

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



March 2015



Board of Directors Briefing Materials

March 23, 2015

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

AmtrakDowneaster.com



FY2015 Action Plan

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority 75 W. Commercial Street, Portland, ME 04101 207-780-1000

Meet or exceed projected Performance Benchmarks

- Exceed 50% total cost recovery
- Achieve 90% OTP
- Achieve 80% Café Cost Recovery in Café.
- Exceed 90% in all CSI categories

Improve Service Efficiency

- Begin Brunswick Layover Construction to eliminate deadheads, increase revenue service, eliminate idling
- Maximize revenue potential on peak performing trains.
- Improve reliability through tie replacement program.
- Increase performance of off-peak trains through targeted marketing campaigns.

Improve Passenger Services & Communication

- Develop PIDS implementation plan
- Simplify Group Sales process
- Improve station displays
- Explore ways to improve bicycle access.

Complete Service Development Plan

- Review and refine key objectives
- Finalize infrastructure improvement plan

Begin MBTA Infrastructure Improvement Project

- Finalize Scope & Budget
- Begin Construction

Explore Options for Service Expansions

Maintain Compliance with all Regulations

Work to secure a stable and dedicated funding mechanism to sustain Downeaster operations and continued capital investments in the Downeaster Corridor.



BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA

March 23, 2015

12:15pm

Motion to enter Executive Session

1:00pm

1. Motion to open Public Session
2. Approval of Minutes from February 2015 Meeting
3. Downeaster Performance Update
4. Finance Report
5. Executive Director and Staff Reports
6. Other Business
7. Public Comment
8. Next Scheduled Meeting: April 27, 2015



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

February 23, 2015
Portland, Maine

Directors in attendance:

Mr. Dana Connors, Ms. Sue Moreau, Mr. John Bubier, Ms. Carolyn Ouellette and Mr. Robert McEvoy

Staff in attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn, Ms. Marina Douglass, Mr. Brian Beeler, Mr. James Russell, Ms. Natalie Bogart, Ms. Rachel Michaud and Ms. Theresa Diffin

Interested parties:

Ms. Emily Boochever, Brunswick; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Tony Donovan, Maine Rail Transit Coalition; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Bill Lord, TrainRiders Northeast; Ms. Alison Harris, Brunswick; Mr. Kenyon Karl, Sierra Club; Ms. Nelia Dunbar, All Aboard Brunswick; Mr. Charles Dunbar, All Aboard Brunswick; Mr. Paul Weiss, MRTC & Sierra Club; Ms. Linda Longfellow, TrainRiders Northeast; Ms. Claudia Knox, All Aboard Brunswick; and Mr. Ed Knox, All Aboard Brunswick

Commencement:

Vote to open Public Session at 1:00 pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Ms. Ouellette

Accepted: All

Minutes of January 26, 2014 Meeting

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff.

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Ms. Ouellette

Accepted: All

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

- Downeaster ridership fiscal year to date is approximately 9% less than the previous year. Tie replacements and track work caused cancellation of 143 trains between July and the end of November of last year, and many trains that did run were delayed significantly.
- January ridership was 34,931, 3% less than January 2014 and 6% less than projected this year. Ridership for the month was pacing ahead of 2014 until the blizzard on January 27th which caused cancellation of 16 trains through end of the month. As a result, the month ended with 1,169 fewer riders. Revenue was \$615,000, 2% more than January 2014.

- The excessive snow in January and February created challenges in Boston, and there were delays due to mechanical failures of equipment.
- A presentation highlighting the challenges snow created at the Portland layover was shown.
- 36 trains have been cancelled month to date in February and delays related to infrastructure issues and mechanical failures continue.
- Ridership month to date is 6,500 less than last February.
- The next challenges are likely to be caused by snow melting and associated flooding.
- Providing up to date communication to passengers is a challenge. Amtrak has a notification process passengers can sign up for to inform them of delays, and calls are made to notify passengers of cancelled trains. The Amtrak.com website also has several tools to track train status, but there are limitations. NNEPRA staff tries to keep up with delay notifications on the AmtrakDowneaster.com website, but they are dependent upon staff being notified of delays, and be available to post them.
- Mr. Connors commended the openness, commitment and loyalty of the NNEPRA team.
- Mr. Lord noted that the updates provided to stations is helpful.
- Mr. Donovan said the pictures were telling and would like more information on train facilities.
- Ms. Quinn said that while the indoor layover proposed for Brunswick will not solve all the problems, it would have made it significantly more efficient, effective and safer for crews to maintain the equipment.

FINANCE REPORT – Marina Douglass

Budget Variance Report

- Ms. Douglass reviewed the January Variance Report.

Vote to accept the Variance Report

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Ms. Ouellette

Accepted: All

MARKETING REPORT – Natalie Bogart

- Rachel Michaud, NNEPRA's new graphic designer was introduced.
- Web traffic increased 50% in January and February.
- The Downeaster participated in the Boston Globe Travel Show which had 24,000 attendees. The Event Team created a lot of interest for the booth.
- A communication campaign is being planned in anticipation of the spring tie installation project.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF REPORTS

Staff Presentations

- The Maine DEP public hearing regarding NNEPRA's Storm Water Permit application for the Brunswick layover project is scheduled for March 25 at the Brunswick Golf Course. The Maine DEP conducted a site visit of the layover parcel. |
- An informational field visit for members of the Standing Committee on Transportation of the Maine Legislature was held on February 10th. A special train was operated between Brunswick to Portland for legislators and members of the public. Attendance was good and a lot of good questions were asked.
- A bill was introduced by Representative Golden to evaluate passenger rail service to the Lewiston/Auburn area.
- A meeting of the Passenger Rail Advisory Council was held on February 11 and featured presentations from the Maine Rail Group regarding potential service to Augusta, and a presentation by Tony Donovan regarding service to Lewiston.
- NNEPRA staff met with David Schwanke from the Golden Eagle Railway regarding his plans for service on the Mountain Division.

Public Comment

- Mr. Donovan thanked NNEPRA for the Legislative Trip. He also mentioned three bills going before the Legislature regarding passenger and freight rail. He was looking for the NNEPRA board to consider endorsing these bills (all three or any one).
- Mr. Connors stated the board will take it under advisement. He stated there is a need to move forward with a plan on passenger rail that will be financially prudent and a need to set priorities.
- Mr. Dunbar, Brunswick, asked what percentage of the problems would be alleviated by the Brunswick layover facility. Ms. Quinn stated that it would drastically improve equipment performance and reliability.
- Mr. Weiss asked which trains would move in and out of the facility. Ms. Quinn reviewed a typical day with train set moves.

Vote to adjourn: 2:03 pm

Reschedule next meeting due to the Storm Water Permit public meeting to be held March 25th.

NEXT MEETING: TBD

NEXT MEETING: February 23, 2015

PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - February 2015							
	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
Revenues							
Operating Revenue							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	532,283	627,000	(94,717)	5,607,219	5,754,010	(146,791)	-3%
Food Service Revenue	50,286	47,500	2,786	465,571	427,932	37,639	9%
Advertising Revenue	280	0	280	7,400	7,500	(100)	0%
Parking Lot Revenue	28,544	30,000	(1,456)	259,540	265,282	(5,742)	-2%
Interest on Accounts	332	206	126	2,444	1,650	794	48%
Other Revenue	14,009	12,404	1,604	143,134	107,398	35,737	33%
Total Operating Revenues	625,734	717,111	(91,376)	6,485,309	6,563,772	(78,463)	-1%
Expenses							
Wages and Benefits							
Permanent Full-Time	28,828	28,828	0	239,654	239,654	(0)	(0)
Benefits	14,023	14,023	0	113,493	113,492	2	0
Total Wages and Benefits	42,851	42,851	0	353,147	353,146	1	0%
Administration							
Office Expenses	9,988	10,158	(170)	82,329	83,400	(1,071)	-1%
Professional Services	0	208	(208)	18,500	22,167	(3,667)	-17%
Insurance	2,636	2,734	(98)	18,827	20,629	(1,802)	-9%
Board Operations	1,119	1,215	(96)	8,781	9,368	(587)	-6%
Total Administration Expense	13,744	14,315	(572)	128,437	135,563	(7,126)	-5%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Operations	982,099	982,099	(0)	7,571,603	7,571,604	(1)	0%
Train Fuel Cost	253,725	324,900	(71,175)	1,945,349	2,599,200	(653,851)	-25%
PanAm	106,747	106,747	0	771,186	853,979	(82,793)	-10%
Other Train Operations	3,488	3,749	(261)	26,691	31,989	(5,298)	-17%
Insurance	1,290	1,655	(365)	10,156	11,897	(1,741)	-15%
Layover Facility	15,658	13,565	2,093	85,335	93,959	(8,624)	-9%
Capital Maintenance	54,340	55,154	(815)	56,203	59,877	(3,674)	0%
Total Train Operations	1,417,347	1,487,869	(70,523)	10,466,523	11,222,505	(755,981)	-7%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	28,100	29,100	(1,000)	229,501	226,800	2,701	1%
Platform Ins	10,767	12,543	(1,776)	86,041	91,369	(5,328)	-6%
Station Platform Leases	0	0	0	31,611	32,249	(638)	0%
Other Station Improvements	0	0	0	681	944	(263)	0%
Total Station Operations	38,867	41,643	(2,776)	347,834	351,362	(3,529)	-1%
Food Service							
Regular	62,757	57,823	4,934	597,195	515,670	81,525	16%
Total Food Service	62,757	57,823	4,934	597,195	515,670	81,525	16%
Marketing	34,261	34,261	0	230,247	230,427	(180)	0%
Total Marketing	34,261	34,261	0	230,247	230,427	(180)	0%
Total Expenses	1,609,826	1,678,762	(68,936)	12,123,383	12,808,673	(685,290)	-5%
Additional Funding Required	984,092	961,652	22,440	5,638,074	6,244,901	(606,827)	-10%