

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



June 2015



Board of Directors Briefing Materials

June 22, 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

June 22, 2015

12:30pm

1. Motion to go into executive session.

1:00pm

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



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
May 26, 2015
Portland, Maine**

Directors in attendance:

Mr. Dana Connors, Ms. Sue Moreau, Mr. John Bubier, and Mr. Ronald McKinnon

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:

Mr. B.J. White, Amtrak; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Stephen Pesci, UNH; Ms. Emily Boochever, All Aboard Brunswick; Ms. Alison Harris, All Aboard Brunswick; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Bill Lord, TrainRiders Northeast; Ms. Kathy Wilson, Brunswick Town Council; Mr. Kenyon Karl, Sierra Club; Ms. Claudia Knox, All Aboard Brunswick; Mr. Ed Knox, All Aboard Brunswick; Ms. Nelia Dunbar, All Aboard Brunswick; and Mr. Charles Dunbar, All Aboard Brunswick

Commencement:

Vote to open Public Session at 12:30 pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

Vote to go into Executive Session at 1:12pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

Per 1 MRS Section 405(6) (E)

Motion to go into executive session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(E) to discuss with counsel NNEPRA's pending application for a stormwater management permit for the Brunswick layover facility.

Motion to go into executive session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) and 1 MRS § 405(6)(E) to discuss the condition of the rail line in Maine and New Hampshire and NNEPRA's contract rights in connection with the condition of the rail line.

Motion to re-open Public Session

Out of Executive Session into Public Session at 1:15 pm

Mr. Connors welcomed back Mr. Ron McKinnon to our board.

Minutes of April 27, 2015 Meeting

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff.

Motion: Ms. Moreau

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

Mr. Connors stated that managing and running the Downeaster service has been a challenge and acknowledged the efforts and good work of the NNERPA staff for doing the very best they can under very difficult circumstances.

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

- Ms. Quinn reviewed the performance report for the first three quarters of FY2015 highlighting that fiscal year ridership through March was 356,000 passengers, 40,000 less than the previous year, but also noting that 203 trains had been cancelled due to weather or construction. She also noted that Customer Satisfaction Scores in the areas of cleanliness and crew helpfulness have remained reasonably good considering the poor OTP, and is a very positive reflection on crews.
- The project to replace 22,000 ties between Plaistow and Portland began on May 4. This project will result in the removal of many speed restrictions which have been in place, impacting on time performance (OTP) since the beginning of FY15.
- The Amtrak accident which occurred in Philadelphia did not have a direct impact on Downeaster service, but could lead to more requirements in the future. Safety is an important part of the culture and the Downeaster has safely transported 5.4 million people since 2001.
- Ridership for May is projected for 20,611 riders. The original projection was 43,000. Currently ridership is 9,600 less than last year. Ninety-nine trains have been cancelled this month and another 44 will be annulled before the end of May.
- Ms. Quinn explained that tie replacement is two part process. One construction crew replaces the ties and the second crew provides the ballast and then tamps the area – which is called surfacing. The tie crew is very productive and has replaced 8,000 ties (700-800 per day), but surfacing equipment has been very unreliable. The gap between the two crews has extended the amount of track are restricted construction speed, and is causing significant delays to the Downeaster trains which are operating. More surfacing equipment is being deployed and should be working shortly.
- NNEPRA has developed a comprehensive communication plan to inform passengers of delays and annulments, which includes daily updates sent out by Mr. Beeler with the assistance of Mr. Corcoran and Mr. White. Appreciation was expressed for the extra effort put forth to provide these updates. Hopefully by the next meeting the project will

be completed and the railroad will be in good shape. It is a great service and will be great again.

FINANCE REPORT – Marina Douglass

Budget Variance Report

- Ms. Douglass reviewed the variance report for April 2015.

Vote to accept the Variance Report

Motion: Mr. McKinnon

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF REPORTS

Staff Presentations

- Ridership estimates for the FY15 budget did not anticipate track outages for construction in May and June. Therefore, May ridership was projected to be 43,000, but will likely be approximately 22,000.
- Ridership for June is not expected to be approximately 19,000 – which is about 25,000 less than what was projected.
- FY14 ridership figures have been used as the baseline for the FY2016 proposed budget. Amtrak capital expenses have increased \$1 million since last year. Increasing costs make it even more essential to pursue opportunities to increase revenues and reinforces the need to move ahead on construction of the Brunswick layover facility and the Yarmouth Royal Junction siding.
- Ms. Quinn will submit a draft of the FY16 proposed budget to the Commissioner.
- Ms. Harris thanked Mr. Beeler for coming into the station and keeping everyone up-to-date. A lot of people are still great fans of the trains and understand what is causing the delays.
- Mr. Dunbar asked about the tie replacement project. Ms. Quinn said it will be an ongoing process. There will always work being done but not to the extent that is going on at this time. The Downeaster is mostly single track creating delays when there is construction or disabled trains on the line. As we go forward and add more double track and sidings, delays and work interruptions will be alleviated.
- Ms. Quinn noted that a decision from the MaineDEP regarding the stormwater permit is expected mid-June.
- Ms. Quinn made a presentation to the Town of Brunswick in May to address mistruths and misconceptions perpetuated regarding the Brunswick Layover Facility. Ms. Quinn appreciated the opportunity to speak and answer questions.
- The Massachusetts Department of Transportation has written a letter to clarify that they have no intention of using the Brunswick layover to service MBTA commuter equipment.
- Proposed Maine Legislation LD439 – An Act to Prohibit Excessive Idling of Passenger Trains before the Transportation Committee did not pass. The committee agreed to request that NNEPRA install an Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) would be installed in Brunswick and, pending funding availability, a compressed air unit. The committee will send a letter with their request. The cost estimate for compressed air is approximately

\$85,000. NNEPRA met with the Commissioner and have secured the funding for the APU but not the compressed air unit. NNEPRA is proceeding with the procurement of the APU. Delivery of the APU is expected by early July. CMP is putting together a quote for installing the electric hook up. Installation of the APU could begin mid-July and the APU could be on line early to mid-August.

Motion for NNEPRA to affirm the previous vote to install the auxiliary power unit at the Church Road location as discussed and voted on at the last board meeting.

Motion: Mr. McKinnon

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

Ms. Quinn has invited the Town of Brunswick to provide input regarding the location of the APU - but they have not commented on either of the proposed locations. NNEPRA has not received any information from the Senator.

Other Business

- Mr. Connors presented the George Mitchell Award to Mr. Stephen Pesci, Special Projects Director for the University of New Hampshire in Durham. . The award recognizes individuals who promote excellence, community, and stewardship for passenger rail service in Northern New England. Mr. Pesci was involved in efforts to initiate the Downeaster and has continued to be actively involved in supporting and enhancing the Downeaster and all modes of public transportation serving the UNH Campus. . Mr. Pesci thanked the NNEPRA Board and said that he is willing to help meet NNEPRA's challenges as the service moves forward.
- Mr. Bubier mentioned Mr. Pesci's assistance helping UNE develop a bus service (the Nor'easter). Biddeford says thank you as well.
- Mr. Connors stated how important it is for people to step forward and participate in public service. It is so beneficial for people like Mr. Pesci to speak up and support it. Thank you to all.

Public Comment

Ms. Dunbar asked if Ms. Quinn has the authority to move forward once a decision on the stormwater permit is rendered from the Department of Environmental Protection. Mr. Connors replied that NNEPRA is preparing for the decision and will have a clearer view of the path forward after the permit is issued and if there are any contingencies attached.

Mr. Connors also thanked the members of the public who have been supportive of the Downeaster and NNEPRA's initiatives to improve service.

Vote to adjourn: 2:28 pm

Motion: Mr. McKinnon

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

NEXT MEETING: June 22, 2015

PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - May 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	393,556	694,450	(300,894)	7,322,471	7,910,411	(587,940)	-7%
Food Service Revenue	41,414	53,750	(12,336)	633,177	594,182	38,994	7%
Advertising Revenue	1,745	0	1,745	9,145	7,500	1,645	0%
Parking Lot Revenue	32,092	27,000	5,092	383,964	364,642	19,322	5%
Interest on Accounts	469	206	262	3,465	2,269	1,196	53%
Other Revenue	12,039	12,404	(366)	181,191	144,611	36,580	25%
Total Operating Revenues	481,315	787,811	(306,496)	8,533,413	9,023,615	(490,202)	-5%
Expenses							
Wages and Benefits							
Permanent Full-Time	30,119	30,119	0	328,757	328,757	(0)	(0)
Benefits	14,295	14,295	0	155,442	155,441	2	0
Total Wages and Benefits	44,414	44,414	0	484,199	484,198	1	0%
Administration							
Office Expenses	12,163	13,608	(1,445)	115,964	119,149	(3,184)	-3%
Professional Services	127	1,208	(1,082)	24,734	29,292	(4,557)	-16%
Insurance	2,446	2,734	(288)	26,165	28,831	(2,666)	-9%
Board Operations	1,168	1,215	(47)	12,682	13,012	(331)	-3%
Total Administration Expense	15,904	18,765	(2,861)	179,545	190,284	(10,739)	-6%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Operations	982,099	982,099	(0)	10,517,900	10,517,901	(1)	0%
Train Fuel Cost	253,725	324,900	(71,175)	2,706,524	3,573,900	(867,376)	-24%
PanAm	106,747	106,747	0	1,091,428	1,174,221	(82,793)	-7%
Other Train Operations	1,321	3,749	(2,427)	36,477	43,235	(6,759)	-16%
Insurance	1,290	1,655	(365)	14,026	16,861	(2,835)	-17%
Layover Facility	12,871	12,406	465	116,355	128,045	(11,689)	-9%
Capital Maintenance	1,615	1,667	(51)	249,236	253,543	(4,307)	0%
Total Train Operations	1,359,669	1,433,223	(73,554)	14,731,946	15,707,706	(975,760)	-6%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	28,100	29,100	(1,000)	320,373	320,700	(327)	0%
Platform Ins	10,767	12,543	(1,776)	118,273	128,997	(10,724)	-8%
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)	470,938	482,891	(11,952)	-2%
Food Service							
Regular	62,570	64,759	(2,188)	826,472	715,118	111,354	16%
Total Food Service	62,570	64,759	(2,188)	826,472	715,118	111,354	16%
Marketing	22,217	22,217	0	312,626	315,443	(2,817)	-1%
Total Marketing	22,217	22,217	0	312,626	315,443	(2,817)	-1%
Total Expenses	1,543,642	1,625,021	(81,379)	17,005,726	17,895,639	(889,913)	-5%
Additional Funding Required	1,062,327	837,210	225,117	8,472,313	8,872,025	(399,711)	-5%