

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Potomac Division, MER, NMRA
7:33 PM, March 17, 2026

1. Call to Order

a. Attendance: E Little, L Stoermer, A Belida, M Brechbiel, K Wilson, G Cassidy absent: J Stanley, B Schultheiss

2. Adoption of the Agenda- adopted and passed as shared.

3. Approval of Minutes of Past Meeting

a. Minutes from prior meeting: February 2026: adopted and passed as sent out via email after last meeting, as amended.

4. Superintendent's Report (Ernie Little)

a. 2026 Event Planning update: Dranesville center confirmed for May, as well as B&O Center in Silver Spring and Leisure World, so next couple in person meeting events are set for locations.

b. Web Master Report: updated as to events and other info.

c. NMRA education workgroup: Ernie attended meeting and came away disappointed with meeting overall but looks forward to possible future prospects.

d. Potomac Module group: is in process for joining as a NMRA 100% Club and will then be integrated into future Division events as they desire.

5. Senior Asst. Superintendent's Report (Greg Cassidy)

a. Bylaw amendments Greg reports that he has an amended set of bylaws ready to present for adoption at the May meeting and will also have a printed copy on hand for review on site as well as an option to view on overhead during presentation, discussion and vote.

b. IO Groups: Discussion about the IO Groups Division page, about the listing of persons that are signed into it. Owner/moderator has access to the full directory, and we will work on promoting it more to the rest of the membership that is not already enrolled. Approx 105 of the 220 members are enrolled. Martin is the owner, Ernie and Alex are moderators.

Ernie asked Martin to include Greg as a co-owner, which is in progress.

6. Flyer Editor/Publisher Report (Alex Belida)

Alex's Report: "The next Flyer will introduce the candidates running for the Board and publish information on the voting process. It will also disclose the Bylaw amendments to be considered and voted on at our Annual Meeting in May.

But this is going to be an Achievement Program special issue – 61 pages in all -- leading into our series of virtual and in-person clinics on all the AP categories. We will have an introductory piece on why AP is worthwhile, a full schedule of our clinics, brief pieces by each clinician demystifying their subjects. We also have a printable checklist that can be used by those working on AP categories. In addition, we have a piece by Greg on how he received a merit award for a structure that had to be judged in another division.

Our challenge is for Industries, and we lead off with a photo essay by Mat Thompson on rail worthy industries. Martin discusses another structure he built, and Jim Allen outlines his construction of a plastics industry for his layout.

Our Meet the Member this time is Bob Rodriguez. And we have Bernie Kempinski lined up for our June-July issue. "

7. Asst. Superintendent's Report (Ken Wilson)

- a.** Ken reports on layout tours: Notes very good attendance at all four layouts. All four layout owners were pleased with the attendance. Ernie reports that during a model railroad event he attended the following week, that multiple people commented on the quality of the layout tour. Alex will share info on the layout tour report to Ernie for inclusion on the website.
- b.** Layout tours for upcoming Maryland date is developing well that Greg is facilitating. Info will be posted in the upcoming Flyer edition and on website.

8. Paymaster's Report (Jerry Stanley)

- a. Report was shared via email and will be posted online. No further info as Jerry was not in attendance.
 1. Checking account (beginning balance) \$ 6558.54
 2. Cash on Hand \$0.00
 3. Total assets as of 2/27/2026 (end balance) \$ 6553.54
 4. Deposits by date \$ 0.00
 5. Total Deposits \$0.00
 6. Individual Deposits \$ 0.00
 7. Total Deposits \$0.00
 8. Total individual payouts \$5.00 02/23/26 Service charge
 9. Total Payouts \$0.00
 10. Checking account balance as of 02/27/2026 (Lines [1+5]-9) = \$6553.54
 11. Total Cash on hand 02/27/2026 \$0.00
 12. Total Assets (lines10+11) \$6553.54

- b. Paypal and venmo: Lee reports that these accounts are prepared to set up, awaiting the distinct checking account to be arranged for online transactions. By the treasurer.

9. AP Coord. (Martin Brechbiel)

- a. Two AP certificates have been sent in for award from Division members, with one of them leading to MMR (Lytle) so waiting for them to be processed.
- b. New AP templates are being prepared for use.
- c. A new AP category is being developed: Modular Model Railroading. Martin discussed the merits of this although believes it repeats or overlaps items in other AP programs.
- d. Martin offered insight on Structures AP application that is being updated and clarified.
- e. AP Model Training Evaluation Guide: Martin notes it is a guide based on a presentation that he developed and gave multiple times over several years on the parameters of evaluating models for AP and Merit Awards. He later displayed a DVD recording of it that he possesses.

10. Old/Unfinished Business

- a. Donated items** discussion, Receiving and disposition of items: document ready adoption.
- b. Securement of PayPal account:** waiting on Jerry to establish the dedicated checking account.
- c. Layout survey** (Greg Cassidy) Greg reports that 58 respondents to the survey sent out so far of those emailed. Survey closes in two weeks and Greg will present results, and Board can use the results to guide future decisions. Strong initial response within first couple days and has trickled off to a few in past couple days. He does not foresee the need to send a reminder to those that have not yet participated.
- d. AP manager opening:** no volunteers for this position as yet. Discussion on the requirements of the position. Alex offered that two managers be developed, one on either side of the Division (due to the river) for ease of covering the territory
- e. Contact with Todd Hermann** concerning videos of in person clinics. Ernie notes he discussed the process of recording an in-person clinic for future presentation online. Additional discussion begun by Martin provided additional insight on this to get this arranged for the May meet if possible.
 - i. There was a side conversation started by Martin about appointing members as 'lead' on committees to develop volunteer points in a way that can be readily accounted.
- f. Joint meet with Chesapeake Division** on November 14th has settled on a date with the Venue TBD although looking in the Columbia MD area as a central point between both Divisions.

11. New Business

- a. Annual business meeting – May 23rd**
 - i. Venue secured: Dranesville.
 - ii. Planning: 2 clinics are planned, would like to aim for a third, possibly a fourth if no layout tours.

- iii. Discussion about lunch as part of it: brief discussion about options.

12. Good of the Order

- a. Concerns/Questions. Some additional follow up discussion was had, and this info was included in the topics noted previously.
- b. 3 new members were added: Welcome email was sent to each.
- c. Next BOD meeting
 - i. Tuesday 21 April 2026, 7:30 PM.

13. Adjournment at 8:35pm