

February 4, 2022—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, February 3, 2022. This was our first hybrid (in-person and Zoom) formal business meeting.

Agenda Item 1—Welcome and Call to Order

Vice President Keith Schmidt greeted everyone at 7:30 pm. He began recording the meeting at 7:31 pm. He then put the agenda up on the screen. He called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm. We had 42 computers connected then. A few of those had two people watching. There were 19 people in the physical meeting space, in the basement of the North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point.

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—Introduction of Current Officers and Board

Vice President Keith Schmidt began by introducing himself to all of those present. He was in the physical meeting room at the church. President Mike Yugas was on board a cruise ship in the Caribbean Sea. His pre-recorded video address on the State of the Wisconsin Chapter will be played later in this meeting. Keith then introduced Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek (also present in the physical room). He then introduced Secretary Tom Marcussen (attending via Zoom), who waved at his web camera. He last introduced the rest of our board, composed of five at-large Directors— Dan Grudzielanek, Ralph McClure, Andrew Roach, Cathy Wegner, and Neal Wegner. All were present at this meeting. Some of these were in the physical room, and others were on Zoom. All of the above incumbents are running for re-election.

Agenda Item 3—Confirmation of Quorum

We had 66 paid-up dues-paying members (both National and Chapter dues) as of Friday, January 28, the latest record that is available. A quorum is 5 per cent of that number, which works out to at least 4 members. We had well in excess of that number present. The meeting could proceed.

Agenda Item 4—Minutes of Last Meeting

The last previous formal business meeting was held on Friday, January 8, 2021. It was conducted via Zoom only. A shortened summary of that meeting's minutes was published on page 3 of the February 2022 issue of *Sparks & Cinders*. The full minutes were posted on our Chapter website. Keith Schmidt asked if there were any comments or additions. There were

none. There was a motion and a second, from the physical meeting room, to approve the minutes as published. No one offered any discussion. The motion and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote. There were no “nay” votes.

Agenda Item 5—President’s Remarks

We played a pre-recorded 8 ½ minute State of the Chapter address from President Mike Yuhas.

We currently have 159 members and other subscribers to *Sparks & Cinders*. That is probably an all-time record. Twenty-nine (29) of those had not yet renewed for 2022, as of the date of recording. Forty-eight (48) per cent of the number above are also National members. The latest edition of *Sparks & Cinders* was mailed to a total of 21 US states. That is also an all-time record.

Much of this growth is due to our new ability to offer on-line and hybrid meetings—not requiring physical travel to Fox Point. We invested about \$2000.00 in improved audio-visual equipment. That allowed us to offer the same high-quality experience to remote attendees as those physically present get—during our new hybrid meetings. Mike expressed his particular appreciation for the members who donated about \$2200.00 to our audio-visual equipment fund, which then exceeded the cost of the new equipment by about \$200.00. These donors are listed on Page 4 of the February 2022 issue of *Sparks & Cinders*. We started doing remote Zoom meetings on May 1, 2020, and hybrid meetings on September 10, 2021. Our hybrid meeting skills have been rapidly improving from where they were at first. We have been averaging about 20 in-person and 80 remote attendees per hybrid meeting.

We have also been offering virtual slide shows, with 5 presentations each, on the third Tuesday of each even-numbered month, starting on October 20, 2020. These have been well received and attended. We have been getting much better at those as well.

Our latest on-line offering is highly informal virtual railroad Gab Fests, on the second Friday of each month that has a regular meeting. These just started on December 10, 2021.

We had two in-person special events in 2021—an East Troy trolley ride and shop tour on Saturday, July 31, and a visit to the private Christopher Transportation Museum on Saturday, November 13. Several more similar events are being considered for 2022. We are looking to return to our annual chapter banquet. Ralph McClure will be covering that later in this meeting.

Agenda Item 6—Report from Vice President

Vice President Keith Schmidt had nothing to add to the above.

Agenda Item 7—Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Tara Grudzielanek presented her treasurer’s report for 2021, as follows:

Opening Balances

Opening Checkbook Balance	\$6,835.67
Less Checks Not Cleared in 2020	<u>-697.84</u>
Net in Accounts	\$6,137.83

Closing Balances

Pay Pal Account (new in 2021) Closing Balance	2,667.32
Closing Checkbook Balance	5,264.14
Less Checks Not Cleared in 2021	-1834.80
Less PO Box Payment not yet cleared on Pay Pal	<u>-134.00</u>
Net in Accounts	\$5962.66

Receipts

Via Check Book Deposits	5033.00
Via Pay Pal Account	2667.32
Interest on Checking Account	<u>0.38</u>
Total Receipts	\$7700.70

Sources of Receipts

Dues	\$4,767.32
Audio/Visual Equipment Fund Donations	2,218.00
Estate Auction (Mary Lou Findley-Books and Time Tables)	715.00
Interest on Checking Account	<u>0.38</u>
Total Receipts	\$7,700.70

Other Assets

Heartland (Mutual) Fund (Dec. 31, 2021)	\$90,682.11
Chase Bank CD (Sept. 2021) (matures March 2022)	28,589.80

Expenses

Sparks & Cinders (printing, postage & mailing)	\$2,548.79
Web Hosting Service / Domain Renewal	119.88
Zoom Meeting License Renewal	52.75
Cost of Audio / Visual Equipment	2037.51
Annual Post Office Box Fee	134.00
Insurance (Securian)	580.00
Project Map of Wisconsin & UP-CN Line to Watco (Graffix)	210.20
East Troy Trolley Museum—Excursion on July 31	633.00
East Troy Trolley Museum—Donation	500.00
Christopher Transportation Museum—Nov. 13 tour (for Sheboygan Fresh Meals on Wheels) (Chapter gave \$200.00—individual attendees gave \$150.00)	350.00
North Shore Congregational Church-Donation—Use of Space	600.00
Church Custodian (Gift Certificate)	60.00

Banquet (there was no banquet in 2021)	0.00
Sales Taxes (there were not taxable sales in 2021)	0.00
Sales Tax License Fee (Wisconsin Dept. of Revenue)	10.00
Auction Items Postage	<u>39.74</u>
Total Expenses	\$7,875.87

Agenda Item 8—Acceptance of Treasurer’s Report

Keith Schmidt said that the Treasurer’s report was accepted as presented—subject to future audit. No motion or vote was required.

Agenda Item 9—Old Business

The agenda did not show any old business. No one in attendance was aware of any.

Agenda Items 10—New Business—and 11—Member Comment (Combined)

Banquet Committee Chair Ralph McClure said that the Pallas Restaurant on 108th Street in West Allis is still showing our \$100.00 reservation deposit on account. Ralph is working on trying to set up a date in late September or early October of 2022.

NRHS National Vice President Tony White reminded everyone of the *Trains* Magazine 2022 Photo Contest. The NRHS is the largest sponsor. There is a top prize of \$1000.00 in cash.

Agenda Item 12—Chapter Elections

All incumbent (2021) officers and directors (see Agenda Item 2 above for list) are running for re-election in 2022. We are not aware of any other candidates. Vice President Keith Schmidt stated that each office would be addressed individually.

He asked for any other nominations (besides incumbent Mike Yuhas) for President. There were none. There was a motion and a second that the nominations be closed, and that Mike Yuhas be re-elected for another term as President. There was no discussion. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote. There were no “nay” votes.

Keith then asked for any other nominations (besides himself—the incumbent) for Vice President. There were none. There was a motion and a second that the nominations be closed, and that Keith Schmidt be re-elected for another term as Vice President. There was no discussion. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote. There were no “nay” votes.

Keith then asked for any other nominations (besides incumbent Tara Grudzielanek) for Treasurer. There were none. There was a motion and a second that the nominations be closed, and that Tara Grudzielanek be re-elected for another term as Treasurer. There was no discussion. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote. There were no “nay” votes.

Keith then asked for any other nominations (besides incumbent Tom Marcussen) for Secretary. There were none. There was a motion and a second that the nominations be closed, and that Tom Marcussen be re-elected for another term as Secretary. There was no discussion. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote. There were no “nay” votes.

Keith last asked for any other nominations (besides the five incumbents Dan Grudzielanek, Ralph McClure, Andrew Roach, Cathy Wegner, and Neal Wegner) for our five at-large Directors. There were none. There was a motion and a second that the nominations be closed, and that Dan Grudzielanek, Ralph McClure, Andrew Roach, Cathy Wegner, and Neal Wegner be re-elected for another term as Directors. There was no discussion. The motion was passed by a unanimous vote. There were no “nay” votes.

All of the incumbents above were re-elected for another term in 2022.

Agenda Item 13—Anything Else for the Good of the Order

Vice President Keith Schmidt announced that we will be trying to return to the private Christopher Transportation Museum for a picnic in the late spring or early summer. We are trying to move the banquet to the fall—for 2022 only.

Next month’s presentation, on Friday, March 4, will be from Alan Freed. He will offer the highlights from his 1000-mile early August 1980 tour of the Milwaukee Road Pacific Extension, from Miles City, Montana to Cedar Falls, Washington, on a reconditioned 1952 M-19 Fairmont speeder. Operations had ceased on March 31, 1980. All of the rails were then still in place.

We will be holding a third on-line Railroad Gab Fest on Friday, February 11. There will be an on-line slide shown on Tuesday, February 15, featuring the work of:

- Jerry Pyfer—Illinois Central Gulf—Tales of the Freeport (Illinois) District
- Dan Grudzielanek—SD40-2 Tribute
- Jeff Wojciechowski—2020 Out West
- Erik Lindgren—Winter on the Front Range (Colorado)
- Erik Shicotte—to be announced

Agenda Item 14—Adjournment

Keith Schmidt announced that he would entertain a motion to adjourn the formal business meeting. There was a motion and a second from the physical meeting room. All voted “aye.” There were no “nay” votes. The motion carried. The official business meeting was declared adjourned at 8:00 pm.

A short 5-minute break followed.

Presentation

Long-time member Tom Hoffmann took over at 8:06 pm. Tom treated us to his highlight slides from 2001. “Twenty Years Ago” has been a long-standing annual tradition at our meetings. Dave Nelson recently digitized the 2001 slides so that the tradition could continue in a hybrid meeting format. The 2001 slides were mostly from Wisconsin and other nearby Midwest states. There were a few from Colorado, Utah, and California.

Attendance held at about 50 computers throughout the presentation. There were 19 attendees in the physical room in the church basement.

The presentation ended at 8:54 pm.

Virtual Post Meeting

Ward Wells took over as our remote host, after Keith Schmidt stopped recording, at about 9:00 pm. That way remote members could continue conversing, while allowing in-person attendees to clear out of the church basement at a reasonable hour.

Respectfully Submitted
Thomas W. Marcussen
Wisconsin Chapter Secretary