

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MAY 1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

By Rich Kolm, PCR Secretary

Your PCR Board of Directors meets twice a year—one meeting is at the PCR Annual Convention in the spring, like this one, and the other is at a selected location within the Region in the fall. These meetings are open to PCR members.

The Board of Directors met at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center in Redding, California, on Wednesday, May 1, 2002. President and Trustee Ray deBlieck presided over the 4-hour meeting. Around the table were Directors Jack Wall from Coast Division, Brewster Bird from Daylight Division, Gus Campagna from Redwood Empire Division, and Bob Mountjoy from Sierra Division, and Secretary Rich Kolm. Also present were Ron Plies, new Director from Redwood Empire Division, committee chairpersons Bob Ferguson, Ken Lunders, and Jim Long, and a number of PCR members.

Trustee's Report. PCR Trustee Ray deBlieck explained NMRA's proposed single membership which will include national, regional, and division membership with a single payment of dues. The details are yet to be worked out. All NMRA members in the PCR territory will automatically be members of PCR and one of its five divisions. He also talked about the proposed restructuring of the NMRA Board of Trustees as part of implementing NMRA's Long Range Plan. Under consideration is a reduction of the number of Trustees from 17 (one from each region) to 7 to make the Board more effective. How the fewer number of Trustees would be selected is still under discussion. He will be attending a special committee meeting in Chicago in a few weeks to develop the details of both proposals.

Budget for FY02. Treasurer Larry Altbaum was not able to attend the Board meeting, but submitted his report with a proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2002. The report says assets of the Region are extremely healthy. Nevertheless, there has been a dramatic drop in dues income which affects the operating budget. It is important to address this issue (declining membership) and it is essential to support (PCR's) long range planning effort and focus on membership growth. The proposed Budget is based on continuation of business as in recent years, with some increased emphasis on membership promotion. The Board of Directors approved the Budget.

Electronic Distribution. Secretary Rich Kolm has been sending out meeting agendas and documents to PCR officers, directors, committee chairpersons, and others in electronic form (Acrobat PDF files) attached to e-mail, which has been working very well. It saves a lot of reproduction work, addressing envelopes, and postage and allows broader and faster distribution. These documents will also be posted on the PCR website for anyone to access.

Member Services. Bob Ferguson, Chairperson of the Member Services Committee, described the decline in PCR membership from 1,359 members in 1994 to only 980 members today. At the same time there are about 700 NMRA members in the Pacific Coast Region who are not members of PCR. He explained what he does in processing new memberships and renewals. He said there is a need for membership promotion staff at the Divisions to follow up on dues delinquencies. Ongoing Board discussions have focused on the need to retain members and improve membership promotion, which are being addressed in PCR's Long Range Plan (see below). The Board recognized that the problems with the current system of dues payment and the membership data bases cannot be fixed until more is known about NMRA single membership and its impacts.

Contest Directory. Ken Lunders, Chairperson of the Contest Committee, proposed a change in the PCR Contest Directory that would require all contest judges to be PCR members in good standing or NMRA members in good standing residing outside the PCR. Lunders said that judges should be part of the NMRA because model contest judging is in fact supporting the NMRA Achievement Program. The Board approved the change in the Contest Directory and then amended the PCR Manual of Operations to be consistent.

By-Laws and Manual of Operations. Gene Mayer, Chairperson of the By-Laws and Manual of Operations Committee, reported that the By-Laws and Manual have been updated by the Secretary to incorporate amendments adopted since 1995. They have been retyped as digital files with correction of errors and improved formatting. The Board of Directors approved the Manual of Operations and directed that the By-Laws be submitted to the membership for approval at the Annual Business Meeting.

New Amendments. The By-Laws and Manual of Operations Committee also recommended three amendments to the Manual of Operations, which were approved by the Board:

- A Member Aid Committee was created to develop and implement a Member Aid Program, with a Key Contact person in each Division available by mail, telephone, and e-mail to assist PCR members who have questions. President deBlicek announced that Rod Smith is the new Chairperson.
- The Publication and Ballot Committees were reorganized to allow more flexibility in finding volunteers to staff the committees. The Editor of the *Branch Line* does not have to also be Chairperson of the Publication Committee nor serve on the Ballot Committee. The new positions of Publisher and Webmaster were added to the Publication Committee.
- Staffing requirements of the By-Laws and Manual of Operations Committee were modified to permit any former member of the Board of Directors to serve on it, not just current Directors.

Election of Division Directors. Jim Long, who filled in at the last minute as Ballot Committee Chairperson, reported that only 30 ballots were cast in the recent election of Division Directors. He said this wasn't surprising given that the ballot was sent out late and there was only one candidate in each Division. The results were:

- Jack Wall, the incumbent in Coast Division, was re-elected.
- Brewster Bird, the incumbent in Daylight Division, was re-elected.
- Bob Mountjoy, the appointed incumbent in Sierra Division, was elected.
- Ron Plies, the candidate in Redwood Empire Division, was elected.

PCR Yahoo Group. The Board discussed the new PCR Yahoo Group website. It was pointed out that the content of e-mail messages and files posted on the website are not controlled by PCR. There is an official PCR website which is separate from the Yahoo Group.

Convention Committee. Jim Long, Convention Committee Chairperson, gave a report on the status of upcoming PCR conventions.

- 2003: "Tri-Valley Zephyr" will be hosted by Coast Division. It will take place April 23-27, 2003 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Pleasanton. Dennis Stokely is the Host Committee Chairperson and Jack Wall is the Registrar, who is now accepting registrations.
- 2004: Napa Valley Railroaders and Redwood Empire Division submitted a bid to host the 2004 PCR Convention at the Chateau Hotel and Conference Center in Napa. Harold Mentzer is Host

Committee Chairperson. The Board of Directors accepted the bid contingent upon satisfactory negotiations with the facility.

- 2005: Coast Division will be the location of the 2005 PCR Convention and Jim Long is looking for a group in the Division to host it. Possible locations are San Francisco Peninsula, Santa Clara County, and the Santa Cruz-Monterey area.

- 2006: Daylight Division will be the location of the 2006 PCR Convention unless Sierra Division wants to host the convention that year in conjunction with the 25th Anniversary of the Railroad Museum in Sacramento.

Long Range Planning. Gene Mayer, Long Range Planning Chairperson, submitted his Committee's Interim Report for review, requesting comments by the middle of July. The report is available by e-mail from him or Secretary Rich Kolm. The Interim Report includes recommendations for programs at the Divisions for improving member retention and attracting new members. One of the concerns is finding the volunteer manpower needed to implement the Committee's proposals. A Final Report will be submitted to the Board in the fall.

Education Committee. Director Brewster Bird described his involvement with the Boy Scouts' Railroading Merit Badge Program and how that program may evolve into a new separate program called Rail Alternatives for Youth. The Board discussed the coordination of PCR with such outside programs to introduce young people to railroading and model railroading. This can be under the auspices of a PCR Education Committee, which President deBlieck proposes to establish.

Old Business. There were three agenda items: (1) Consideration of new programs and projects of benefit to PCR members, as related to revenue from the 21st Century Limited convention account, was deferred to the next meeting. (2) Discussion of membership renewal dates was considered moot given NMRA's plan for single membership. (3) A report on PCR's offer for financial support of a Hawaiian Division newsletter was deferred to allow more time for contacting members in Hawaii.

Honors Committee. The Board approved the first step in setting up an Honors Committee, which will be responsible for overseeing PCR's program of awards recognizing meritorious service within the PCR. Amendment of the Manual of Operations to formally establish is as a standing committee will be on the agenda of the Board meeting in the fall.

Possible New Division. Dwayne Coate informed the Board that he is looking into creating a new separate Division in what is now the northern part of the Sierra Division, centered on Redding. One of the reasons is the long travel time required to attend Division meetings in the Sacramento area. He will be determining the interest of members in the area and will keep the Board informed.

The next meeting of the PCR Board of Directors is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 26, 2002 at a location yet to be determined.