

BAGRS Board Meeting – 14 June 2009

[BAGRS Market Research 090614.pptx](#)

10:05 AM meeting called to order

Board members present:

- Don Watters, Russ Miller, Dennis Mack, Chip Gierhart, Nancy Norris and husband, Joe Barker, Mike Patterson, Ray Turner, Frank Lucas, Johannes Hoech, Richard Murray

Topics:

- April Minutes:
 - Johannes read the April 2009 minutes, which were approved
- Membership Report (Frank Lucas):
 - Johannes arrived too late to take down the notes of this report
- Treasurer's Report (Chip Gierhart):
 - 1,353 in the bank, very little change from last time
 - Spent on postcard, and took in more new member dues
 - We're low on picnic registrations, but it's still early
 - Chip discussed insurance quote we are expecting to receive this week and also discussed additional issues to be aware of around insurance:
 - The current premium assumes we're doing open houses for the public; however, we may be able to assume the home owners liability insurance will kick in, so he'll investigate dropping the liability insurance
 - I.e. replace a \$1,000 annual liability insurance premium with \$100 individual meeting riders for public events; and for open houses we can assume the home owners insurance will cover the needed liability insurance

- One thing could be to ensure that signs at open houses are posted that state that makes “enter at your own risk” obvious, letting people know that they agree with this policy by entering
 - Neighbors and club members are covered
 - However, if there is advertised, openly stated commerce at the open house (i.e. more than just friends), then all bets are off as the standards to sue us become very low
- Yearly outlook is fine, not assuming we have extraordinary expenses. E.g. postcards are on budget and the cards are getting great reviews
- Baggage Car (Dennis Mack):
 - Very quiet saleswise up in Marin
 - We’re down to 1 zippered sweatshirt, but many hats. Inventory is drawing down slowly
 - Hats don’t move that well, embroidered Polo shirts sell well
 - We discussed selling these items at the Picnic; the feeling was that it’s a good idea (e.g. to harness impulse buying)
 - Russ discussed the online search looking for Cafepress. There is a place called Corporate Casuals where we can get Polo Shirts for \$22
 - We could link site visitors right through to their site and people can buy everything and anything there
 - They would add our logo to whatever merchandise they sell for us
 - We don’t want to do markups
 - We could, for example, show samples at the open houses and then send people to the website (we might have a terminal right at the open house)
 - **Russ** and **Dennis** will work together to make this work
- Live Steamer Report (Richard Murray):
 - We had two live steamer events since last time
 - Didn’t get a lot of traffic, no new members, as well

- The folks that came didn't fit the target demographic for us that are likely to join; so we may not do Guadalupe again next year
- Next we'll do "Roaring Camp", followed by the Gilroy Days
- Richard lost his driver, he's looking for another one for next week
- **Richard** may borrow Johannes' truck, he'll call by this Wed if needed
- Richard plans to give out the postcards there; we'll need to consolidate inventory
- Scheduling Coordinator's Report (Ray Turner):
 - We had good turnout in Marin at the open houses
 - The next big events are the Mega Weekend with 19 railroads open (8 on Sat and 11 on Sunday), and the BBQ up at Tilden Park with both railroads running
 - The overnight accommodations setup worked out perfectly, that was a good idea
 - Ray said he also needed the other descriptions, **Frank** agreed to send them to Ray
 - He's also looking for someone that does Lego robotics
- Past President's Report (Jack Verducci):
 - Jack was going to come but couldn't attend
 - Russ update us on our regional meet in 2011, the issue is that we can't conflict with the national meet which however doesn't have a date yet (probably June or August)
 - So, we're looking at doing this the weekend after the NMRA, i.e. sometime in July
 - We'll have a booth and will also do advertising at the NMRA meet, and we think about doing a West Coast meet Thu to Sat
 - Chip updated on the "Conservatory of Flowers" in GG Park initiative
 - We met several of the big decision makers and had them toured several layouts which really impressed them
 - Last year they had a lot of derailments so they'd like help

- Last year they had 100,000 visitors that all would see a garden railroad; there are obvious marketing possibilities
 - So, we're trying to use them for meeting facilities for the annual meeting but the drawback is they only have 1 room
 - Their problem is that they need more donations and to drive more traffic, so we could help by giving them a new setup
 - He's trying to close a deal where we get the facility for a day, and in return they'd get us to redo their layout with something that's San Francisco-esque (e.g. take a track car and make a cable car out of it)
 - We would help running and maintain the trains, and they have a volunteer
 - We need to make sure we're in the Garden RR Magazine's Christmas layout list
 - The duration would be late October to April, and we'd have 1 week to put it in
 - Jack V is excited about designing the layout; it'd be a cool work party to get this built up
 - We'd permanently "loan" the equipment to them
 - Their PR last year was incredible, so we'd be very visible and we're clearly asking for embedded recognition in the layout
- Chip asked for a motion, and we agreed to talk about the annual meeting first. The motion for Chip to proceed negotiating with the Conservatory was approved.
- Vice President's Report (Russ Miller):
 - Chip asked that we have member photos on the website so you can associate a face with a profile:
 - Russ wants **everyone** to update their profiles to make them more relevant
 - **Chip** will slam all profiles to make them available again
 - **Nancy** agreed to take photos at the next mega weekend

- Russ gave an update on the annual meeting
 - We could host the live steamers indoors
 - They would be good access for the live steamers trailer
 - We'll have to figure out logistics, e.g. for the swap meet (not clear if we should have that, or maybe only have a short swap meet)
 - We'd prefer to not use the Conservatory's caterer; so we try to convince the conservatory that we do a Potluck
 - We might need to look for another tent to have extra room
 - We have to figure out the food that we can afford; also, maybe only bring cold food, and we'd only do breakfast and lunch
 - We might leave the swap meet and the live steamers open to the public, and the rest is closed to the public
- We wrapped up the update with the newsletter
 - There was discussion about the format of the newsletter
- Market Segmentation Report (Johannes Hoech):
 - Johannes presented the marketing analysis results
 - **Johannes** will upload the presentation to the site, and then we'll discuss the implementation plans during the next board meetings
- Public Outreach (Nancy Norris):
 - Nancy presented the trailer exhibit concept as a follow up to her earlier emailed budget and concept description
 - Nancy had quite a bit of detail about the trailer, storage, insurance, 5th wheel, wings over the wheel wells, weight of the fully equipped trailer, the water system with a battery powered timer for the garden, etc.
 - Cost of putting in the railroad should be borne by volunteering members
 - There we several questions around the marketing efficacy of this concept, the issue of maintenance, about who would build it and maintain it, and where it should be stored

- Nancy felt a key benefit of this concept would be a) keeping new and existing members interested via a new project, and b) create a venue that would excite folks that can't otherwise get access to a model / garden railroad (e.g. kids at a hospital)
- Motion for **Nancy** to proceed up to a budget of \$4,000 was made and approved; should this budget be exceeded, Nancy needs to notify the board
 - **Nancy** will do the next postcard given that she's doing outreach
 - Chip talked about how there are many regional meets popping up
- Old Business (Don Watters):
 - Nothing
- New Business (Don Watters):
 - Joe passed around some pictures of open house setup where they promoted BAGRS; wants to work together with BAGRS more
 - Frank wanted permission to add a blurb into the next T&T about the founder of BAGRS, which was granted
 - Richard let us know that he came her on his 40th wedding anniversary

Next Board Meeting:

- TBD on August 14 at 10am 'til 12 noon.

Adjourned at 12:40 PM.