

Meeting Minutes Winchester Chapter, NRHS

Meeting Date:	July 8, 2023
Meeting Location:	Calvary Church of the Brethren, Winchester, VA
Minutes Submitted by:	John Foote, Chapter Secretary
Attendance	21 members and 11 guests

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by President Van Welton

President's Report:

Van Welton reported that the chapter's annual Railfan Day will be August 19, 2023. It will feature a tour of the Bunker Hill Train Club layout (at 11:00 AM) and a picnic at Shenandoah Junction (at 12:30 PM). The Chapter will supply hot dogs. Members are asked to bring chips and appropriate side dishes.

Matching Grants awarded to the Chapter

See New Business section for information on two matching grants.

Treasurer's Report:

Carl Stephanus provided a report with the following information:

- Chapter expense Budget is \$802.00
- Chapter income, year to date, totaled \$975.00
- Chapter bank account balance, as of 7/8/2023 is \$3,474.79 plus \$5,000.00 (the amount of the NRHS matching grant--see New Business section for information on two matching grants.)
- The Chapter has a certificate of deposit (CD) in Summit Bank, in the amount of \$5,642.64 The CD matures with a yield of 4.0% on August 15, 2024

Secretary's Report

We have 21 members and 11 guests in attendance tonight.

National Representative's Report

The matching grant from the NRHS will be covered in New Business.

The chapter membership is reminded that the NRHS national convention will be in Fort Lauderdale/Deerfield Beach Florida—from Friday, September 1st through Wednesday, September 6th, 2023. Convention details and hotel information are accessible on the NRHS website.

Old Business –

Caboose Relocation

The Caboose Relocation Committee reported progress to date regarding plans to move the chapter caboose from its current location (in Clearbrook Park, north of Winchester) to a tentatively arranged location in or near Middletown, Virginia.

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The committee has established a preliminary budget and contacted a local construction company with equipment suitable for the move. The committee indicated this company has experience relocating railroad rolling stock and management has indicated genuine interest in the caboose project.

Cooperation with the Town of Middletown, Virginia

Leaders of the town of Middletown have taken steps to establish a railroad-themed “living museum,” featuring, among other attractions, a collection of railroad rolling stock. The town and the chapter have informally agreed that the project can include space for the caboose.

Junior Railroad Club

President Van Welton announced that the first Junior Railroad Club event will take place before the September meeting, at 5:30 PM. Subsequent Junior Railroad Club events will occur every other month just prior to the Chapter meeting.

Railroad Merit Badge

In a related note, the Chapter has been recognized to assist Scouts with their Railroad Merit Badge experience. Regarding this activity, there will be a Scouts Merit Badge University at the Laurel Ridge Community College campus in Middletown on October 28, 2023.

New Business –

Matching Grants for the Caboose Relocation project

The chapter has received \$5,000.00 from the NRHS to assist with the cost of relocating our caboose. Half of this grant must be matched by donations of at least \$2,500.00 in cash and the rest matched with any mix of cash and donated materials and labor.

Carl reported he had obtained an additional matching grant for \$1,250.00 from a local charitable trust.

Thus for matching half (\$2,500) of the NRHS grant, every additional dollar donated will result in having four dollars to use for the caboose relocation (i.e., one dollar from you (as a donor), one dollar earned from the local charitable trust grant, and two dollars earned from the NRHS grant).

Free Lance Railroad

Noah Collins suggested establishment of a free lance railroad by the Chapter. The goal would be to enhance the Chapter’s “reach” to the railroad/railfan community in the Shenandoah Valley.

His initial concept involves creation of an online “app.” The app could, among other activities, enable or app users to individually (or perhaps in a group) build a virtual railroad. Users could presumably add other elements (buildings, highways, industries, etc.) and go ahead and “play railroad.”

A motion based on Noah’s suggestion was tabled pending further investigation and a detailed presentation. Members suggested that Noah lead the project.

Meeting Adjournment and the Meeting’s Program

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM with the monthly program to be presented by George Hamlin.