeter*.

Approval of Minutes for the September 24, 2021 Membership Meeting at Missoula, Montana: Chris Atkins moved to approve, Bruce Butler seconded. Approved unanimously via voice vote.

NPRHA Board Membership: Four Seats are up for election in 2022.

- Seat 7 – Currently held by Don Golde, who indicated he was willing to serve another two years. No other nominations for Seat 7 were received. Members unanimously approved re-election of Don Golde.
- Seat 9 – Currently held by Dave Hillard, who is willing to remain on the Board and serve as Treasurer for one more two-year term. No other nominations for Seat 9 were received. Members unanimously approved re-election of Dave Hillard.
- Seat 6 – Has been held since 2014 by Doug Shearer, who will be retiring from the Board. Allen Manson nominated Steve Fuller for Seat 6. No other nominations for Seat 6 were received. Members unanimously approved election of Steve Fuller.
- Seat 8 – Has been held since 2014 by Bob Makins, who will be retiring from the Board. Al Zimmerman nominated Bill Taylor for Seat 8. No other nominations for Seat 8 were received. Members unanimously approved election of Bill Taylor.

Bill Zidel encouraged members to consider including NPRHA in their estate plans. He also encouraged members to consider volunteering to serve on the NPRHA Board.

Grants Committee:

Committee Chairman Harold Shannon reported. In addition to Harold, the Grants Committee includes Phil Beach, John Berg, Bruce Ferguson, John Fujii, and Barry Kantowitz.

Under the current grant process, the committee receives grant requests at any time during the year; however, there is a yearly cutoff of March 1 at 11:59 PM. So, all of the requests received on or after March 2, 2021, but not later than March 1, 2022, were considered as candidates for 2022 NPRHA Grants. Grant Applicants must be public bodies (such as city or county governments) or 501c3 Non-profit Organizations or private individuals sponsored by a public body or a 501c3 non-profit. Instructions for Grant Applications, as well as the Grant Application form, can be found at <http://www.nprha.org/NPRHA%20Preservation%20Grants/Forms/AllItems.aspx>. You may also send an email to grants@nprha.org – it will be redirected to Harold as the chair of the Grants Committee.

The Grants Committee attempts to evaluate all grant requests for a given year by the end of March of that year, and propose worthy grant requests to the NPRHA Board for approval in early April. Following approval by the NPRHA Board, checks are sent to the approved requestors by the end of April.

Based on requests received by March 1, 2022, the Grants Committee proposed, and the NPRHA Board approved, the following 2022 Grants:

- \$4000 to the Minnesota Transportation Museum for Roofing, Paint, Stenciling, and Clear Coating of NP Caboose #1264 at Jackson Street Roundhouse in St. Paul, Minnesota.
- \$5000 to the Promontory Chapter of the NRHS, Inland Northwest Railroad Museum at Reardan, Washington, and Klarr Locomotive Industries to retrieve and restore former Northern Pacific GP-9 locomotive #317 for static display at the Inland Northwest Railroad Museum.
Bruce Butler commented that he had heard that #317 would not be going to the Northwest Railroad Museum. Harold and Bruce will follow up on this issue.
- \$5000 to Yellowstone County Museum in Billings, Montana to replace rotted wood on NP L-7 0-6-0 #1031, the last steam switch engine operated at Billings and retired in 1956.
- \$5000 to Northwest Railway Museum at Snoqualmie, Washington for restoration of Northern Pacific HH660 #125, the oldest surviving NP diesel locomotive. It will be restored to its appearance on arrival in Seattle in February 1940.
- \$5000 to the Crow Wing Museum at Aitkin, Minnesota for improvement of their Northern Pacific exhibit. Convention attendees saw the current status of this exhibit during our September 16 visit to the Crow Wing Museum.

Photos were shown illustrating progress on the projects supported by these grants.

One 2022 Grant Request was declined because the applicants did not own the object they were proposing to restore.

Since 2011, NPRHA has made 29 grants, totaling \$113,953. 4 grant requests, totaling \$15,000, were declined.

- 15 covered work on depots, related structures, and equipment - \$50,553
- 6 covered work on locomotives - \$30,000
- 3 covered work on museum exhibits - \$12,000
- 3 covered work on cabooses - \$11,400
- 2 covered work on other rolling stock, coaches, and maintenance of way equipment - \$10,000

Bill Taylor commented on the success NPRHA achieved by giving grants contributing to stabilizing and later restoring the Northern Pacific water tank at Elkhorn, Montana. Our grants, together with those from other organizations have resulted in a fine restoration. Signs have been erected, including photos showing the tank in its pre-restoration and post-restoration conditions. These signs give credit to NPRHA and the other contributing organizations.

Bill Taylor also mentioned the display funded by an NPRHA grant at The Paradise Center in Paradise, Montana, as well as the Trident Depot, which has been relocated and restored at Three Forks, Montana.

Pat Egan asked about the "limitations" that NPRHA imposes on entities seeking grants. Harold Shannon replied that the current maximum grant to any requestor in any year is \$5000, and a requestor may receive up to that amount in two consecutive years. That requestor is not eligible to receive a grant in a third consecutive year, but will again be eligible for a grant after a one-year pause. As part of the grants process, NPRHA becomes aware of grants requested and given by other contributors to any given project. In some cases, the amounts given by other contributors are significantly larger than those given by NPRHA. However, receipt of an NPRHA grant sometimes facilitates legitimization of grant requests to other contributors.

Bruce Butler asked what would happen in the instance that an organization did not use the money they were given by NPRHA for the project for which they requested an NPRHA grant. Harold replied that, depending on the circumstances, NPRHA might request return of the granted funds. Harold said that he could only think of one instance where the grant did not contribute to the successful completion of the project for which it was requested. And in that instance, it was not for lack of trying by the requesting organization. Bill Zidel mentioned that one organization did return their grant, saying that they would not be able to complete the project for which it was granted.

John Fujii commented that all grant requests must include Goals, a proposed Schedule, and a Budget for the related project. This gives the NPRHA Grants Committee insight into how the money requested from NPRHA fits into the overall scope of the proposed project, and whether the project might succeed in the absence of a contribution from NPRHA. The Grants Committee feels strongly that NPRHA should be involved in as many projects as possible that relate to the Northern Pacific.

Bruce Butler repeated his concern that the Promontory Chapter of the NRHS and/or the Inland Northwest Railroad Museum may not have properly utilized that money they received in 2022 for retrieval and restoration of former Northern Pacific GP-9 locomotive #317. Bruce and Harold will further investigate the situation. The funds actually went to Promontory Chapter of the NRHS. If the funds were not used as requested, we may request their return.

Gary Wildung asked if there was any limitation (beyond only getting money 3 years out of 4 consecutive years, or 5 out of 7 consecutive years, or 7 out of 10 consecutive years, etc.) that would affect how often a requestor might conceivably get money for a long-running project. Harold Shannon replied that there was no additional limitation, but that such a long-term situation had not yet occurred. Bill Taylor commented that in order to receive repeated grants related to any particular long-running project, the requesting organization would need to show that they had completed (or at least vigorously pursued completion of) the various parts of the project for which they had requested the initial/previous grants from NPRHA. John Fujii commented that each grant request is evaluated on its own merit, and that the Grants Committee could stop support of a long-term project if support was perceived to be of reduced merit, or of lesser merit than other grant requests received within the year in question.

Kent Sullivan commented on NPRHA's 2016 contribution of \$5000 for restoration of NP L-5 0-6-0 #924 at Northwest Railway Museum in Snoqualmie, Washington. Although NPRHA's contribution was only a small fraction of the total spent on that restoration, it was important the NPRHA was perceived as a contributor, and NPRHA's contribution also served to convince other contributors of the overall worthiness of the project.

President Zidel thanked Harold and rest of the Grants Committee for their report.

Calendar Committee:

Currently, the Calendar Committee consists of Bill Kuebler as chairman, along with Duane Durr, John Fujii, Bob McCoy, and Gary Wildung. Members have received the 2023 Calendar. If members wish to comment on the 2023 Calendar via email, Bill's address is kuebler@frontiernet.net.

Bill Kuebler gave a status report regarding the 2024 NPRHA Calendar, which should be published in mid-2023. About a year ago, Bill received a phone call from Don Cozine. Don had 55 large format color images he believed were taken by Ron Nixon, the great majority of which had never been published. Don sought Bill's assistance in identifying locations and other information about the images. In reviewing the images, Bill determined that a few of them were probably not captured by Nixon – at least two were from Warren McGee. Overall, Bill was impressed by the quality of the images, which all feature diesel locomotives and were taken as early as 1947. After some thought, Bill formulated the idea for a special calendar, featuring 12 of the aforementioned diesel images, as well as 12 other Nixon images that included steam locomotives. Thus was born the *2024 Ron Nixon Tribute Calendar*, which will have two pages for each month – one featuring a color Nixon image and one featuring a black and white Nixon image. The 2024 calendar will also feature some biographical information about Ron Nixon, as well as a few other surprises. Since this calendar will cost a bit more to produce, the Calendar Committee sought and received approval from the NPRHA Board. The committee has completed its work to produce the 2024 calendar, which is now in the hands of John Kutz, who does the layout and artwork.

In recent years, NPRHA has printed 2600 copies of the Calendar – about 1630 of these are distributed to NPRHA members; the remainder are sold via hobby shops and the NPRHA Company Store. Given the special nature of the 2024 Calendar, Bill asked the members present at the Membership Meeting if they might be interested in purchasing an additional copy of the 2024 Calendar. About ¼ of the members indicated that they might consider buying an additional copy, even though the price for additional copies will likely be as much as twice the typical cover price.

Significant Change is coming to the Calendar Committee. Due to health concerns and other reasons, Duane Durr, Bill Kuebler, Bob McCoy, and Gary Wildung will all leave the committee when the 2024 calendar has been mailed to the membership. This will leave John Fujii as the only returning member of the Calendar Committee, and John does not wish to chair the committee. **The NPRHA Board seeks volunteers for the Calendar Committee, including someone who is willing to serve as chair of that committee, whose first product will be the 2025 NPRHA Calendar.** With past practice as a guide, that committee should pursue the following timeline for the 2025 NPRHA Calendar.

- August 2023 – begin selection of photos for the 2025 Calendar. Photos are chosen with a goal of achieving Balance – balance of steam vs diesel, east end vs west end, balance in choosing images from several photographers, etc.
- End of September 2023 – photo selection completed, with 12 images for the 12 months, plus at least 2 images for front and back covers. Might also include as many as 12 additional images for “thumbnails” on the monthly pages.
- Mid-November 2023 – captions written for selected photos, photo editing/enhancement begins
- Mid-January 2024 – All content completed for 2025 Calendar, including daily notations as appropriate, and sent to John Kutz.
- Mid-April 2024 – All content ready to Print for 2025 Calendar; content reviewed by John Kutz, further reviewed by Committee chair. Content goes to printer.
- May 2024 – 2025 Calendar printed. John Kutz reviews printed pages to ensure quality of content and printed images.
- June/July 2024 – 2025 Calendar mailed to membership along with current edition of The Mainstreeter.

Bill Kuebler thanked the membership and the NPRHA Board for the support he has received during his 25 years on the Calendar Committee (20 as chairman).

Convention Committee:

Current members of the Committee are Steve Fuller, Dean O’Neill, Jan Taylor, Ken Zieska. Steve covered future Conventions, all of which are currently scheduled for mid-September:

- 2023 – Tacoma, Washington, led by Bill Zidel, to celebrate 150th anniversary of Northern Pacific’s arrival in Tacoma. Watch the Mainstreeter for more details.
- 2024 – Location somewhere north of Seattle, Washington (perhaps Everett)
- 2025 – St Paul, Minnesota area. Likely a joint convention with Great Northern Railway Historical Society, and perhaps with Burlington Route Historical Society.
- 2026 – Toppenish, Washington area, featuring their Northern Pacific Railway Museum.

Modeling Committee:

Steve Joyner commented that convention attendees should review available printed copies of the Modeling Committee’s 2022 Report, as produced by Dean O’Neill. We have had a good response to the Vista Dome Package, and the future appears bright for NP modelers. Mike Lustig asked about kits for Brainerd-built boxcars, Steve replied that he did not have information on those. There was also a question about drop-bottom gondolas.

Pacific Northwest Railroad Archive:

Bill Zidel commented that the PNRA has essentially returned to pre-COVID activity levels, with several volunteers active there each time he visits.

Jackson Street Roundhouse:

Ken Zieska commented that Jackson Street will start an effort this fall to scan all of the Northern Pacific freight car builder’s photos. There will be an East End Meet on October 22 at Bandana Square (former NP Como Shops) from 2:00 – 6:00 PM in concert with GNRHS. Jackson Street has new scanners, and a new computer for Hudson Leighton, who remains a stalwart in digitizing Northern Pacific content.

Vista Dome Package: Although there had been no additional sales via the Company Store at the 2022 Convention, we continue to see good response to VDP.

Second Board Meeting is scheduled at 8:00 PM on September 17, 2022. As always, interested members are welcome to attend.

Adjournment:

Gary Wildung moved to adjourn, seconded by several. Approved Unanimously. Adjourned at 4:49 PM

Jim Woodward – NPRHA Secretary