

# Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



## February 2014

---



### Board of Directors Briefing Materials

---

February 24, 2014

---

**NNEPRA Office**  
75 West Commercial Street  
Suite 104  
Portland, Maine 04101

[AmtrakDowneaster.com](http://AmtrakDowneaster.com)



# **BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA**

February 24, 2014

12:30pm

- I. Open Public Session
  
- II. Motion to go into executive session pursuant to 1 MRS Section 405(6)(E):
  - a. To consult with counsel concerning pending litigation; and
  - b. To consult with counsel concerning NNEPRA's legal rights and duties.

1:00pm (Approximate)

- III. Motion to re-open Public Session
  
- IV. Approval of Minutes from November 25, 2013 Meeting
  
- V. Downeaster Update & Staff Reports
  - a. Downeaster Performance
  - b. Budget Status Report
  
- VI. Other Business
  
- VII. Public Comment



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority**

January 27, 2014  
Portland, Maine

**Directors in attendance:**

Mr. Martin Eisenstein, Mr. Dana Connors, Mr. Matt Jacobson, Mr. John Bubier, Ms. Sue Moreau, and Ms. Carolann Ouellette

**Staff in attendance:**

Ms. Patricia Quinn, Ms. Marina Douglass, Mr. Brian Beeler, Mr. James Russell, Ms. Natalie Allen, Ms. Angela Smith and Ms. Theresa Diffin

**Interested parties:**

Mr. Fred Fournier, Amtrak; Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders NE; Mr. Bill Lord, TrainRiders NE; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach

**Commencement:**

Vote to open Public Session at 12:15pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier  
Seconded: Mr. Connors  
Accepted: All

Vote to go into Executive Session at 12:16pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier  
Seconded: Mr. Connors  
Accepted: All

Per 1 MRS Section 405(6) (E)

- a. To consult with counsel concerning pending litigations; and
- b. To consult with counsel concerning NNEPRA's legal rights and duties.

Motion to re-open Public Session

Out of Executive Session into Public Session at 1:08 am

**Minutes of November 25, 2013 Meeting**

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff.

Motion: Mr. Jacobson  
Seconded: Mr. Bubier  
Accepted: All

## **DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT**

### **Staff Presentations**

---

#### **Downeaster Performance update**

#### **Staff Presentations**

- PRIAA Section 209 went into effect on October 1, 2013 resulting in a few changes to ridership reporting. First, Amtrak began reporting ridership, particularly pass riders, based on actual counts instead of allocations. NNEPRA will now begin reporting ridership comparisons to last year against handheld counts from last year, not Amtrak reported numbers from last year. Additionally, in an effort to develop consistency in reporting among States, Amtrak has decided to standardize the reports provided to States on a monthly basis. These new reports contain only a fraction of the data which had previously been provided to NNEPRA. NNEPRA, as well as many other States, have voiced concerns and Amtrak assures us that more complete reports will be available to all States very soon. Downeaster FY 2014 to date ridership is approximately 6% greater than FY2013 to date and revenue for the same period is approximately 5% greater.
- January 2014 month to date ridership is pacing about 286 riders ahead of January 2013 despite being plagued with a couple of snow storms.
- In November 2013 CSI Reports provided by Amtrak, 99% of Downeaster riders reported being very satisfied with their experience. Mr. Fournier noted that is exceptional. Mr. Eisenstein commended all on the exceptional results.  
Ms. Bogart reported on marketing initiatives noting that a special promotion featuring \$14 fares was available in January and that Downeaster travel packages have been very successful. She reported on a number of events which recently occurred, such as Freeport Black Friday, Sparkle Weekend, Sparkle Express Trains, and the Toys for Tots promotion. Other upcoming events include commuter appreciation week and volunteer appreciation day.
- NNEPRA was awarded “Non Profit Member of the Year” by the Brunswick Downtown Association, and Maine Midcoast Chamber named Natalie Bogart “Young Professional of the Year”.
- Ms. Bogart previewed a new television ad for the Board.
- NNEPRA was notified they will receive the “Governor’s Award for Tourism Excellence” this year.

## **FINANCE REPORT – Marina Douglass**

---

#### **Budget Variance Report**

- Ms. Douglass reviewed the December Variance Report.
- Mr. Jacobson inquired as to why office expenses were so low. Ms. Douglass will provide information on this matter to him.
- Cost recovery year to date was 60% for six months. Café cost recovery 88%.

Vote to accept variance report

Motion: Mr. Jacobson  
Seconded: Mr. Connors  
Accepted: All

## **PROPOSED UPDATE OF NNEPRA STRATEGIC GOALS**

---

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority Board of Directors had a planning session in December. Mr. Eisenstein summarized the workshop noting that it was a productive session during which the Board discussed both short and long term goals and updated the strategic initiatives for the organization as a roadmap for the future.

Ms. Quinn reiterated the board's commitment to the current service and interest in exploring the feasibility of other services within and outside Maine. Ms. Moreau stated the Board's goals are consistent with the State Rail Plan.

Ms. Moreau mentioned that MaineDOT is moving ahead with the development of a Passenger Rail Advisory Council which will include 10-15 people in addition to NNEPRA and MaineDOT staff. The Council has been formed at the request of the legislature and is expected to have its first meeting next month. The Commissioner will announce who will be named to the council.

Motion to accept the updated Strategic Goals as presented:

Motion: Mr. Bubier  
Seconded: Mr. Connors  
Accepted: All

### **Other Comments**

Keolis America has been selected to operate the MBTA's commuter rail system effective July 1, 2014. NNEPRA and the MBTA are still working to finalize the scope and budget of the Haverhill Double Track Project.

Congress has approved a provision which will allowing NNEPRA to continue to use CMAQ funds to provide operating support for the Downeaster service. Ms. Quinn wanted to thank all members of Maine's Congressional Delegation for their advocacy of this initiative.

NNEPRA staff and representatives from Amtrak will meet with members of Bicycle Coalition of Maine this week. The coalition would like the Downeaster to be more bicycle friendly. The Downeaster is the only service on the east coast that allows bikes on the train. Amtrak representatives will discuss equipment modifications which have been tested on the trains and discuss other options to improve bicycle access on all Amtrak trains, including the Downeaster.

The state adopted the OPEGA report which requires us to annually report procurements and policies. It will be submitted today.

Drummac, Inc. was the successful candidate in Amtrak's procurement request for turnaround servicing for the Downeaster. Drummac has held the contract for the Downeaster since the inception of service and has done an exceptional job.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Lord inquired whether the FRA had made any decisions on the Layover Facility. Ms. Quinn reported that no decision has been made at this time.

Mr. Davis commented how remarkable it was that Downeaster trains have continued to operate considering the significant ice and snow. Mr. Corcoran noted that it has taken considerable effort and commitment of crews to keep the equipment operational in these severe conditions.

Vote to adjourn: 1:50 pm

Motion: Mr. Connors  
Seconded: Mr. Jacobson  
Accepted: All

**NEXT MEETING: February 24, 2014**

<b>DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE STATISTICS</b>					
<b>December 2013</b>					
<b>Performance Stats</b>	Ridership	Revenue	Fare/Pax	Pass Mi	Mi/Pax
Actual December 2013	41,044	\$ 719,740	\$ 17.54	3,483,067	85
Actual December 2012	42,800	\$ 655,555	\$ 15.32	3,545,856	83
FY2014 Year to date	295,069	\$4,631,835	\$ 15.70	24,365,518	83
FY2013 Year to date	295,469	\$4,348,290	\$ 14.72	24,089,427	82
<b>City Pair Ridership December 2013</b>	#Riders	Revenue	Avg Fare	% Total Riders	% Total Revenue
Boston - Portland	11,055	\$233,331	\$ 21.11	27%	32%
Boston- Exeter	5,892	\$79,305	\$ 13.46	14%	11%
Boston- - Saco	3,013	\$57,952	\$ 19.23	7%	8%
Boston - Dover	3,437	\$57,505	\$ 16.73	8%	8%
Boston-Wells	2,828	\$48,538	\$ 17.16	7%	7%
Boston-Brunswick	2,328	\$53,864	\$ 23.14	6%	7%
Boston-Durham	3,024	\$50,484	\$ 16.69	7%	7%
Boston-Haverhill	1,826	\$19,810	\$ 10.85	4%	3%
Boston-Freeport	727	\$16,581	\$ 22.81	2%	2%
Total	34,130	617,370	\$ 18.09	83%	86%
<b>On Time Performance</b>	<b>Average overall OTP for Dec 2013</b>				
	<b>65.80%</b>				
100%	n/a				
90-99%	n/a				
80-89%	n/a				
Below 80%					
<b>Customer Satisfaction Score</b>	Downeaster November 2013		Amtrak November 2013		
Overall CSI	96%		88%		
Overall Cleanliness of Train	92%		85%		
Friend./Helpful of Conductors	98%		90%		
Friendliness of Café Attendant	94%		88%		
Quality of Café Food	90%		78%		
Overall Café Experience	92%		81%		

# Performance Report

First Half of Fiscal Year 2014: July 2013 - December 2013

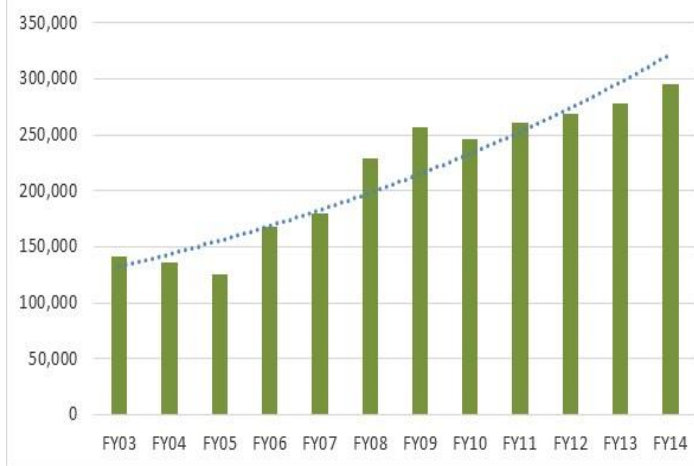
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

75 W Commercial Street, Suite 104, Portland, Maine 04101 207-780-1000

## Fiscal 2014 Year to Date: July 2013-December 2013

FY2014	RIDERS	REVENUE	PASS. MILES	OTP
July	55,085	\$ 851,450	4,642,062	58%
August	60,044	\$ 929,299	5,068,553	62%
September	48,485	\$ 699,492	3,834,463	62%
October	45,681	\$ 682,890	3,676,047	74%
November	44,730	\$ 748,007	3,652,980	78%
December	41,044	\$ 719,697	3,483,039	74%
FY14 To date	295,069	4,630,835	24,357,144	68%
FY13 To Date	278,404	4,348,290	24,089,427	74%
FY14 vs FY13	6.0%	6.5%	1%	

FY Ridership History to Date



## PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

During the second quarter of FY2014, the Downeaster transported a 131,455 passengers the equivalent of 10.8 million passenger miles, generating \$2.15 million in revenue. This represents a ridership increase of more than 13,000 passengers (11%) and a revenue increase more than \$94,000 (6%) greater than the second quarter of FY2013. Increases are in part due to construction and weather-related service interruptions last year, but still represent solid growth.

Fiscal year 2014 to date, ridership of 295,069 is 6% greater than FY13 with revenues of \$4.6m pacing 6.5% ahead of the same period last year.

On Time Performance (OTP) for the Downeaster, however, continues to struggle with an overall 68% OTP recorded fiscal year to date. Issues impacting OTP are varied, but constrained capacity between Portland and Boston accounted for approximately 45% of all delays, while infrastructure defects (slow orders) accounted for 40% of delays.

Despite the poor OTP, ~~Amtrak~~ Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) indicated that in November of 2013, 99% of all Downeaster passengers were very satisfied with their overall experience.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	Fiscal Year to Date	
	Downeaster	Amtrak
Overall Customer Satisfaction	94	87
Value for Price Paid	92	84
Overall Cleanliness of Train	90	84
Clarity of Announcements	86	78
Conductor Helpfulness / Friendliness	93	89
Food Service Personnel Friendliness	92	87
Quality of Food	86	80
Overall Café Experience	89	82

## FY2014 3-Month Fiscal Year to Date Statistics (Jul13-Dec 13)

- Average Daily Ridership: 1,601
  - x Average Weekday Ridership: 1,667
  - x Average Weekend Ridership: 1,575
- Average Passenger Fare: \$15.75
  - x Average Fare on Weekdays: \$14.90
  - x Average Fare on Weekends: \$17.66
- Average Miles per Passenger: 83
  - x Avg. Weekday Miles/Passenger: 80
  - x Avg. Weekend Miles/Passenger: 90

Fiscal year to date, the Downeaster is averaging a cost recovery rate of 83% with an average cost of 23 center per passenger.

Since December 2001, the Downeaster has transported more than 4.88 million riders the equivalent of 392 million passenger miles and has generated more than \$68 million in ticket revenues.



<b>DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE STATISTICS</b>					
<b>January 2014</b>					
<b>Performance Stats</b>	Ridership	Revenue	Fare/Pax	Pass Mi	Mi/Pax
Actual January 2014	36,100	\$ 588,597	\$ 16.30	Amtrak Data Not Yet Available.	
Actual January 2013	34,134	\$ 557,145	\$ 16.32		
FY2014 Year to date	331,169	\$5,220,434	\$ 15.76		
FY2013 Year to date	312,538	\$4,872,014	\$ 15.59		
<b>City Pair Ridership</b>	#Riders	Revenue	Avg Fare	% Total Riders	% Total Revenue
Amtrak Data Not Yet Available.					
<b>On Time Performance</b>	<b>Average overall OTP for Dec 2013</b>				
	<b>74.52%</b>				
100%	Amtrak Data Not Yet Available.				
90-99%					
80-89%					
Below 80%					
<b>Customer Satisfaction Score</b>	Downeaster December 2013		Amtrak December 2013		
Overall CSI					
Overall Cleanliness of Train	Amtrak Data Not Yet Available.				
Friend. /Helpful of Conductors					
Friendliness of Café Attendant					
Quality of Café Food					
Overall Café Experience					

<b>PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - January 2014</b>							
	Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	Current Month Variance	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Year to Date Variance	Year to Date Percent
<b>Revenues</b>							
<b>Operating Revenue</b>							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	588,597	562,487	26,110	5,220,432	4,872,014	348,418	7%
Food Service Revenue	49,425	41,243	8,182	410,259	373,055	37,204	10%
Advertising Revenue	280	0	280	12,276	7,500	4,776	64%
Parking Lot Revenue	32,440	35,440	(3,000)	220,574	227,240	(6,666)	-3%
Interest on Accounts	226	236	(10)	1,422	1,649	(227)	-14%
Other Revenue	4,250	4,206	44	29,309	29,221	88	0%
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>675,218</b>	<b>643,611</b>	<b>31,606</b>	<b>5,894,272</b>	<b>5,510,679</b>	<b>383,593</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Wages and Benefits</b>							
Permanent Full-Time	29,769	29,769	0	199,185	199,185	(0)	(0)
Benefits	14,465	14,465	0	89,969	89,969	(0)	(0)
<b>Total Wages and Benefits</b>	<b>44,235</b>	<b>44,235</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>289,154</b>	<b>289,154</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Administration</b>							
Office Expenses	10,286	9,482	805	69,920	72,542	(2,621)	-4%
Professional Services	443	1,958	(1,515)	20,996	29,730	(8,734)	-29%
Insurance	2,520	2,700	(180)	16,614	16,625	(11)	0%
Board Operations	1,076	1,170	(94)	7,134	7,754	(620)	-8%
<b>Total Administration Expense</b>	<b>14,325</b>	<b>15,310</b>	<b>(985)</b>	<b>114,664</b>	<b>126,651</b>	<b>(11,987)</b>	<b>-9%</b>
<b>Train Operations</b>							
Amtrak Operations	887,036	883,333	3,703	6,034,688	6,020,335	14,353	0%
Train Fuel Cost	314,000	314,000	0	1,950,175	2,198,000	(247,825)	-11%
PanAm	106,399	107,200	(801)	730,408	744,968	(14,560)	-2%
Other Train Operations	3,575	3,125	449	27,810	21,875	5,935	27%
Insurance	1,160	1,160	0	8,120	8,120	0	0%
Layover Facility	7,510	9,074	(1,563)	64,014	80,640	(16,626)	-21%
Capital Maintenance	10,048	10,048	0	10,048	10,048	0	0%
<b>Total Train Operations</b>	<b>1,329,727</b>	<b>1,327,939</b>	<b>1,788</b>	<b>8,825,262</b>	<b>9,083,986</b>	<b>(258,724)</b>	<b>-3%</b>
<b>Station Operations</b>							
Portland Station	28,100	29,100	(1,000)	206,863	210,985	(4,122)	-2%
Platform Ins	10,748	12,491	(1,743)	74,932	78,467	(3,535)	-5%
Station Platform Leases	0	0	0	31,009	31,742	(733)	-2%
Other Station Improvements	0	817	(817)	75	5,717	(5,642)	100%
<b>Total Station Operations</b>	<b>38,848</b>	<b>42,408</b>	<b>(3,560)</b>	<b>312,880</b>	<b>326,911</b>	<b>(14,031)</b>	<b>-4%</b>
<b>Food Service</b>							
Regular	57,335	53,616	3,719	476,603	484,971	(8,368)	-2%
<b>Total Food Service</b>	<b>57,335</b>	<b>53,616</b>	<b>3,719</b>	<b>476,603</b>	<b>484,971</b>	<b>(8,368)</b>	<b>-2%</b>
Marketing	24,723	24,723	0	191,104	191,127	(23)	0%
<b>Total Marketing</b>	<b>24,723</b>	<b>24,723</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>191,104</b>	<b>191,127</b>	<b>(23)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,509,193</b>	<b>1,508,230</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>10,209,666</b>	<b>10,502,800</b>	<b>(293,133)</b>	<b>-3%</b>
<b>Additional Funding Required</b>	<b>833,975</b>	<b>864,619</b>	<b>(30,644)</b>	<b>4,315,394</b>	<b>4,992,121</b>	<b>(676,727)</b>	<b>-14%</b>