

# **Railroad Club of Atlanta**

## **Meeting Minutes for October 2024 RMCA zoom business and train discussion meet**

Oct 01, 2024 06:50 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) ID: 893 8321 6070

### **Quick recap**

The meeting experienced technical difficulties at the start but eventually proceeded with discussions on various topics. They also discussed the electrical requirements, projected costs, and the logistics of moving model railroad equipment to the new location. Additionally, the team discussed the formation of the layout planning committee, the incorporation of a narrow gauge operation into the layout, and the possibility of switching to Google Meet for future business meetings.

### **Next steps**

All members to fill out and return layout surveys by October 14th.

Joe Congemi to discuss switching to Google Meet with Dan for future meetings.

Officers to send Zoom meeting transcripts immediately after meetings to Daniela Congemi for minutes distribution.

Brad Smith to continue layout planning work and reach out to specific members for input.

Brad Smith to incorporate narrow gauge options into layout planning.

Joe Congemi to bring motion to vote on switching to Google Meet at November meeting.

Dan to work with Scott Merrill on finalizing building details like electrical outlets and paving.

Members to help organize moving club materials from storage to new building when ready.

Ovidiu to research more cost-effective website options and report back.

### **Summary**

#### **I. October 2024 RMCA Business Meeting Update**

- Dan called the October 2024 RMCA business meeting to order. The members introduced themselves, with several joining remotely. Dan handed over to Scott Merrill, the project engineer, to provide an update on the building project timeline.

#### **A. Heavy Rainfall Event Management and Construction Progress**

- Scott reported on the successful management of a heavy rainfall event without soil erosion or dirty water issues. He announced the official approval of development plans, paving the way for paving and utility installation. The next steps include starting the building foundation and moving the building package to the site. Scott also mentioned the need for a traffic engineer to address concerns about the entrance to Old Canton Road. He expressed confidence in the project's progress and efficiency. Scott discussed the progress of the construction project, mentioning that the foundation work is expected to be completed within the next two weeks. Scott expressed his excitement about using a new company for the sheeting part of the project, which he believes could be completed in three weeks. He also mentioned that he would shift his crew to do paving and concrete work if necessary to ensure maximum activity on site. Scott emphasized his goal of getting the building up and utilities installed as soon as possible.
- Soil Absorption, Concrete Pouring, and Site Elevation
- Scott discussed the site's soil absorption and the potential for pouring concrete after winter rain. Joe asked about the temperature requirements for pouring concrete, to which Scott responded that they need two nights above freezing after pouring and the ground not to be frozen on the day of pouring. Walter expressed satisfaction with the paving schedule, while Ken inquired about the site's elevation. Scott confirmed it was around 1,180 feet. Dan asked about the possibility of moving in by the first of the year, to which Scott responded positively, suggesting they could get a permit for the space finish separately if there were delays. The team agreed to meet on the 26th of October for an operational meet, with plans to arrive at 10 am.

## **B. Commercial Power Supply and Building Expansion Plans**

- The team discussed the commercial power supply for the building, with Scott confirming it would be underground and run from a pole. They also discussed the placement of conduit in the foundation for future expansion and the need for protection from dirt and tripping hazards. Scott proposed a recessed block out for the outlets. The team also discussed their upcoming plans, including a meeting at the building site and a visit to Phil Steds. Ken raised concerns about potential heavier conduit requirements if the building's occupancy exceeded 100, but Scott clarified that the occupancy was reasonable for the building's size. Ken planned to check the electrical code's specific requirements.

## **C. Electrical Requirements and Power Options Discussion**

- Ken, Scott, Dan, Ovidiu, Joe, and Tom discussed the electrical requirements for their project. They clarified that certain areas above ground level and not damp don't require GFCI outlets. They also discussed the need for a workshop with heavier equipment and confirmed the building's electrical service is 400 amps. The team considered the possibility of using 3-phase power for the HVAC system, but Joe suggested single-phase power could suffice. They agreed to further investigate the power needs and costs associated with 3-phase and single-phase options. The team decided to gather specific electrical requirements via email and move forward with installing the foundation and conduit to avoid project delays or additional costs.

## **D. Discussing Building Costs and Zoom TV Budget**

- Dan discussed the projected costs for the building, which were originally estimated at \$819,000. However, due to additional line items added to the original contract, the total estimated cost is now \$898,000. Dan also mentioned that they have spent \$204,788.85 and have a projected total cost of \$898,000. He asked the team if there were any significant costs they had overlooked. Ovidiu suggested that the budget for a Zoom TV sound system could be around \$3,000 instead of \$5,000. Dan also mentioned the need for paving and

sidewalks on the west side of the building. The team was asked to consider if there were any other significant costs they had missed.

## **II. Model Railroad Equipment Move and Building Costs**

- Dan, Joe, Ken, Bradley, and Walter discussed the logistics of moving a large amount of model railroad equipment to their new location, with Joe offering to use his flatbed trailer for the move. They also discussed the estimated costs for the new building, including an upgrade to the HVAC system, and the potential for saving \$100,000 in operating expenses. The group also discussed the insulation of the building and the absence of an internal sprinkler system. Dan mentioned an ongoing issue with the Cherokee County Fire Department regarding access and a proposed turn lane on Old Camp Road. The conversation ended with Dan and Ovidiu discussing the cost and maintenance of their website, with Ovidiu offering to ask his wife about their preschool's website costs for comparison.

## **III. Layout Planning Committee and Google Meet Discussion**

- Joe Congemi led the discussion, starting with the layout planning committee's formation with Brad Smith as the chair and Bruce Copeland as the chief design engineer. They are working on a list of givens and druthers and starting to do some rough sketching and compiling design elements. Bradley added that they are using feedback from questionnaires and defining everything down into operations. The committee will discuss this in their next meeting. Joe also mentioned the need for survey responses by October 14th for the layout planning meeting. The possibility of switching to Google Meet for future business meetings was discussed, with Joe planning to talk to Dan about it. Ken raised a question about the cost of Google Meet, to which Joe responded that it's included in their existing Google subscription. Joe also reminded the officers to send Zoom meeting transcripts immediately after each meeting for the distribution of minutes.

#### **A. Narrow Gauge Operation Discussion**

- Joe Congemi expressed his interest in incorporating a narrow gauge operation into the layout, seeking suggestions from the team. Bradley mentioned a narrow gauge in Tennessee that could be incorporated into the layout. Philip shared that a railroad near their new building was built narrow gauge. Matt and Joe Congemi discussed various narrow gauge lines in the southeast region, including the Danville and Western, the Surrey, Sussex and Southampton, and the Roswell Railroad. Walter suggested involving the narrow gauge community in Atlanta, as they are the largest growing part of O Scale. The team agreed to consider these options for the layout.

#### **IV. Adjournment and Next Meeting**

- **Monday, November 4, 2024 at 7 PM, virtual on Zoom**