

Meeting summary for RMCA February 2025 Business Meeting (02/04/2025)

Quick recap

The meeting focused on the need for a new treasurer to manage the club's finances, including bank accounts and investments, and the importance of promoting the club's social media presence. The team also discussed the upcoming O Scale South event, plans for the next OPS session, and the potential use of a new rental space for club activities. Lastly, the meeting addressed the recent passing of Tom, a club member, and the need for someone to handle the club's tax return.

Next steps

- All members will email their National Model Railroad Association membership numbers and expiration dates to Joe.
- Joe to submit liability insurance information to the church for O Scale South.
- Dan to pay Brad for the Hiram storage space rental.
- Club to join National Model Railroad Association and O Scale Central as organizational members.
- Darrell to prepare a dead rail clinic demonstration for O Scale South using the modular layout.
- Joe to send out invitations for the upcoming operating session at Ray DeVarney's layout.
- Brad and Morris to start working on track plans for the new club layout.
- Brad to create lesson plans and educational materials to support the club's 501(c)(3) application.
- Club members to consider volunteering for the treasurer position.
- Club to move the small layout to the Hiram storage space after O Scale South.
- Marty to send pictures of the Harry Roberts bridge to Dan for consideration in the new layout.
- Dan to arrange for a plaque commemorating Tom's work with the club to be placed under the laser-cut steel wall hanging in the new building.
- The Club needs to find someone to prepare and file the club's tax return.

Summary

Treasurer Position and Financial Management

The meeting began with a moment of silence for Tom Lavin, who had passed away. Dan then discussed the need for a new treasurer, as Tom had held both the treasurer and board member positions. He explained the responsibilities of the treasurer, which include managing financial records, ensuring bills are paid, and providing monthly or bi-monthly financial updates. Dan also mentioned that two bank accounts, Wells Fargo and Edward Jones, need to be managed. He then introduced Matthew McManus, a financial advisor with Edward Jones, who would discuss the club's investments and financial situation. Dan also mentioned that the club currently manages a building project and needs someone to

oversee the construction and ensure timely payments. He encouraged anyone interested in taking on the treasurer position to consider it.

Trains, Trains, Trains Show Event and Volunteer Appreciation

Dan led a discussion about the recent train show event, highlighting the attendance of 2,200 people and the positive feedback received. He expressed gratitude to those who volunteered and helped set up the layout, particularly Joe, Daniela, Jim Herrick, and Morris Smith. Dan also mentioned the need for more volunteers for future events and the importance of promoting O-scale. He noted that while no new members were directly recruited at the event, it did generate interest and educate attendees about O-scale. The team agreed on the importance of educating children and the public about the hobby, as it could contribute to the club's future as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Club's Social Media and Financial Advisor

Dan discussed the club's social media presence, highlighting the Facebook groups and YouTube channel. Darrell explained the setup and purpose of these platforms, emphasizing their ease of use and the potential for showcasing members' work. Dan encouraged everyone to visit the club's website and social media pages, and to share content. Joe added that there's a Facebook page for O Scale South. Dan then introduced Matthew McManus, a financial advisor with Edward Jones, who was invited to share his role and discuss the club's account. Matthew, who has been in practice for 13 years, expressed his interest in the club and his desire to support its members.

Railroad Club's Financial Management

Matthew discussed the management of the railroad club's funds, which were initially invested in CDs to keep up with inflation. The club earned \$24,000 in 2023 and has a balance of \$822,000. Matthew also mentioned the decision to invest in Franklin mutual funds, which have provided a return of around \$30,000 to \$35,000. The club's treasurer, Tom, was praised for his financial management skills. Dan emphasized the importance of staying conservative with investments and thanked Matthew for his work. The conversation ended with an invitation for any questions or concerns about the club's finances.

Club's Financial Stability and Future

Dan discussed the club's financial situation, stating that they owe \$549,133 to complete their contract and have \$271,867 earmarked for layout and future expenses. He emphasized the importance of maintaining this balance and not overspending. Dan also mentioned the goal of obtaining an 1,800 square foot tenant to help with financial responsibilities. He encouraged the team to start advertising for potential tenants and contacting realtors. D. Gaines expressed concerns about the club's future, emphasizing the need for increased membership and a sustainable financial plan. Dan reassured him that the board is committed to finding a tenant and maintaining the club's financial stability.

O Scale South Event Planning

Dan discussed the upcoming O Scale South event, emphasizing the need for club support and promotion. He mentioned that the event would take place on February 21st, with setup starting at 9:30 AM. Dan also highlighted the importance of paying club dues and the benefits of doing so, such as receiving a club shirt. He encouraged everyone to attend the event and participate in various roles like setup, sales, and registration. Morris, who had previously committed to working at the event, expressed uncertainty due to personal circumstances. Matt confirmed his attendance for both days but mentioned he wouldn't be able to attend the dinner on Friday. Dan also mentioned the need for listing the three open houses on the O Scale South website and Facebook group, with specific details to be provided by Darrell.

OPS Session Event Plans and Updates

The team discussed plans for the next OPS session event. Darrell agreed to conduct a clinic on dead rail and possibly demonstrate aspects of the modular layout at the O Scale South meet. Dan mentioned securing a projector for presentations and testing. Darrell also mentioned working on an Allegheny model, which has been a learning experience due to incorrect diagrams. He plans to bring several locomotives to the OPS session, including a Q1 and a Mohawk. Bradley confirmed that the club now “owns” the storage rental space, which is fully insulated and equipped with A/C and heat. Dan asked Bradley to text him the payment details for January.

New Rental Space for Club Activities

The team discussed the possibility of using the new rental space for their club activities. They considered the dimensions of the space and the existing layout, deciding that a 15 by 21 feet module could fit in the space. The team also discussed the potential for using the space for construction or prototyping activities while waiting for the final building to be completed. They agreed to start working on the track plans and operational documents, with the aim of presenting the educational aspect of their club to the community. The team also discussed the need for a place to run trains and agreed to use the new building for this purpose.

Transition to 501(c)(3) and Trailer

Dan led the meeting, emphasizing the importance of transitioning to a 501(c)(3) status as advised by Tom. The trailer issue was discussed, with Joe confirming that the bearings needed to be packed. Plans for the upcoming OPS session at Ray DeVarney's house were confirmed, with Joe agreeing to send out the address. The group also discussed the layout at Hiram, with Pete Chase expressing interest in participating. Marty, a new member from Merritt Island, introduced himself and offered to donate a Harry Roberts Bridge to the layout. The group agreed to consider this offer.

Southern Locomotive and Model Railroad Plans

Dentrix shared his plans to build a Southern locomotive for the upcoming Old Scale South event, which he hopes to complete by summer. He also discussed his involvement with the Prototype Rails show, where he showcased his uncoupler system and plans to host an

open house at his layout. Pete suggested organizing a Boy Scouts of America railroad merit badge event and a workshop for young children to learn model building. The group also discussed the need for insurance liability for the church and the process of renewing memberships for the National Model Railroad Association and O Scale Central. Joe requested insurance details from Darrell, and the group agreed to join these organizations. Joe also expressed interest in converting a 3-rail passenger car to 2-rail, and Darrell suggested using insulated wheels from Northwest Shortline.

Tom's Passing and Club's Future Plans

The meeting revolved around the recent passing of Tom, a member of the Railroad Model Club of Atlanta. Dan expressed his intention to handle the probate of Tom's estate as a donation to his wife, Donna. Morris shared that Tom's son had gifted him a laser-cut steel wall hanging, which the club intends to display in their new building. Dan also mentioned needing someone to handle the club's tax return, with Joe suggesting Matt McManus or other individuals could assist. The conversation ended with plans for a future gathering at Brad's place.