



# NH Railroad Revitalization Association

June 25, 2007

Tonight's meeting was called to order by Pres. Griffin @ 7 PM at the Health and Safety Council in Concord.

## Attendees:

Name	Town
Peter Griffin	Windham, NH
Tom Noel	New Boston, NH
Stephen Flanders	Weare, NH
Stephen Piper	Dover, NH
Winthrop Buswell	Loudon, NH
Gary Kerr	Chichester, NH

Name	Town
Sam Langley	Boscawen, NH
Lenny McGee	Manchester, NH
Bill Remington	Concord, NH
George Katsakiores	Derry, NH
Claire Zopf	Concord, NH
Gus Sheedy	Derry, NH

## May minutes

The May 21 meeting minutes were accepted as written.

## Treasurer's Report

Steve Flanders reported the organization's account balance and stated that he has received \$64.00 since the last meeting and has paid out nothing.

## PR Committee

Gary and Claire submitted two examples of what could possibly serve as window signs or other advertising placard for corporate members. They depict the NHRRA logo, the organization's major endeavors and have a "corporate member" banner across the top. Discussion was held and suggestions were made for potentially making the signs clearer and easier to read. Gary and Claire also submitted a draft bumper sticker for review and comment.

## Goals and Objectives Committee

Gary submitted the most recent draft of the organization's Goals and Objectives document for review and comment. After receiving input from the members present at the meeting, the document should go out to the general membership for suggestions. Members are encouraged to bring any comments to the next meeting or send them to the committee by e-mail. Members present at the next meeting will give final approval.

## Legislative Report

Tom reported that SB 75, the bill to create a NH Rail Authority, has passed both the House and the Senate and should soon be signed by the Governor. The bill, as amended by the House Transportation Committee, was passed by the House by a solid 189 - 120 vote after a one hour debate. The amendment added many more cities and towns to be represented on the Authority's Board of Directors. The Senate then quickly concurred with the bill as amended so a conference committee was unnecessary. The Board of Directors includes representatives from a number of regional planning commissions and 25 communities with current or potential rail service. There is no seed money associated with the Authority. The amended House version can be found on the web at <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2007/sb0075.html>. It was suggested that NHRRA should create a press release for submission to area newspapers to keep the issue focused in the public realm.

HB311, the bill that was initiated to formulate a study committee to investigate the current liability insurance requirements, also passed.

## Interviews

Peter met with Doris Ballard of Concord Public Television to conduct an interview on the benefits of improving rail service in NH. This interview will be aired on Concord's local access channel (22?), but it is unknown as to exactly when. Winthrop also had the opportunity to speak with Ms. Ballard at his recent concert, where he spoke about NHRRA and his policy on contributing 10% of his railroad art sales to the organization.

## Other Business

- Peter attended the Rockingham Planning Commission's annual meeting on June 13. At the meeting, interim NHDOT Commissioner Chuck O'Leary described the Department's future as "bleak" as there is no money for transportation. Regional planning commissions have been told to scale back the number and scope of projects they have on the books. Assistant NHDOT Commissioner Jeff Brillhart stated that I-93 may not be built according to current plans or within the current projected time frame.
- Tom finally received a letter back from the IRS with the determination that NHRRA's current level of lobbying does not adversely affect our exempt status and the exemption letter issued to us continues in effect. Tom submitted a copy of this letter to Steve Piper to be maintained in the files.
- Winthrop is working on graphics for an NHRRA bumper sticker. Claire and Gary have been working on a decal for display and presentation to entice potential corporate memberships.
- Win offered that as proactive outreach, members should contact friends and suggest that they become NHRRA members.
- Bill has been actively investigating potential new business opportunities on the Northern corridor.
- Bill also reported that Amtrak's reauthorization bill (S294) passed on April 24. Funds will now be dedicated for five years instead of year to year.
- Steve Piper reported that April registered the fourth consecutive month in which the NH ridership has been greater than 50% of the total Downeaster ridership. He stated annual NH ridership totals since 2002 to highlight the very upward trend.
- George suggested that once the Goals and Objectives have been finalized and adopted, a copy should be sent to the NH Senators and Congress.
- Gary has written a "thank you" letter for Peter's signature to be sent to those NH senators who voted in favor of SB75.
- Gary suggested that if there were sufficient interest, an annual NHRRA meeting could be held at the Black Cat in Laconia. NHRRA could possibly combine the meeting with a ride on the Hobo Railroad. Peter suggested that Concord might be a more central location and requested that Gary research other potential places.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM

Next meeting: Monday, July 23, 2007 at 7 PM  
Safety & Health Council  
163 Manchester Street, Concord

Minutes by: Stephen R. Piper, Secretary