

HIGHLIGHTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
NOVEMBER 5, 2005

By Rich Kolm, PCR Secretary

Your PCR Board of Directors meets twice a year—one meeting is in the spring at the PCR Annual Convention and the other, like this one, is in the fall. These highlights are based on the minutes taken by Gus Campagna on November 5.

President L.E. “Gene” Mayer called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm at the DoubleTree Hotel in Sacramento. Board members present were Vice-President Dave Connery, Treasurer Larry Altbaum, and Directors Doug Wagner (Daylight Division), Kermit Paul (Coast Division), Jesse Menefee, Jr. (Sierra Division), and Ron Plies (Redwood Empire Division). Gus Campagna acted as Secretary in the absence of Rich Kolm. The agenda and minutes are available at the PCR website. The DoubleTree Hotel is the site of the PCR Annual Convention in May 2006.

President Mayer reported that Director Menefee submitted his resignation due to ill health and said he will appoint a replacement. He commented that many members are concerned about the new *Branch Line* subscription fee and the Region’s proposed budget. Vacant positions is a serious concern, he said, particularly Membership Department Manager and Membership Promotion Committee Chairperson which he is trying to fill.

Vice-President Connery said that with the change brought on by the new NMRA Regulations it is more important than ever for an effective membership recruiting effort at the Division and Region levels. A strong program of activities that retains members goes hand-in-hand with an organized effort to bring in new members. Connery pointed out that there is no written set of objectives to guide the Region. The Board agreed that specific objectives need to be developed, which Connery will work on and report at the next Board meeting.

Member Services Chairperson Bob Ferguson commented on NMRA’s transition to single membership. He pointed out that only the new NMRA membership form should be used. NMRA expects its membership database to be ready by January 1. Jim Long will be the new Member Services Chairperson when that database becomes active.

Convention Department Manager Dennis Stokely reported on the status of PCR conventions. Bill Swindell, Chairperson of “Devil Mountain 2005” in Concord last May, submitted his final convention report. There were 280 registrations. Bob Warner, Chairperson of “River City Express 2006” in Sacramento next May, described the convention program. Stokely said planning for the “Suntan Special 2007” convention in Santa Cruz is well underway (Kevin Hurley is the Chairperson). John Houlihan, Chairperson of “Sierra Memories 2008” in Fresno, reported they are still working on getting a hotel for the convention; a proposal for review and acceptance by the Board will be submitted at the next meeting.

The bequest from the Keith Heinsolm estate of a collection of model railroad equipment will be inventoried and then sold, possibly at the PCR convention next May.

Publications Department Manager Gus Campagna introduced Stephen Johnson as the new Editor of the *Branch Line*. He also reported that the Postal Service will be increasing postal rates in January, affecting the cost of sending out newsletters. The January-March *Branch Line* will be mailed to all NMRA members in the Region as approved by the Board in May 2005. A paid subscription (or life membership) is required to receive the other three issues in 2006 or they can be downloaded from the PCR website.

John Rolston, Chairperson of the special committee looking into financial support of Division activities, submitted his report. The committee concluded, in part, that (1) every member of NMRA within the Region should receive a quarterly newsletter from his/her Division at no additional subscription cost, and (2) a portion of the \$2 administrative subsidy PCR expects to receive from NMRA should be allocated to Divisions to defray newsletter expenses. The Board thanked the committee for its work.

Treasurer Larry Altbaum reported that the assets of the Region remain healthy but the cash flow is negative. Income this year from Regional dues (now discontinued) and the new Branch Line subscriptions are projected to be lower than budgeted. And, the Region has not yet received any allocation from National under the new single dues program. The prophesy that FY 2005 would be a difficult year financially is turning out to be all too true. The Board decided that interest earned in the 2000 NMRA Convention account will be paid to the PCR general fund. The Treasurer said that projections for FY 2006 look much brighter. Action on the proposed 2006 budget was deferred to the next meeting so the Treasurer can rework his proposal.

The special committee's report (see above), and Treasurer Altbaum's comments that the true benefit of membership is connecting and communicating, lead to a discussion of the importance of every Regional member receiving Regional news at least quarterly. One proposal was to give two pages of content to each Division for its newsletter each quarter along with first class postage. Publications Department Manager Gus Campagna was asked to propose a plan at the next Board meeting.

The Board approved joint sponsorship of the Layout Design and Operations SIGs meeting in Santa Clara, February 11-12, 2006.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm. The next regular Board Meeting will be on May 3, 2006 at 1:00 pm, during the Annual Convention in Sacramento.