

# Apple Valley Model Railroad Club, Inc.

## Policy Manual

Revised Nov. 2017A



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## Policy Manual

### Preamble

The Apple Valley Model Railroad Club (AVMRC) will create and maintain a Policy Manual which addresses in detail its various policies and operating procedures. This Policy Manual will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis by the AVMRC Board and will be available to all active AVMRC members.

This manual is to be retained in the workshop of the Hendersonville Depot and the AVMRC website Members Only section, for access by any and all AVMRC members.

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## **1.0 Mission Statement**

The AVMRC's primary mission is to promote an understanding of model railroading. The AVMRC shall also promote the preservation and restoration of the Historic Hendersonville Depot, and promote public awareness of the significance of the history of the Depot in the development of Henderson County.

## **2.0 General Rules and Regulations**

Members are expected to demonstrate mutual respect to other members, and to show respect for the property of the AVMRC and the depot itself.

Members are expected to participate in some AVMRC activities on a reasonably regular basis, within their physical and schedule constraints.

The AVMRC depends on regular Wednesday and/or Saturday participation in order to fulfill its agreement to the City of Hendersonville to maintain hours open to the public.

## **3.0 Membership**

### **Types of Membership**

The AVMRC has three types of membership:

#### Regular Membership

Most members fall in this category. Regular members have voting privileges and pay dues.

#### Honorary Membership

Honorary membership status may be bestowed upon members who have served the club in a significant manner over the years but who are no longer able, for whatever reason, to participate in routine activities to the same degree. Honorary members will not have voting rights nor be required to pay dues. Honorary member status is bestowed by majority vote of the membership at a regular business meeting.

#### Junior Membership

Junior members are occasionally accepted into the club through the regular application process. Junior membership is reserved for individuals, under the age of 18, who show exceptional aptitude for the hobby of model railroading and interest in the AVMRC. No dues are required. A junior member who attains the age of 18 will be automatically converted to a regular member, after which regular membership dues are required. Junior members have the privileges of regular members except for the right to vote and hold office.

### **Application Process**

An individual that visits the club and expresses interest in joining (Prospective Member) is referred to the Membership Chair or the Chair's designee. The Membership Chair discusses the membership process with the Prospective Member, and provides appropriate forms to him or her. The Prospective member returns the completed application with \$15.00 (three months dues), and a \$30.00 initiation/processing fee, for a total of \$45.00. The Membership Chair will provide him or her with mentoring information. The Membership Chair also provides the contact information to Club officers

and Committee chairs so they can make him or her aware of Club activities. Prospective members will, in general, be granted the privileges of regular members except for the right to vote and hold office. The Prospective Member will be introduced at the next scheduled club business meeting. The Prospective Member is encouraged to attend as many meetings and open house/visitor sessions as possible. The Prospective Member must obtain signatures of 3 club members willing to sponsor him/her for membership. When the 90-day orientation period is completed, at the next scheduled club business meeting all attending members will vote on whether to accept the Prospective Member (simple majority). The Club President will inform the Prospective Member whether or not she/he is accepted. If the Prospective Member is accepted, the Treasurer will provide a membership card. The Membership Chair shall give website information, and order an AVMRC name badge.

### **Dues**

The AVMRC dues are \$5.00 per month, for a total of \$60.00 annually. Dues can be paid by cash, check or money order, payable to the Apple Valley Model Railroad Club, and given to the Club Treasurer. Payments should be made quarterly (\$15.00), semiannually (\$30.00) or annually (\$60.00).

Dues are expected to be paid in a timely fashion. If a member falls three months or more in arrears in dues payment, the Treasurer will advise the member that payment of past dues is required within 30 days of notification. Failure to respond and pay dues to the current date within 30 days of notification will result in suspension or termination of membership, as determined by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may take into consideration extenuating circumstances. A suspended member may reapply for membership through the normal application process, including Initiation/processing fee.

A member may request a leave of absence in writing to the President for any duration, during which dues requirements will be suspended. A member submitting a request for a leave of absence must be current in dues at the time of the request. A leave of absence request will not be accepted in lieu of payment of past dues.

### **Mentoring/Training Program**

Every new AVMRC Club Member (mentee) will receive training through the AVMRC Mentoring Program, by one or more designated members. The program consists of approximately 15 subjects. Training is documented on the AVMRC Mentoring Record. A mentee is expected to arrange training with the appropriate mentor. Mentors will sign off once the new member has completed training on a particular subject. The expectation is that the mentee will complete all training within a reasonable amount of time.

### **Revocation**

After completing the training through the AVMRC Mentoring Program, if a club member fails to follow club rules, the following steps may be taken by a club officer or a designee.

Step 1. Coaching: Verbal instructions regarding the infringement of rules and what needs to be corrected

Step 2. Verbal Warning and retraining: Review of rules, with emphasis on the seriousness of failure to follow the rules

Step 3. Written warning/reprimand: warning to member, including consequences if behavior continues

Step 4. Dismissal from the club: membership discontinued after approval by the board

If the infringement of rules is of a serious enough nature, the proceeding steps 1 and 2 may be skipped, and a written warning/reprimand issued to the member by a club officer.

Each step should be documented in a secure and private place. The actions taken must remain confidential to the extent possible.

The AVMRC reserves the right to revoke an individual's membership for cause. The revocation process may be initiated by a complaint filed in writing and submitted to the Executive committee. The Executive committee shall first review the complaint privately with the member against whom the complaint has been filed. If the Executive Committee, by majority vote, determines that a motion of revocation is appropriate, it shall present this motion to the membership at a duly authorized meeting for voting. A vote of at least 60% membership in attendance at a regular meeting of the AVMRC is required for membership revocation. In the event an individual's membership is revoked, the individual shall immediately remove from the AVMRC all personal possessions, and return to the AVMRC all the AVMRC property that they possess, including but not limited to keys to the Depot.

For certain patterns of egregious behavior, The Executive Committee, by unanimous vote, possesses the authority of summary revocation of membership. Examples of such behavior which would warrant summary revocation are, but not limited to, theft of AVMRC property, embezzlement of funds, destruction of property, commission of a felony on premises, and non-payment of dues. Any member who has been revoked shall be banned from participation in any AVMRC activity.

#### **4.0 Purchases**

No member may authorize or make any expenditure without the express permission of the appropriate committee head. Committee heads may spend up to \$100 that is within their committee budget. Expenditures in excess of \$100 will require that the committee head obtain approval in advance from a board member. The board member may choose to consult with the rest of the board if deemed appropriate.

#### **5.0 Operating Rules and Guidelines**

The AVMRC has an obligation to open the Depot to visitors on a regular basis and to operate model trains for view by the general public.

##### **Hours of Operation**

The club is normally open to the public from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm on Wednesdays and 10:00 am to 2:00 pm every Saturday. Holiday schedules may differ and are published on the AVMRC website.

## Operating Sessions

In order to provide a stimulating operating experience for members, the club conducts regular operating sessions, normally on the third Tuesday of each month. If a conflict occurs, the operating session will be changed to another Tuesday in the month, and members will be notified by general meeting announcement and/or by email.

Procedures for these operating sessions are provided in the document "Operating on the Apple Valley Model Railroad", located on the website and in the workshop.

**Members are required to purchase and use two-way radios with headsets, and batteries during all operating sessions.**

## Computers

The AVMRC has 3 computers (Workshop, Asheville, and Laptop) that are used for digital command control (DCC) operation. They are critical for layout operation. Only appointed AVMRC members may make changes or operate AVMRC computers.

## Operating Procedures

The AVMRC Layout Operating Procedure is located in the workshop. This procedure gives detailed instructions for use of the layout by AVMRC members.

The AVMRC DCC system start up and shut down instructions are posted at the Asheville DCC Command Station and the Piedmont Booster. **These instructions must be followed by all AVMRC members.**

## DCC Guidelines

For all HO operations AVMRC utilizes the NMRA standard DCC system as provided by Digitrax, Inc. Any NMRA DCC compatible mobile or sound decoder will operate in this system. Only Digitrax throttles can be used (DT400R, UT4R, DT300R, and Dt402R) and Digitrax *simplex* proprietary wireless control is achieved using multiple Digitrax UR91 receivers. Digitrax proprietary *duplex* operation is not provided. Layout start-up and shut down is achieved by following posted protocol.

Digitrax DCC involves the acquisition and dispatching of locomotive addresses, and the exact procedure of acquisition and dispatching is determined by the throttle being used. Protocols for throttle operation are posted in the Depot and are available to all members. All locomotive addresses must be dispatched from the system when no longer in use since automatic purging of acquired addresses is not provided in a Digitrax system, and the system capacity is 23 simultaneous addresses.

AVMRC provides for new members a limited number of battery operated Digitrax wireless DCC throttles. Batteries for these throttles are not provided by AVMRC. These throttles are moderately fragile and should be handled with care at all times. Digitrax throttles are stored in a locked cabinet in the workshop, and should be returned there, battery removed, after use.

WiFi operation of locomotives and turnouts (mainline Asheville Division) is provided. Members are responsible for providing their own WiFi throttle device (iPod, iPad, iPhone, Android) and acquire the appropriate throttle application (Wi Throttle or Engine Driver) for that device. Connectivity to the AVMRC router is password protected and is available to all AVMRC members.

**All AVMRC members are expected to either purchase their own throttle or use a WiFi throttle.**

**All AVMRC members are expected to provide their own batteries for throttle, either personal or club owned.**

## **Equipment Guidelines**

The AVMRC owns a significant amount of rolling stock and locomotives. Every member is expected to handle this equipment carefully and with respect.

If a piece of rolling stock or locomotive is deficient, a Bad Order form must be filled out by the member finding the deficiency, placed on the work bench in the Office/Repair Shop with that piece of equipment, and clearly labeled with the deficiency so that other members charged with repair responsibility will be able to clearly understand what the problem is and fix it. Leaving an unidentified piece of equipment on the workbench is a disservice to other volunteer workers.

The AVMRC maintains a Deficiency Log in the work room. All members are encouraged to record any deficiency they find in club equipment, layout or rolling stock in that log so that the appropriate members can become aware of and remedy the deficiency.

**AVMRC Members shall NOT leave personal equipment at the Depot, without special permission from the AVMRC Executive Committee.**

## **Outdoor Layout Guidelines**

The AVMRC has a Large Scale Layout operating on G or #1 gauge track located on the track-side of the depot. The layout will accommodate equipment in 1: 24, 1:22.5, and 1:20.3 Scale that will operate on a minimum track diameter of 12'. The layout uses DC track power operated through Crest Revolution radio controllers. There are three power blocks: the upper section, lower mainline and yard. Battery powered equipment is also suitable.

The equipment guidelines require metal wheels and body mounted Kadee couplers for club or member owned rolling stock. Some accommodation can be made for visitors or new equipment. The layout requires regular care for the live plants. A drip irrigation system has been installed to minimize that effort. As part of the club mentoring program, members will be trained on the opening and closing plus operating procedures. The layout is open to the public during the same hours as the indoor layout, except during inclement weather.

## **6.0 Depot Opening and Closing Procedures**

Each day that the Depot is opened there are some actions that must be performed for the safety of the Depot, the safety of members and guests, and the efficient operation of the Depot.

Items of particular importance in opening and closing include proper locking, setting of thermostats, settings of lights and state of power to the layouts and associated control systems.

Check lists for opening and closing are provided in the depot and on the website. These checklists must be followed.

## **7.0 Housekeeping**

As tenants in the Depot building, AVMRC members are expected to maintain the building in a clean and tidy fashion. Parts, tools, etc., should be returned to their proper place unless it is anticipated that they will be used in the immediate future.

Books and other reference material should be returned to their normal storage location.

All AVMRC members are responsible for the cleanliness and stocking of consumable materials in the restrooms.

## **8.0 General Meetings**

General meetings of the membership are normally conducted starting at 10:00 am in the Meeting Room on the fourth Wednesday of each month except December. All members and prospective members are encouraged to attend. Meetings may be rescheduled to another Wednesday of the month at the same time if a conflict occurs.

## **9.0 Donations**

The AVMRC maintains several donation boxes in different locations in the Depot. Visitors should be made aware of these donation boxes but should not be pressured or intimidated to contribute. The contents of the collection boxes will be retrieved only by the Treasurer, or by the Treasurer's designated representative, on a regular basis.

The AVMRC accepts donations of various items from visitors and guests. These items shall be brought to the attention of the Donation Sales Committee chairperson for the purpose of distribution, as per the AVMRC Donation Sale Committee Procedure. A copy of the Donation Sales Committee Procedure shall be kept in the AVMRC office and on the AVMRC web site.

The Donation Sales Committee chairperson, or persons authorized to accept donations by the chairperson, should graciously provide the donor with the donor information card, available in the card rack located in the meeting room.

## **10.0 AVMRC Property**

Property of the AVMRC, including books, pictures, references, rolling stock, tools, supplies, etc., should remain in the Depot unless its removal is approved by an officer of the Club or the Committee Chair of the cognizant committee.

### **AVMRC Library**

The AVMRC maintains a library in the work/break room. There is a chart on the chimney wall to help members locate books, as well as a sign-out sheet for books they wish to borrow. Members should fill it out completely when borrowing a book. There is also a plastic bin labeled "BOOK RETURN" on the floor by the chimney. Members should place returned books in the bin, not back on the shelf. The Librarians will return the books to the appropriate location. Members should help by keeping it neat and organized.

### **Keys**

Keys to the Depot are carried by the Board of the AVMRC and by selected Committee Chairs. Keys will not be duplicated unless approved by the Board of Directors.

### **11.0 7th Avenue District Relationship**

AVMRC shall strive to maintain good relations with its neighbors in the 7th Avenue District. Participation in 7th Avenue Special Events will be part of regular AVMRC activities as AVMRC members volunteer to facilitate and coordinate logistics for these events, and will maintain an "Open House" atmosphere during special events. Upon request from the 7th Avenue Advisory Board, AVMRC will designate a selected member to represent the AVMRC as a Director to the Advisory Board.

### **12.0 City of Hendersonville Relationship**

As a Lessee of a City owned building, the AVMRC will maintain a relationship with the Hendersonville Mayor's office, the City Manager, and the Director of Public Works. AVMRC will, at all times, remain in compliance with its lease. Issues of facility maintenance and security will be communicated by the AVMRC Board, or its designee, to the appropriate city agency in a timely manner.

### **13.0 Approval and Amendments**

The Policy Manual may be altered, amended, or repealed and new Policy Manual adopted by majority vote of the members at a duly authorized meeting of the AVMRC.

The adoption of the Policy Manual by affirmative vote of a majority of the members at a duly authorized meeting of the AVMRC will render all previous Policy Manuals null and void.

The Secretary will make available the newly approved Policy Manual to each of the members within thirty days of their approval by the AVMRC. Posting on the AVMRC's web site and email notice to members shall satisfy this requirement.

**APPROVALS**

**AVMRC President:**

SIGNATURE ON FILE

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**Rob Wright**

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Date

**AVMRC Vice President:**

SIGNATURE ON FILE

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**Bill Davies**

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Date

**AVMRC Treasurer:**

SIGNATURE ON FILE

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**Larry Morton**

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Date

**AVMRC Secretary:**

SIGNATURE ON FILE

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**Brad Jones**

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Date

**AVMRC Ombudsman:**

SIGNATURE ON FILE

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**Dave Simmons**

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Date

**Membership Approval**

DATE ON FILE

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Initials and Date