

THE FEVR FLASH

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025, APRIL, 2013

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BACK ISSUES:

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

(Note: the following is not the official meeting report. Only the approved meeting minutes sent to NRM members is the official report.)

The NRM Board of Directors met at the NRM depot in Fremont on April 3, 2013. Present were: Treasurer/Executive Director **Angermund, Swetnam (Secretary), Blessing, Fachman (President), Lafferty, Sedlacek, and Love.**

Absent: **Blackmore**

Guests: **Dennis Wallen** (via conference telephone) and **T.J.Foster.**

Treasurer **Angermund** presented her report which was approved. She also mentioned that she is receiving calls regarding charters and suggested that at the present time reservations not be accepted. The BOD agreed to that policy.

Member **Wallen**, who is currently in Arizona, reported on his contacts with several short line/tourist railroads to ascertain their interest in NRM's operations. He reported on each of his contacts and will continue his efforts.

Blessing discussed the new FRA rules regarding hours of train duty service and the reporting process. These rules do apply to tourist railroads, but would probably not cause any problems for typical NRM operations.

The topic of obtaining used **ties** for replacement use was discussed by guest Foster. Donations of used ties from other railroads are complicated by the EPA rules on treated tie disposal. It was decided to authorize the sale for landscape use of any ties on NRM property that are unusable for track repair.

An allocation of \$2300 was made to rent a front end **loader** to clear the ROW of trees and debris between Fremont and Nickerson prior to other needed track maintenance.

BOD member **Love** agreed to coordinate the cleaning of the excursion cars.

There was discussion about crew **training**, depot counter sales, and advertising *(Note: the NRM ad in the Directory of Tourist Lines and Railroad Museums has appeared in*

the now available June issue of Trains magazine and will also be in three subsequent issues). The topic of eligibility for free car **storage** for NRM members will be addressed at a future meeting.

The next BOD meeting will be held on May 1, 2013.

DEPOT OFFICE:

To provide for security while allowing authorized access, it has been decided to install a computer room door **lock** which will provide a unique access code for each user.

A BOD member has donated a hot laminating unit for the office.

MAPLE CREEK BRIDGE:

. Almost **ten** years have passed since the rail line between Nickerson and Hooper was taken out of service because of deteriorating conditions of the wooden pilings and substructure, particularly on the north end.



North end before traffic closure.



Crossing during high water

Maple Creek begins in another county and stretches across Dodge County in a meandering course. The situation near the bridge is made worse by sharp bends just above the bridge which direct stream flow against the north bank under the bridge. The photo here shows the flood waters only a short distance below the steel superstructure.

Repair work was undertaken by then NRM members Charles Egbers and the now late Jerry Morris.

The **north** end was rebuilt with steel piles

and provided with a guard structure on the upstream side. The track was re-laid but the **south** end pile structure remains in need of work. The new track owner had expressed the intent to reopen the route to Hooper, but that has not happened. The rail to **Hooper** is mostly usable, but much tie replacement and vegetation removal would be needed.



Current view of bridge.

(All photos by FLASH editor)

NATURAL GAS LOCOMOTIVE FUEL:

Those who receive the June issue of Trains should be certain to read the article by Fred Frailey on the use of liquefied natural gas (**LNG**) for locomotive fuel. BNSF experimented with this concept in the 1990's but at that time there was no financial advantage to implement further use.

Since the purchase of BNSF by Warren **Buffet**, who typically uses long range planning, and with no usual stockholders expecting immediate profits, BNSF may be ready to start the program again. The incentive is the present and future expectations of the relationship between diesel fuel and natural gas **pricing**.

The implementation will result in **dual-fuel** engines able to run only on diesel fuel or on a mix. In the mix situation, natural gas is added to intake air. The mix is then compressed in the usual manner in the cylinder and a small amount of diesel fuel is injected to start combustion. All this is computer controlled, with only about **5%** of the usual amount of diesel fuel used.

In the case of **locomotives**, it is planned to operate in idle, run1, and run2 with diesel only, with the mix at higher power settings.

The gas fuel will be LNG carried in large thermos bottle like fuel tenders at **-260** degrees F but at near atmospheric pressure. These containers might be on a specially built chassis or could be adapted to intermodal deep well cars, the total weight easily allowing placement just behind the locomotives.

CHARTERS AND EXCURSIONS:

NRM **excursions** and charters are scheduled to return later this Spring. More information at www.FremontRailroad.com.