

WASHINGTON STATE TRAIN SHOW
AD HOC COMMITTEE

REVIEW SUMMARY

July 31, 2006

Ad hoc Committee Members appointed by 4D superintendent Kevin Oleson:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
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Meetings: June 19, 26, July 10, 17, 24 and presentation to 4D BOD July 31 (postponed due to unavailability of BOD quorum). Meetings averaged three hours in duration and included alternate site visit.

I. Approach

- A. The committee approached its assigned task in its first four meetings by:
1. Reviewing the purpose and objective of having the show.
 2. Reviewed the finances of the 2005 and 2006 show with special attention to operational costs and fees charged.
 3. Reviewed the 2005 and 2006 attendance numbers.
 4. Reviewed the 2006 participation by vendors and manufacturers.
 5. Reviewed the venue for the show and related rates charged.
 6. Reviewed promotion and advertising done and effects.
 7. Reviewed the show's "fit" in the area's other train shows and timing.
 8. Reviewed the effectiveness of our sponsoring partner MRIA.
 9. Reviewed the continued use of the Puyallup location and other alternatives.
 10. Brainstormed ideas to be chosen from in offering its final report and recommendations.
- B. During the analysis phase of our work, open discussion was encouraged but no solutions were permitted. The purpose was to consider what had been done to date.

II. Committee analysis produced these preliminary conclusions (referenced to the subsections in A above) relative to the first two shows.

1. Extensive effort was expended to determine what was the true purpose of having this show. The final conclusion was ***"to provide a supplemental source of income for the 4D"*** should the Science Center Show be discontinued or for increased program expenses.

2. **Table I** (page 2) is full disclosure of the comparative income and expenses for the first two years the show has operated. The net operating loss decreased in the second year as a result of reduced expenses despite a decrease in paid admissions of 156. The largest single decrease in expenses is attributable to not using Pavilion 2 (second floor). Next greatest saving was in Printing and Promotion. Our analysis demonstrated that less space produced more income (\$583.32) despite reduced gate income. In other words, having more space was not profitable. The operating loss was reduced by \$2 747.51 or \$8 164.96 less than the 2005 loss but not enough to enable the show to become a source of 4D supplemental income.

Table I

4th Division PNR-NMRA
PSX Finance Statements

| ITEM | 2005 | 2006 | DIFFERENCE |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Income | | | |
| Vendors | \$ 4 976.44 | \$ 6 353.76 | \$ 1 377.32 |
| Gate Receipts * | 7 158.00 | 6 364.00 | (794.00) |
| Total Income | 12 134.44 | 12 717.76 | 583.32 |
| Expense | | | |
| Venue | 13 164.50 | 10 001.00 | 3 163.50 |
| Printing and Promotion | 5 540.08 | 1 445.56 | 4 094.52 |
| Advertising | 3 456.62 | 3 625.71 | (169.09) |
| Recognition / Awards | 413.93 | -0- | 413.93 |
| Insurance (NMRA) | 25.00 | 25.00 | -0- |
| Miscellaneous | 446.78 | 368.00 | 78.78 |
| Total Expense | \$ 23 046.91 | \$ 15 465.27 | 7 581.64 |
| Gain/(Loss) | \$(10 912.47) | \$ (2 747.51) | \$ 8 164.96 |

* Admissions sold: 2005 – 989; 2006 – 833.

Had we used only Pavillion I the show would have made a profit of \$152.49. The Expo hall was primarily exhibits and clinics versus revenue generating tables.

3. Noted that despite a one year prior track record and similar amounts of advertising, the gate decreased by 156. It was noted that many “helpers” came as much to see the show as to be of actual help!

A letter drafted by the 2006 vendors and presented to Supt. Oleson showed vendor support of the show *only* if the gate was increased substantially. This letter requires *serious study* by the 4D BOD and by a show marketing committee. If we do not respond positively, substantial vendors will be impossible to obtain. Remember that they schedule their shows and book space in the summer months for the next season!

4. Manufacturer participation was two in 2006 compared to some five in 2005. The actual number of vendors in 2006 was not available but was estimated at 50. This is reflected in the \$ 1 337.32 increase in vendor revenue.

Original planning had hoped to create a west coast “Chicago Type Trade Show”. It was obvious that such a show requires 10 000 or larger gate according to one traveling vendor. Chicago has three days set aside for retailers to interact with manufacturers and vendors *before* the public enters. It is a dual purpose show and the public entry days serves to help cover trade show costs.

5. See Table II for Puyallup Fairground and an alternate site at the Lynnwood Convention Center. Several other venues were located in Federal Way, Renton and possibly Kent. The space needs and access to alternate venues were carefully considered. Further consideration was focused on proximity to an anticipated market and the density of other similar events. Admission charges were also reviewed and appeared to be reasonable although suggestions were made for a stepped admission that allows free admission for children under 12, adult \$10, family (two adults and children under 16) \$15. Seniors and NMRA members with card \$8. Additional pre sale promotional tickets would be \$8 for adults.

TABLE II
Comparative Venue Charges

| ITEM | PUYALLUP FAIR GROUNDS | | | LYNNWOOD CONVENTION CTR | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | SQ FT | PER DAY | TWO DAY | SQ FT | PER DAY | TWO DAY |
| SPACE | | | | | | |
| Expo Hall | 20 000 | \$ 1 450.00 | \$ 2 900.00 | | | |
| Pavillion 1 | 22 700 | \$ 1 950.00 | \$ 3 900.00 | | | |
| Pavillion 2 ‡ | 46 200 | \$ 3 225.00 | \$ 6 450.00 | | | |
| 2 – D, E | | | | 11 748 | \$ 2 930.00 | \$ 5 860.00 |
| 1 D, E, F ∞ | | | | 5 940 | \$ 1 500.00 | \$ 3 000.00 |
| Booths (10) | | | \$ 25.00ea | | optional | |
| Electric Drops (19) | | | \$ 30.00ea | | * | |
| Tables (178) | | | \$ 8.00ea | | ** | |
| Gateman (6 hours) | | | \$ 11.50hr | | Not needed | |
| Chairs (152) | | | \$.75ea | | Free | |
| Parking | | | \$ 180.00 | | Free*** | |
| Food & Beverage Service. | Pavilion 1 | | | Concourse 2 | | |

‡ Passenger only elevator in Pavillion 2 plus escalator/stairs.

∞ Freight elevator to lower 1 D, E, F level from loading area 10' x 12' plus passenger elevator and stairs from/to concourse on both levels.

* Estimated for amount used 2006 \$600.00 after one free for each space rented.

** Display tables free. Tables sold to vendors (6' or 8') \$8 ea.

*** 600 spaces adjacent to Center. Can designate space for vendor trucks and trailers across from four loading docks.

6. A careful review of the advertising and promotional efforts was made. It was noted that little advertising was directed to interest groups such as the railroad historical, railfan, toy train and railroadians groups. The poster was well done but

lacked a central “hook”. Newspaper advertising, while broad coverage in smaller publications needed more direct market targeting.

In fact, it was noted that modelers planned the PR when a strong experienced marketing team who think like the target customer rather than a modeler was needed. Several interested marketing persons were identified.

It was noted that the target audience was the 35+ returning to the target/doing something with the kids parent group. The Committee analysis indicated that on a scale of 1 to 100 we achieved about a 35! Marketing must more clearly identify the target audience and ways to reach them.

7. The schedule of area train shows was reviewed. Most shows are held in the fall and early winter/spring time frame. United Northwest just moved to a February date to obtain greater space leaving their April date open. The first fall shows start in early October. The June date for the 4D show was studied. Weather is the controlling factor for gate building here. By June, good weather draws people outside with many activities to participate in. The analysis suggests that whatever date is settled on, June is not the best. Strong feeling was directed to late September and late April.

8. This show was conceived as a partnership with MRIA to promote the hobby and expose the public to manufacturers and new products. The 2006 show had little or no input from MRIA. They failed to include a manufacturer’s invitation in their publication. No financial help was received for setting up the show. This relationship appears to be no more than a token endorsement.

To replicate the Milwaukee Trainfest show, MRIA needs to step up and reserve Thursday or Friday for a dealer only trade show that will attract the Pacific Northwest businesses to see and place their orders. June was a time they could write Christmas orders. If the relationship is to be symbiotic, MRIA needs to see it as a sales opportunity with the public showing on Saturday and Sunday as thanks to the local Divisional co-participant.

Barring this kind of partnership, 4D needs to create its own *unique identification* in the Seattle area show market.

9. The continued use of the Puyallup location was studied. 4D has not capitalized on the outside area between buildings. In a computer era, the locomotive simulator operated by Operation Lifesaver would be a draw. Railroadiana such as speeders, handcars, lamps and lanterns, antique and modern track maintenance equipment would be activity draws. Any alternate site must provide such space to create added “draw”. Modest ticket prices or donations for speeder pumping, spike driving or pulling, refundable if accomplished in a specific time will increase show income.

Diversifying offerings by inclusion of such features will increase the gate appeal and proceeds.

Parking across the street adds an expense of several hundred dollars and is less convenient as some other venues might be.

Analysis shows that this facility is perhaps larger than 4D needs, at least until the show “matures” and develops a following. It is also costlier than alternate sites. A smaller but busier site with a wider variety of activities sends a positive message about the quality of a show and word of mouth advertising becomes more effective as a gate builder.

10. The Committee freely brainstormed ideas that the 4D Board and any Committee for future shows may utilize in creating and building the public gate and the show’s net income.

It was suggested by one Committee member that “we need to bring in dollars from outside of the organization’s membership . . . from a potential audience of families including husband, wife and children.

III. Suggestions generated by the Committee:

1. Modular layout groups should submit a budget for admission passes for essential workers to be issued by name. All other layout “helpers” should purchase tickets: \$8 for NMRA members and \$10 for non-NMRA members who will be “casual” helpers. This will deal with the rather large number of “helpers” that claim connection but really want free admission to the show.
2. Actively seek participation of “related” railroad interest groups. Ask historical groups to present features of interest, antiques etc for their areas of interest. Offer sales space for TCA, LOTS, TTOS, etc that is limited to their members even for a period and then open to the public.
3. Need to provide vendors (both individual and commercial with WA state sales tax form. If they do not have a tax ID number, law requires the show to receive the form with their declared sales and correct sales tax. Many do not conform or do not return the form. If so, upon an audit by the revenue department, 4D is clear and they go after the unreturned forms. If we do not provide them, we are liable for whatever tax revenue assesses plus fines. It is suggested that we provide each vendor with a booklet outlining our rules (such as aisle displays) and the tax rules.
4. It is essential that show staff frequently communicate with vendors about what we are offering and display organizations about their participation. Communications include confirmation of space, payment, number of “free” passes per table (one for the vendor and one for each additional table), new features, arrival, setup and tear down times and arrangements.
5. Adequate pre-planning is a must. No one person should be responsible for the show. A committee with distinct responsibilities for each member and a regular system of accountability for assigned tasks has to be required. Planning for the next show needs to start at the last show. Vendors and exhibitors should be offered pre-registration for the next show, even deposits collected. Continuity creates trust and confidence in the permanency of the show.

6. Vendors should be offered a selection of motels and parking for their needs. Lynwood requires at least ten “room nights” in area lodging to qualify for the Convention rates for their space.
7. Layout Tours to increase income and draw at the gate. (See II .10 above.)
8. Utilize the outside space at a venue for such displays and activities as to draw a wide spectrum of people to the venue, and then draw them inside for “more”:
 - a. Kiddy train ride
 - b. Display of railroad related vehicles such as hi-railers and track maintenance machines solicited from area railroads.
 - c. Displays of transportable equipment from area railroad museums (for the advertising value to their attractions).
 - d. Contact the Fort Lewis Army railroad group for military railroad display (recruitment value).
 - e. Private rail artifact collectors of baggage carts, speeders, track tools etc. An example is the LeMay collection of vehicles in Tacoma that includes old US Postal trucks and Railway Express trucks.
 - f. Operation Lifesaver simulator.
 - g. Arrange with BN/UP for a display of modern and old track systems. Include a rail lifting with tongs and spike driving and pulling.
 - h. The O Scale Live steamers could be set up outdoors.
9. Urge the 4D BOD to continue a spring meet. If the show date is moved earlier in the spring, use the 7D Burnaby Show pattern of a Friday start with layout tours for registrants and/or a prototype tour, Saturday clinics with a morning opening of displays for members and a noon opening for the public continuing Sunday with a public showing. The show admission is added to the Meet registration providing a base contribution to the show financial success.
10. Consider using only 4D Modulars layouts (including the Garden Railway) to demonstrate the value of being an NMRA member in the 4D. Adequate signage should promote the connection. See II . 6 above for separate display “modules-in-progress and even module kits.
11. Seek a show “partnership” with NRHS Tacoma and Cascade chapters. This could lead to jointly sponsored fan trips as additional funding sources at other times.
12. Emphasize digital photography of modules by providing a basic camera with a coach and then print the results on a computer (for a “materials” fee of say \$5). Photos of outside activities with participants kids or family as souvenirs.
13. Encourage diorama contests similar to Dave Kreitler’s sponsorship of 1 x 2 dioramas. Invite public to enter next year. Provide booklet of guidelines and offer a cash prize for the best one submitted. Railpass NMRA membership could be required for entry. Perhaps several classes from novice up could be offered.
14. Encourage Modulars to set up operation opportunities where the operator integrates switching movements from a raised dias adjacent to the module being

switched against the clock. Could charge a donation for that scale modulars group and offer a prize for beating the clock.

15. Try offering swap table space “by the hour” called “Speedy swap” and promote it as an opportunity for persons (members and non-members alike) with small amounts of materials they want to put up for sale. Could bill it as an opportunity to “haggle” for railroad model equipment or memorabilia. Charge by the hour per person so two or more could share the hour. The changing vendors will serve to draw attendees back during the day. A chalkboard could list the time slots with the seller’s name and type of items to be offered. Would also allow show staff to take an hour and sell items. Two tables could be used. One for pre hour viewing and then moved to sell table in the hour paid for. Could even offer a few half hour slots.
16. Mix commercial sellers and individual sellers. Any non-selling manufacturers should be given central exposure forcing customers for selling to migrate.
17. Use a PA with a clear voiced announcer to refer attendees to features that will put on special events or special sales discounts for the next half hour. Could charge a \$5 announcement fee for sellers to have a specific time slot for promoting their specials.
18. Suggest that the 4D Video Library be set up as a theatre with some seats for showings from the collection. Two screens could be used in separate or adjoining settings with one dedicated to prototype railfan screening and the other for modeling how-to or layout tours. Provides a center of attraction and a place to rest. Could also have a kids screen with age appropriate Thomas and similar pictures.
19. Incorporate a railroad art show or a transportation art show with trucks etc. as well as trains. This would encourage the several railroad art sellers to come and participate as vendors. Could also include railroad photography and encourage railroad photo sellers to participate. Burnaby has a number of photo sellers that do very well.
20. Have a music stage with railroad focused music. Gramps is a professional musician and might be able to put such a feature together. Could use outside “stage”. Slide or video shows of railroad theme could be featured during the Show. There are some excellent story tellers that focus on railroads. Public Libraries have story tellers for children that could be featured events on stage.
21. Offer a daily lecture on railroad history, especially in the Western Washington area. Local authors could be featured. Ruth Eckes with her Rail Tales books would draw many older retired railroaders.
22. Feature a railroad book exchange open to all with a \$2.00 fee per exchange to the house. If a book is sold for cash, The purchaser pays the \$2 fee per book on top of selling price. Really want to encourage trading.

23. Do features put on or sponsored by local short line railroads such as Ballard Terminal, Mount Vernon Terminal, Meeker Southern, Tacoma Rail, Mount Rainier etc. Photos, history, even raffle off cab rides or free tickets.
24. Encourage a vendor or two to offer “gift Shop” items for the tourist trade. Many parents would purchase toys, Thomas, whistles etc. Tacoma Trains would be a good source of help for this. Railroad coloring books and story books would be good items.
25. Encourage hobby shops to prepare a 3’ x 4’ display we would show for free if they provide door prizes. Basically half a table to tout their location and stock lines. Could include related line shops with marine or military focus.
26. See II . 6 paragraph 3. Develop a team to visit local hobby shops at least twice a month with a display table featuring 4D and the Show. Table staff should answer questions about the hobby, 4D and NMRA, the show and talk up features of the show focused on hands on and participation. Pre-sale tickets for \$2 off list prices could be sold. Many will buy but may not come, thus enhancing the plus side of the finances. It also builds the total gate count because “interest follows dollars” and vendor sales follow ticket sales.
27. Vendors repeatedly state that adequate drayage services are not available at a reasonable cost for a small show in the Seattle area. They need a place to send their displays and merchandise weeks ahead that can provide secure storage and delivery at setup. BOD and Show managers need to find a way to provide this. Vendors will be impressed that the Show understands their needs and moves to meet them. They will pay for reasonable charges for this service. Volunteers to help in the delivery will in fact be contributing to the financial success of the show.
28. In providing modular layouts, size is less important than logical sequence of modules. If the Show rents less sq. ft. of space, module layouts may not be able to include major interior switchyards etc. Module participants need to be encouraged to staff their displays outside the circle so visitors can see the controllers at work, ask questions and even be allowed to speed up or slow down a train.
29. The marketing staff should maximize websites and links in NMRA and related sources. This is an internet age! A suggested reference is <http://www.trainfest.com>.
30. The Publicity staff must organize a consistent supply channel for flyers in hobby shops, clinics and other train shows. Too many shop and event folk say they got flyers but no one brought more and their supply was quickly gone. One idea is to provide smaller flyers for hobby shop owners that will insert one in each bag they put customer purchases into. Another idea is to have bags printed and supplied free to hobby shops with show data on them, probably a more effective advertising method than expensive news or media ads and spots.
31. Lego Club displays are a real draw in shows today. We have an active Lego group in the Seattle/Tacoma area. Invite their participation and allow them to sell or to advertise local sources of Lego train products.

32. Clinics should be hands on make and take. When rocks are colored, have a base on which to mount and add grass, trees or other scenic items. Simple clinics for kids and more complex clinics for adults including a simple structure or bridge. Many of these ideas take from five minutes to one hour and have been developed by the Seattle Clinic team. Talk to them for ideas.

Other more advanced clinics can be demonstrations by manufacturers and suppliers. Charge a small fee to participants and offer to pay token prices for items supplied by manufacturers like Chooch loads or junk piles. Offer manufacturers the opportunity to sell the demonstrated product to participants.
33. Suggest that a system of raised viewing stations be developed for children to watch trains.
34. Publicize children's items and events on the flyers distributed.
35. A suggestion that the Show provide a trademark Tee shirt each year has been made. This might be given to bona fide participants at a discounted "member" price and sold to the public at list. A picture of railroad topic might increase sales.
36. The Show must feature an active NMRA PNR – 4th Division booth. It is not enough to put a few folders and applications on the table and expect memberships to flow in. The NMRA RailPass introductory membership at \$9.95 is the way to get members signed up. Membership Booth staff must be trained in the art of engaging passers by in conversation and then slip in the NMRA as an integral part of being a model railroader. The booth needs visible "hooks" to draw people close enough to talk to them. A video playing, a small switching track operating, some electronic device chugging, photos, samples of publications etc. You can not count on people signing up if they take an application. Offer plastic, the intro \$9.95, to send in the application that day for them (and then do it). Applications with credit card numbers can be e-mailed for next day entry. Cash payments can be pocketed and then use your credit card number to get instant enrollment. Shows are golden opportunities for the 4D membership chair – where are you???
37. Seek to ally with other groups wanting a public venue for their hobby such as miniatures collectors and builders, die cast cars and vehicles, doll house crafters (who use much the same materials and tools as model railroaders) and video/DVD collectors. Increasing the base increases the gate.
38. Limit freebies. At Regional and National NMRA events everyone registers and pays the fee even if they are clinicians, presenters or displayers.
39. 4D has a certified Boy Scouts of America Railroad Merit Badge instructor on its roster. A focus on offering this during the two days of the Show could become a major contributor to gate receipts including a "presentation" of the badge to those completing it at the Show (drawing parents and family in).

40. Consider family entry of up to \$25 requires events for all of the family. Wives and Moms are interested in scenery making, vacation planning that might include points of railroad interest. We have 4D participants (a husband and wife) that specialize in railroad quilt making who might do demonstrations. Even might have a quilt to raffle!

Kids like rides and activities ideal in the outdoor portion of the venue. An inflatable castle (railroad station or car?) would provide activity and revenue.
41. Suggest that if Puyallup continues as the venue, the Garden Railway layout could be set up under the overhang on the north side of the courtyard providing the true outdoor feeling.
42. The Show Committee should enlist other area shows to take a table and promote their events. We benefit from the table cost, they from the publicity and it offers us a chance to promote at their shows during the year.
43. The Show Committee should work through the PR Committee with the Science Center to provide a display promoting the Martin Luther King weekend PSC-4D show. Science Center might even pay for some space and send a staff member.
44. A basic circle of track in each major scale on a table with identical locomotives running would teach scale difference and help visitors identify their scale in the family of scales. This table could be near the Modular layouts so the size could be translated to a real layout.
45. Signage is a must to direct the public to various events and places to see trains and railroad events. Signs should be more than merely “trains” but point to specific areas.
46. In most train shows where there are “swap” vendors, some will purchase a table or go with others to purchase a table with no intent to sell but rather, to get in at setup time in order to pick over merchandise before others. The Committee suggests that show management offer early admission for double the customary gate rate to serious buyers who want in early.
47. Because of the large number of train “shows” in the area, it was noted that a distinct “personality” was needed for the show that no other show is presently doing in order to draw a larger gate.
48. A further marketing suggestion involved carefully developing sites to which special releases and feature articles would be released. This includes local organizational publications and news letters, commercial hobby press, local and regional newspapers, radio/TV leads and interviews, Area events calendars, parents publications, and weekly promotional tables at area hobby shops with staffed 4D members answering model questions and doing demonstrations with a tie to the show at least four months in advance. Discount tickets would be sold. Perhaps drawing tickets sold for prize to be awarded only to persons present at the show.

49. Such clinic features as advanced as well as beginning hands on clinics, advanced modeling to see with the model builders present to answer and describe for viewers and 4D modular layouts only to demonstrate what the visitor can do by joining NMRA. Modules being built at various stages from framework up, even offering memberships followed by building a kit frame to take home on site.
50. The inclusion of “extra fare” layout tours would offer a chance to see real home layouts not available to the general public. Puyallup/Tacoma has many good layouts for this purpose. This in itself can become a “profit center” with little overhead except transportation. Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday morning and afternoon tours with Saturday evening a VIP tour for vendors and participants allows six public and one private slots. \$20 for adults and \$10 for under 12 is a reasonable charge. Four layouts per tour fills three hours. Costs for a bus will determine the number of seats and the estimated net return. These are also a promotion for NMRA membership as features of local meets.
51. Price tables to cover all or most of the Show space cost while remaining attractive to vendors, allowing the gate income to become the primary source of profit.
52. To work closely with the Fire Marshall specifications for aisle and access while maximizing the # of rental tables. This is intended to increase the revenue to expense ratio. Crowded aisles are seen favorably by vendors and make their presence seem more valued customers feel that they are supporting something of value to them.
53. To maximize the use of “free elements” for non-revenue display tables such as free electric outlets while selling vendors pay for these services. A discounted rate if a non-profit display group wishes to sell any display related products h as DVDs etc.
54. That the Show Committee should report news, plans and progress notes to the membership in each GrabIron issue to market the show.

IV. Options

- A. Discontinue a train show as a 4D fund raiser.
- B. Continue the show in a venue that costs less than estimated gate and vendor table income based on first two years of Puyallup. This venue could be less space at Puyallup or another suitable location but still allow some room for future growth.

The chosen venue must provide for maximum revenue producing use of the rented square footage.
- C. Develop a new market name that is shorter and has a catchy initial set. Suggestion: Trains – Trains – More Trains (TTMT). Work closely with a proposed Marketing team.
- D. Develop a partnership with other rail related groups and conduct a joint show with shared profits.

- E. Change the date of the show to reflect better use of local market conditions for Train Shows.
 1. The third or last Weekend in September would place the TTMT Show first in the start of the fall modeling season.
 2. The last week in April before the “good” weather breaks combined with a 4D Spring Meet (See III . 9 above for a current working example.)
- F. Refocus TT&MT from a manufacturer’s / Model display to a family and modelers fun show that includes commercial, private vendors, entertainment, activities and displays. The intent of this recommendation is to build gate by encouraging families, casual interests and related railroad groups to come and find something for them.
- G. If the 4D BOD elects to continue the Show, the Show Committee for 2006 should be directed to include in their proposed Show at least 25 of the 54 concepts and ideas in III .

V. Recommendations to the Fourth Division BOD:

Preamble: The ad hoc Committee has spent more than 20 hours in researching the details of the WSTS show concept, other comparable shows, program planning, venues (including off site visits), reviewing membership and leadership input, brainstorming and open discussion over a period of six-meetings. In addition, Committee members have countless hours individually outside of the Committee’s meetings. The following recommendations are the culmination of this effort and represent a serious attempt to ensure that any continuation of the Show is positive and profitable as a fundraiser for the 4D.

- A. General recommendations:
 1. That a fundraising Show continue, but, in a *vastly redesigned* conceptual format.
 2. That the date of the show either be in late September or late April. [This would begin in 2007.]
 3. That a mini-meet be incorporated into the weekend and that the meet registration fee should include an admission to the Show providing a base for the gate income.
 4. That a venue be used with appropriate space, less square footage, lower costs, better accessibility and a more compact floor layout located preferably in a geographical area where it will compete less with other established shows.
 5. That management of the Show be directed by a Show General Chairperson and a core of sub-chairs for each distinct feature accountable to the General Chair. This Committee should meet at least monthly, face to face, for an accountability check. That planning for the next show should begin before the last show starts! Leaders can take early reservations and payments locking in vendor commitment. [Given today’s late date, this is an urgent priority.]
 6. That all other railroad related interest groups be enlisted to participate in and support the Show as a way to build interest and gate income.
- B. Specific Recommendations:

1. That the present format of a combined MRIA Trade and 4D NMRA show be put on hold for now and that 4D energy first be focused on building a 4D show identity through improved format, gate numbers and vendor participation. When progress is achieved, renewing the potential of a 4D NMRA – MRIA partnership. In the interim, it is urged that the 4D MRIA relationship be maintained.
2. That the 54 suggestions in Section III become the basis for development of a *re-designed* Show concept and redefined operating policies.
3. That the following suggestions be incorporated in simple and succinct operating policy foundational to the show structure and administration:

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 9. | 10. | 15. | 16. | 27. | 29. | 30. |
| 38. | 42. | 45. | 46. | 48. | 51. | 52. | 53. | 54. | | |
4. That the following suggestions in III be included in the next and following shows *to build gate count*:

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 2. | 7. | 8. | 12. | 13. | 14. | 17. | 19. | 20. | 21. | 22. |
| 24. | 25. | 26. | 31. | 34. | 36. | 37. | 39. | 49. | 50. | |
5. That the remaining 10 suggestions be gradually used to improve the Show and provide variety for the public.
6. Personnel suggestions:

Committee members Susan Evans and 4D Secretary Jeannie Melvin have volunteered to head marketing and publicity.

Respectfully Submitted,

Roger H. Ferris, EdD., Chair

Walt Huston, 4D Supt elect

Allen Evans

Susan Evans

Clay Hanson

Diane Kraus

Ed Ives

Kevin Oleson, Ex Officio