

Meeting summary for RMCA Business and Train discussion meeting (04/01/2025)

Club Attendees:

1. Dan Mason, President
2. Joe Congemi, Vice President
3. Ovidiu Trifanescu, Treasurer
4. Darrell Lamm, Secretary
5. Chase Withrow
6. Morris Smith
7. Marty Megregian, member candidate
8. Bradley Smith
9. Pete Silcox
10. Matt Coleman
11. David Gaines

Quick recap

There were three major topics discussed:

1. The organization of the Club's financial information and membership dues status by the Club's new Treasurer, Ovidiu Trifanescu.
2. Discussion of the progress of the club's Ball Ground building project status, door placement, and mezzanine configuration with the builder, Scott Merrell.
3. Guest speaker Mark Gardner presented the development of a large 2-rail, O-scale layout under construction in Oklahoma City.

They also had a second reading for new member candidate Marty Megregian.

Next steps

1. Bradley Smith will host a Zoom meeting of the layout planning group on Thursday, April 3, 2025, starting at 6:00 p.m.
2. Darrell Lamm will announce the next OPS session on the RMCA Facebook page. It will be held on 12 April at the Hiram storage facility starting at 10:00 a.m.

Summary

Monthly Business and Training Meeting

The group gathered for a monthly business and train discussion meeting. Dan, the president, conducted a roll call. The meeting was NOT successfully recorded. Dan provided an overview of the agenda.

Dan introduced the new Club Treasurer, Ovidiu Trifanescu, who presented the status of the membership dues. Ovidiu also indicated his desire to organize the Club's financial information on the Club's Google Workspace. He is currently extracting financial

information from Tom Lavin's archives. Dan emphasized that all important Club-related artifacts should be stored on the RMCA Google Workspace, regardless of where else they are distributed.

Dan reported that we would have two guest speakers:

1. The Ball Ground RMCA site builder, Scott Merrell, would report on the construction status and discuss door locations and mezzanine construction.
2. Mark Gardner, from the Oklahoma City Model Railroad Club, would present their layout and provide suggestions.

Dan welcomed Marty Megregian, the new member candidate, for his second membership reading. Marty discussed making more progress in building a Southern 2,12+2,6,2. He indicated that he is likely to spend substantial time in Georgia near the Ball Ground site so he can more fully participate in Club activities.

Building Project Progress Discussed

Dan introduced the builder of the Ball Ground RMCA site, Scott Merrell, who discussed the progress of the building project, which is nearing wall and roof enclosure.

Merrell indicated that the mezzanine could be supported by a metal I beam in the middle of the West span and at the corners of the mezzanine (and presumably in the middle of the mezzanine's East span against the firewall as well). The location of the stairs to the mezzanine was discussed, with members pointing out that stairs running along either the North or South wall would land at an area with low ceiling clearance. The option of running the stairs along the E firewall starting 4' from the bathroom entrance was proposed. There was no final decision on the stair location.

There was discussion about recent photos showing the builder relocated both slide-up doors closer to building corners: the South-facing SW corner for the layout area and the East-facing NE corner for the tenant area. It was generally agreed that these were beneficial changes.

The builder's movement of the 6' door entrances was also discussed. The layout area's door was moved toward the relocated roll-up door to provide a longer, uninterrupted span along the South wall. Discussion during and after the meeting was generally positive about this change.

The tenant 6' door was moved from its near-center location on the East wall closer to the SE corner. The builder thought this provided the flexibility to extend the open storage area southward if desired. Meeting discussions on the merits of this change were mixed, and the builder indicated flexibility in changing this door's location.

Discussion of the Oklahoma City Model Railroad Club's Layout with Mark Gardner

Then, Mark Gardner from the Oklahoma City Model Railroad Club shared information about the Club's activities, layout design, and construction using a PowerPoint presentation.

The club has 50 to 60 members. Its under-construction 2-rail O-scale (standard and narrow gauge) layout is approximately 5000 square feet and features two levels. Much of the visible trackage is hand-laid, and flex track is used in less visible areas. Turnouts are also hand-laid. The club employs DCC and LCC as its control protocols. Mark remarked that a dedicated team of about eight forms the core of designing and constructing the layout.

He emphasized several essential features (not all he presented are listed here):

1. A unifying theme in time and location
2. Engaging operations
3. “Loop around” routes for “show”
4. Forcing a local view enhances the perception of longer distance and time scales.
5. Flexibility to change layout design over time
6. Adoption of NMRA DCC and LCC standards

[Parenthetically, it should be noted that many of these features were anticipated in our RMCA Layout Specification Document.]