

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



March 2014



Board of Directors Briefing Materials

March 24, 2014

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

AmtrakDowneaster.com



BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA

March 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 February 24, 2014 Meeting

- V. Downeaster Update & Staff Reports
 - a. Downeaster Performance
 - b. Budget Status Report

- VI. Other NNEPRA Business

- VII. Public Comment



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

February 24, 2014

Portland, Maine

Directors in attendance:

Mr. Martin Eisenstein, Mr. Matt Jacobson, Mr. John Bubier, Mr. David Bernhardt, and Ms. Carolann Ouellette

Staff in attendance:

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

Interested parties:

Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders NE; Mr. Bill Lord, TrainRiders NE; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach; Mr. Robert Morrison, Brunswick; Ms. Sue Moreau, MDOT; Ms. Judy Harris, Portland, ME; Ms. Emily Boocherer, TrainRiders NE; and Mr. Jeffrey Reynolds, Brunswick

Commencement:

Vote to open Public Session at 12:15pm

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

Vote to go into Executive Session at 12:16pm

Motion: Mr. Matt Jacobson
Seconded: Mr. David Bernhardt
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 1:07 pm

Minutes of January 27, 2014 Meeting

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff.

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

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE UPDATE

- Ms. Quinn reviewed the Performance Report for the first half of FY2014.
- Ms. Quinn reviewed Downeaster performance for January 2014 noting that only limited data had been provided by Amtrak to date. Mr. Eisenstein agreed to write a letter to Amtrak urging them to provide the performance data which had previously been provided to NNEPRA.
 - Ridership and revenue were both 5% greater than the previous year. Ridership during school vacation week was less than previous years, due in part to storms and very cold weather. Mr. Knapp of Concord Coach also noted that weather impacted vacation week ridership.
 - Overall On-Time Performance (OTP) was 75%. Issues affecting OTP are varied and primarily weather-related with only a few due to mechanical problems.
- Steve Gillingham of Epicurean Feast, who had served as the manager of the Downeaster Café, decided to move on to a new opportunity and his last day with Epicurean was Friday, February 14. Ms. Quinn noted that Steve had been a very effective manager and would be missed. Epicurean's Assistant Café Manager will fill the position on an interim basis until it can be permanently filled. A search is currently underway.
- Mr. Eisenstein inquired when the Epicurean contract expires. Ms. Douglass responded that the agreement renews each year, but would likely be put out for bid again next year.
- Ms. Bogart reviewed the current marketing programs including the January \$14 Fare promotion, school vacation promotions in February and kids ride free on Sundays. She noted that NNEPRA exhibited at the Boston Travel Show.
- Commuter Appreciation Week is the week of March 17. NNEPRA's annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon will be held in April.

FINANCE UPDATE – Marina Douglass

Budget Variance Report

- Ms. Douglass reviewed the January Variance Report.
- Amtrak has not given all the reports for October, November and December.
- Year to date revenue variance was \$383,000 more than budgeted. The expense variance is \$293,133 less than budgeted.
- Downeaster Café expenses averaged \$1.44 per person with average passenger revenue of \$1.24.
- Fuel expense is still under budget.
- In response to a question last month regarding a variance in professional services, Ms. Douglass noted that the budget included funding for on-board survey which was determined not to be needed.

Mr. Eisenstein will schedule a finance committee meeting in April to begin discussions on the FY15 budget.

Vote to accept variance report:

Motion: Mr. Jacobson

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

Board Vote:

The Board voted to accept the three provisions of the Standing Resolution of the Directors of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority authorizing the Certifications and assurances to the Federal Transit Administration:

- To verify that all FTA Certifications heretofore filed with FTA hereby are authorized, approved, ratified and confirmed as representations, assurances, obligations and agreements of the Authority;
- To verify that the Fiscal Year 2014 FTA Certification attached hereto as executed by the Executive Director shall be and hereby is authorized and approved as representations, assurances, obligations and agreements of the Authority; and
- To agree that the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the Executive Director of the Authority, each in any case acting alone, hereby are authorized and empowered, with further action by the Directors, to execute and deliver as representations, assurances, obligations and agreements of the Authority such FTA Certifications that hereafter are required in connection with grants received from FTA.

Motion: Mr. Jacobson

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

Other Business

- The first meeting of the Passenger Rail Advisory Council will be held in March. The Council is being co-chaired by Susan Moreau and Patricia Quinn. Ms. Moreau noted that 12 members representing both the public and private sector would participate as well as representatives from MaineDOT and NNEPRA staff. Mr. Jacobson will represent the NNEPRA Board.
- A Public Meeting has been scheduled for March 19th to get public input regarding the Downeaster Service Development Plan. It will be held in the State of Maine room, Portland City Hall from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.
- There is no new information regarding the Brunswick layover facility.
- Mr. Russell stated that an invitation for bids for ties for the Pan Am Capital Maintenance project is being advertised and hopes to begin the project in late spring.
- NNEPRA is working with Mr. Corcoran regarding upcoming track outages associated with track work on the MBTA line.
- Jim Russell has met with representatives from Kennebunk regarding requirements associated with building a train platform. The representatives from Kennebunk will present a design concept to the NNEPRA Board at a later date.
- Mr. Russell recently participated in a 3-day program offered by the University of Wisconsin which focused on railroad engineering.
- Mr. Beeler and representatives from Amtrak had a productive meeting with members of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM) to discuss the challenges and the many logistical issues associated with accepting bikes on board the Downeaster. Amtrak has formed a task force to look at ways to improve bike access on trains and the BCM will participate on that task force.

Public Comment

- Mr. Morrison thanked NNEPRA for providing ridership numbers that he requested and noted that the number of passengers boarding or alighting from Brunswick Station exceeds 10% of the trains' total ridership less than 10% of the time.
- Ms. Harris, Portland, mentioned an upcoming meeting regarding Thompson's Point on March 10th. Mr. Russell will be in attendance.

Vote to adjourn: 1:54pm

Motion: Mr. Jacobson

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

NEXT MEETING: March 24, 2014

January 2014					
Performance Stats	Ridership	Revenue	Fare/Pax	Pass Mi	Mi/Pax
Actual January 2014	36,100	\$ 588,597	\$ 16.30	2,983,790	83
Actual January 2013	34,134	\$ 557,145	\$ 16.32	3,094,667	91
FY2014 Year to date	331,361	\$5,222,448	\$ 15.76	27,349,308	83
FY2013 Year to date	334,415	\$4,905,435	\$ 14.67	27,184,094	81
City Pair Ridership January 2014	# Riders	Revenue	Avg Fare	% Total Riders	% Total Revenue
Boston-North - Portland	9,835	\$197,463	\$ 20.08	27%	34%
Boston-North - Exeter	5,998	\$74,169	\$ 12.37	17%	13%
Boston-North - Dover	3,575	\$54,374	\$ 15.21	10%	9%
Boston-North - Saco	2,633	\$48,815	\$ 18.54	7%	8%
Boston-North - Wells	2,615	\$41,822	\$ 15.99	7%	7%
Boston-North - Durham	2,459	\$40,504	\$ 16.47	7%	7%
Boston-North - Brunswick	1,551	\$29,721	\$ 19.16	4%	5%
Boston-North - Haverhill	1,936	\$20,465	\$ 10.57	5%	3%
Portland - Woburn	522	\$10,024	\$ 19.20	1%	2%
Boston-North - Freeport	415	\$8,796	\$ 21.20	1%	1%
On Time Performance	Average overall OTP for Jan 2014				
	69.60%				
100%	694,697,699				
90-99%	683, 689				
80-89%	681,690,691,692,693,695,696				
Customer Satisfaction Score	Downeaster December 2013		Amtrak December 2013		
Overall CSI	92%		87%		
Overall Cleanliness of Train	91%		84%		
Friend. /Helpful of Conductors	92%		89%		
Friendliness of Café Attendent	90%		86%		
Quality of Café Food	82%		78%		
Overall Café Experience	81%		80%		

February 2014					
Performance Stats	Ridership	Revenue	Fare/Pax	Pass Mi	Mi/Pax
Actual February 2014	36,114	\$ 602,942	\$ 16.70	2,905,490	80
Actual February 2013	32,246	\$ 525,199	\$ 16.29	2,884,647	89
FY2014 Year to date	367,475	\$5,825,390	\$ 15.85	30,254,798	82
FY2013 Year to date	370,552	\$5,430,634	\$ 14.66	30,068,741	81
City Pair Ridership February 2014	#Riders	Revenue	Avg Fare	% Total Riders	% Total Revenue
Boston-North - Portland	8,916	\$184,646	\$ 20.71	25%	31%
Boston-North - Exeter	5,416	\$70,040	\$ 12.93	15%	12%
Boston-North - Durham	3,410	\$58,004	\$ 17.01	9%	10%
Boston-North - Dover	3,245	\$49,757	\$ 15.33	9%	8%
Boston-North - Saco	2,496	\$45,367	\$ 18.18	7%	8%
Boston-North - Wells	2,456	\$40,884	\$ 16.65	7%	7%
Boston-North - Brunswick	1,444	\$33,790	\$ 23.40	4%	6%
Boston-North - Haverhill	1,985	\$22,022	\$ 11.09	5%	4%
Boston-North - Freeport	514	\$11,511	\$ 22.40	1%	2%
Durham - Woburn	640	\$9,425	\$ 14.73	2%	2%
On Time Performance	Average overall OTP for Feb 2014				
	75.00%				
100%	692,693,694,696				
90-99%	683				
80-89%	682,691,697,699				
Customer Satisfaction Score	Downeaster January 2014		Amtrak January 2014		
Overall CSI	92%		85%		
Overall Cleanliness of Train	90%		84%		
Friend. /Helpful of Conductors	93%		88%		
Friendliness of Café Attendant	91%		88%		
Quality of Café Food	85%		80%		
Overall Café Experience	88%		81%		

PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - February 2014							
	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	602,942	579,705	23,237	5,823,374	5,451,719	371,655	7%
Food Service Revenue	48,556	42,296	6,259	455,602	415,351	40,251	10%
Advertising Revenue	0	0	0	12,276	7,500	4,776	64%
Parking Lot Revenue	24,644	28,000	(3,356)	251,593	255,240	(3,647)	-1%
Interest on Accounts	228	236	(8)	1,650	1,885	(235)	-12%
Other Revenue	4,250	4,206	44	75,774	33,427	42,347	127%
Total Operating Revenues	680,620	654,443	26,177	6,620,268	6,165,122	455,147	7%
Expenses							
Wages and Benefits							
Permanent Full-Time	29,075	29,075	0	228,260	228,260	(0)	(0)
Benefits	13,667	13,667	0	103,637	103,637	(0)	(0)
Total Wages and Benefits	42,742	42,742	0	331,896	331,896	(0)	0%
Administration							
Office Expenses	12,096	10,082	2,014	81,917	82,624	(707)	-1%
Professional Services	161	1,728	(1,567)	21,156	31,458	(10,302)	-33%
Insurance	2,485	2,700	(215)	19,099	19,325	(226)	-1%
Board Operations	966	1,170	(204)	8,100	8,924	(825)	-9%
Total Administration Expenses	15,708	15,680	28	130,272	142,331	(12,059)	-8%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Operations	887,036	883,333	3,703	6,921,724	6,903,668	18,056	0%
Train Fuel Cost	314,000	314,000	0	2,264,175	2,512,000	(247,825)	-10%
PanAm	106,399	107,200	(801)	836,807	852,168	(15,361)	-2%
Other Train Operations	3,159	3,125	34	29,270	25,000	4,270	17%
Insurance	1,160	1,160	0	9,280	9,280	0	0%
Layover Facility	10,794	13,074	(2,279)	74,808	93,714	(18,906)	-20%
Capital Maintenance	0	0	0	10,048	10,048	0	0%
Total Train Operations	1,322,548	1,321,892	657	10,146,111	10,405,878	(259,767)	-2%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	28,100	29,100	(1,000)	239,664	240,085	(421)	0%
Platform Ins	10,748	12,491	(1,743)	85,680	90,958	(5,278)	-6%
Station Platform Leases	0	0	0	31,009	31,742	(733)	-2%
Other Station Improvements	0	817	(817)	75	6,533	(6,458)	100%
Total Station Operations	38,848	42,408	(3,560)	356,429	369,318	(12,890)	-3%
Food Service							
Regular	57,071	54,985	2,086	531,278	539,957	(8,678)	-2%
Total Food Service	57,071	54,985	2,086	531,278	539,957	(8,678)	-2%
Marketing	30,173	30,173	0	221,260	221,299	(39)	0%
Total Marketing	30,173	30,173	0	221,260	221,299	(39)	0%
Total Expenses	1,507,090	1,507,879	(789)	11,717,246	12,010,679	(293,433)	-2%
Additional Funding Required	826,470	853,436	(26,966)	5,096,978	5,845,557	(748,579)	-13%