

THE FEVR FLASH

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025, AUGUST, 2010

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For Dinner Train only- 402-727-8321.

(The Fremont Dinner Train is a separate business)

BACK ISSUES:

Back issues of the FLASH and links to numerous railroad related sites may be viewed at www.FremontRailroad.com.

MAILING LIST:

If anyone wishes to be added to or removed from the FLASH email list send a request to NPTCHM@Hotmail.Com.

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS:

The NRM Board of Directors met on August 4 in the conference/training room at the Fremont Depot. Present were **Jeff Blackmore, George Blessing, Rudy Daniels, Paul Eveland** (part of meeting), **Melissa Peterson, Dave Mutthersbaugh, Maynard Porter, Charles L. Sedlacek, and Dennis Wallen.**

The guest at the meeting was **Mike Williams**, owner of Railroad Materials Salvage, Inc. and several short line railroads. He is from Richmond, Missouri, which is northeast of Kansas City. His attendance was the result of his interest in purchasing assets of the NRM.

His ownership involvement includes the Bountiful and Craig Mountain Railroad in Idaho, the Ozark Valley Railroad in Missouri, the Iowa River Railroad in Iowa, the St. Maries River Railroad in Idaho, and the most recently acquired Dakota Southern Railway in South Dakota.

His proposal would give him the ability to seek restoration of the now out of service connection with the general system and to allow his **storage** of rail cars on the trackage between Nickerson and Hooper. The location of the NRM line has the advantage of close proximity to the main lines of railroads eliminating the need to move storage cars to remote locations, such as South Dakota.

This storage ability would necessitate the rehabilitation of the local track which is much needed. Williams' **organizations** have the necessary supplies and equipment to accomplish that.

He also envisioned the continuing function and improvement of the status of

NRM as a museum and preservation entity. The depot/museum, the two siding tracks leading to the depot/museum, and a parking area would **not** be included in the sale. Also not included in the sale would be the rolling stock of the museum, although all locomotives would be sold. With his many long term connections in the railroad industry, there would be an opportunity to expedite donations to the museum.

His proposal would include the donation to the NRM of facilities in **Hooper** after the required time needed after acquisition to comply with IRS regulations. Track currently in place will not be removed.

After Mr. Williams left there was considerable discussion among the Board members. Afterwards, in a roll call vote, the Board **approved** the proposal, noting that much detail needed to be yet addressed, but that action was needed with the approaching loan deadline.

There was much exchange of information between Mr. Williams in the time after the meeting and on **August 25** an agreement essentially containing provisions presented here was approved by the NRM BOD.

On **August 30**, a two month lease was extended to NRM on the track to allow NRM to continue the present mode of operation, including its relationship with the Fremont Dinner Train, while the many purchase details are completed. It is anticipated those will include work toward repairing the connection with the general railroad system and the arrival of another locomotive for motive power.

The agreement will **preserve** the historically significant route between Fremont and Hooper first laid in 1869 as part of the expansion of the railroad into northern Nebraska and eventually into South Dakota and Wyoming. The **retention** of the depot/museum and vintage rolling stock in NRM ownership will allow a continuum of effort toward improvement with fewer demands on the volunteer staff for maintenance of track and right of way.

INDUSTRY NOTES - BRIDGES:

The **Railway Museum Quarterly/Trainline** Summer 2010 issue (the new joint publication of the **Association of Railway Museums** and the **Tourist Railway Association**, respectively) carries an article about the new FRA rule concerning inspections of railroad **bridges**, including those on tourist lines.

This rule mandates increased attention to bridges, including periodic inspections, record

keeping, and knowledge of their original design specifications. Many railroad bridges may be a century or more old, with design specifications never recorded or lost. Fortunately, typical older bridges were built conservatively to carry the very heavy steam locomotives with their dynamic imbalances and are subjected to lighter stresses with today's traffic but are still subject to degradation. (The current Union Pacific bridge in Omaha has a build date of about 1915)

The document can be downloaded at www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/safety/bridgefinalsafetyrule2010 and is 113 pages long. Pages 11/12 are of application to the tourist railroad industry. (In the document there is an interesting point that a culvert with a span exceeding 10 feet would be subject to the bridge rules.)

ELECTRIFICATION:

Recent news items concerning travel failures on the Northeast **commuter** lines emphasized one of the major disadvantages of the electrification of railroad lines. A single electrical **failure** can render multiple lines inoperative simultaneously and in some cases strand passengers in tunnels or on elevated track. While electrical operation became **mandatory** very early on railroads in terminal areas, it is used in many other places, such as Europe, because of the availability of electricity from nuclear plants or dams (about 80% of electrical generation in France is from nuclear plants).

The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific (**Milwaukee Road**) operated hundreds of electrified miles in the northwestern states until the 1970's.

Although the electrified systems were a viable alternative to the labor and fuel intensive steam locomotive, that advantage mostly disappeared with the use of the modern diesel.

CHARTER:

Saturday, October 9: Harvey House Reenactment (see July 2010 FLASH)

NOTE: The regular excursion train will not operate on October 9.

EXCURSION SEASON:

The 2010 season continues with trips until the end of October on **Saturday** and **Sunday** to Nickerson, NE. The boarding for these trips is at 1:00 PM at the Depot at 1835 N. Somers, Ave. This location is on the west side of Fremont, just south of 23rd Street. A copy of the 2010 brochure may be downloaded from the website at www.FremontRailroad.com or can be obtained by calling the office at 402-727-0615.