

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



July 2011



Congress Street Grade Crossing Reconstruction
July 19, 2011

Board of Directors Briefing Materials

July 25, 2011
1:00pm

NNEPRA Office
75 West Commercial Street
Suite 104
Portland, Maine

FY2011 NNEPRA ACTION PLAN

OPERATIONS

- Work with Amtrak and Host RR's to Improve OTP
- Implement Peak / Off Peak Fare Strategy
- Improve Passenger Communication at Stations
- Facilitate improved access to stations
- Research feasibility of express trains
- Refine Operating Plan for Freeport/Brunswick Service

FINANCE

- Meet Financial Goals & Benchmarks

CAPITAL PROJECTS

- Complete Yard 8 Wye Project
- Construct Layover Facility
- Begin Portland to Brunswick Rehabilitation

POLICY & PLANNING

- Complete the Downeaster Corridor Development Plan and NEPA documentation to evaluate the elements of NNEPRA's Strategic Development Goals and a coordinated plan for implementation
- Collect, document and communicate public benefits and economic impacts of Downeaster related investments
- Work with partner states to secure a stable and dedicated funding mechanism to sustain Downeaster operations and continued capital investments in the Downeaster Corridor.
- Document Downeaster Expansion and other projects for future reference.
- Support the development of State and National Rail Plans.

DOWNEASTER STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- **Expand Downeaster service to Freeport and Brunswick with connections to Rockland and Mid-coast Maine**
- **Reduce Travel Time between Boston and Portland to 2 hours**
- **Increase frequency between Boston and Portland to 6 or 7 daily round trips.**
- **Pursue expansion of Downeaster service to the Lewiston/Auburn Area**
- **Secure dedicated, multi-state funding to sustain Downeaster operations**



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

July 25, 2011
NNEPRA Office
75 W Commercial St
Suite104
Portland, Maine 04101

1:00pm

- I.** Vote to open Public Session
- II.** Approval of Minutes, June 27, 2011 Meeting (page 4)
- III.** Performance Update - Patricia Quinn (page 9)
- IV.** Finance Report - Marina Douglass (page 10)
- V.** Executive Director's Report – Patricia Quinn
- VI.** Passenger Services Report – Brian Beeler
- VII.** Marketing Report – Natalie Allen
- VIII.** Special Projects Report – James Russell
- IX.** Other Business
- X.** Public Comment
- XI.** Next Meeting: August 22, 2011



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

June 27, 2011
Portland, Maine

Directors in attendance:

Mr. Dana Connors, Mr. John Clifford, Mr. John Bubier, Ms. Brenda Garrand, Commissioner. David Bernhardt, and Commissioner. George Gervais

Staff in attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn, Ms. Marina Douglass, Ms. Natalie Allen, Mr. Brian Beeler, and Ms. Theresa Diffin

Interested parties:

Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. B.J. White, Amtrak; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders NE; Mr. Bill Lord; Ms. Nicole Vinal, Brunswick; Mr. Jason Harvie, Brunswick ; and Ms. Kristen Fortier, Brunswick

Commencement:

The meeting was called to order at 1:07 pm

Minutes of May 23, 2011 Meeting

The minutes were accepted as presented by the staff

Motion: Mr. Bubier
Seconded: Ms. Garrand
Accepted: All

Mr. Connors opened the meeting with introductions and welcomed members of the public. He suggested that the Brunswick Layover facility be the first agenda item.

- Ms. Quinn provided an overview of the public meeting held in Brunswick on June 23, 2011 regarding the proposed layover facility. At that meeting, NNEPRA introduced the consulting team from Parsons Brinkerhoff who will be performing an analysis of potential site locations and Brunswick residents were provided an opportunity to ask

questions and present their thoughts and opinions about the facility. The meeting was moderated by Senator Stan Gerzofsky. A follow-up meeting has been set for July 14th to provide an update on this project. Once a site is selected, an environmental review will be done (air quality, noise, water runoff, etc).

- Ms. Fortier asked why NNEPRA did not originally consider sites on the east side of Maine Street. Ms. Quinn stated that the railroad east of Maine Street did not have an automated communication system and that, due to the high volume of traffic, it was preferable to avoid crossing Maine Street.
- Ms. Vinal inquired if there were any written records of the town planning meetings that discussed this matter. Ms. Quinn stated that no public planning meetings about this issue had taken place prior to April 23, 2011.
- Ms. Fortier asked about any environmental reviews that are required. Ms. Quinn states that there was not a federal review process, but that any facility would be constructed in compliance with state and/or federal environmental regulations. Commissioner Bernhardt concurred.

Mr. Connors moved the meeting to consider the following Board votes:

- Vote to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Parsons-Brinckerhoff to provide engineering, design and construction management services for the proposed Brunswick Downeaster Layover. The cost is not to exceed \$319,000 and will be funded with State Bond money. This is a task-based contract.
 - Motion: Mr. Bubier
 - Seconded: Mr. Bernhardt
 - Accepted: All
- Vote to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Pan Am railways for the 2011 Rail Line Capital Improvements. Funding for the \$496,055.00 capital program is included in the FY2011 NNEPRA Operating Budget.

AND
- Vote to authorize to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Pan Am Railways for the 2012 Rail Line Capital Improvements. Funding for the \$496,055.00 capital program is included in the FY2012 NNEPRA Operating Budget.
 - Motion: Mr. Clifford
 - Seconded: Ms. Garrand
 - Accepted: All

PERFORMANCE REPORT – PATRICIA QUINN

- May 2011 ridership in was 42,543, 11% greater than May 2010. Revenue was \$575,853, 7% greater than May 2010.
- June is pacing to be a very strong month.

- CSI scores are strong.
- Mr. Beeler commented on the OTP of 72.7% stating that it is the product of a number of abnormal challenges including a fallen tree on the tracks, a trespasser on the tracks, a camp fire on tracks, overheated equipment caused by excessive pollen and a car which hit high tension pole.
- Delays on the MBTA portion of the line continue to be the most significant.
- The Capital Maintenance program will address repairs to four crossings which will eliminate some slow orders.

FINANCE REPORT – MARINA DOUGLASS

- Ms. Douglass reviewed the May 2011 Variance Report.

Vote to accept the FY2012 Budget of \$17,187,269 as presented with the stipulation that the budget will be reviewed by NNEPRA and MaineDOT in January 2012 and adjustments may be made at that time as necessary.

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

PASSENGER SERVICES REPORT – BRIAN BEELER

- The technical issues with the Saco Quik-Trak machine have been resolved. Amtrak and NNEPRA worked cooperatively to define a resolution that ultimately was applied to the national system of Quik-Trak machines.
- The WiFi units on the train have had another upgrade including the addition of an external antenna and a second modem which should provide better connectivity and faster data speeds.
- The increase in CSI scores month is credited to the Epicurean and Amtrak's positive approach. The Epicurean has added two more Maine products into the café's menu, Stowaway IPA and Pamola Extra Pale Ale from Baxter Brewing Company located in Lewiston, ME.
- The next station operation meeting will be in Old Orchard Beach July 20th.
- The Train Host Luncheon will be held June 30th to show our appreciation for the many volunteer hours provided by the TrainRiders Northeast Hosts.

PROJECTS UPDATE – PATRICIA QUINN (James Russell Unavailable)

- The Portland City Council approved a Transit TIFF for the Forefront Development Project at Thompson's Point. Revenues generated through TIFF could be allocated for a circulator bus which would improve connectivity between the Thompson's Point Station and the downtown.

- A Steering Committee will explore the potential for Station improvements in Portland as part of the Downeaster Service Development Plan. Gannett Fleming is the consultant, and the Committee Members include MaineDOT Deputy Commissioner Bruce VanNote, Greg Mitchell from the City of Portland, Harry Blunt from Concord Coach Lines, Jon Jennings from Thompson's Point Development and Wayne Davis from TrainRiders Northeast.
- On the national front, there is a bill in congress to privatize the Northeast Corridor (NEC). Although the Downeaster does not operate on the NEC there would be some impact if it happened. Another bill proposes to rescind unobligated ARRA Funds granted for HSIPR projects. This could jeopardize the \$20.6m granted to NNEPRA in May for improvements on the MBTA Line.
- Construction in Brunswick continues. Rail installation is complete and tie replacement is expected to begin in August. Pan Am crews are working at grade crossings in Portland. A meeting is scheduled with Portland for coordination regarding the larger crossings.
- Work on the Brunswick end of the project is progressing. Piles are being driven in for the platform. The Freeport platform is to begin in September.

MARKETING REPORT – NATALIE ALLEN

- Rinck Advertising has been hired to work with NNEPRA to develop and implement marketing programs for the Amtrak Downeaster. They will work on a variety of projects including the Train to Maine Campaign, the Downeaster Travel Guide, and developing a NNEPRA Micro Website.
- Rinck developed a 15 second public service announcement to raise awareness and inform the public of the upcoming grade crossing construction. A media plan will be finalized after a meeting with City of Portland on Wednesday, June 29.
- Train to Maine Campaign is underway in the Greater Boston area. Television spots are currently airing on CBS, NBC, and CBS. NNEPRA is also purchasing North Station saturation in August and September.
- Photographer Dean Abramson was selected and secured for interior, exterior and aerial photography projects. Samples of work completed were distributed for review.
- In FY2011, a total of 156 groups or 12,637 passengers traveled represent a 27.3% increase from FY2010. June was busy with the Downeaster Discovery Field Trip Program.
- **Downeaster Discovery Field Trip Program** – A Discovery Program Familiarization field trip for school teachers will be held in August. NNEPRA will be partnering with the Old Town Trolley Tours and the New England Aquarium to host Maine School teachers on a

day trip to Boston and give them ideas for booking their own field trips in the coming school season.

- **40th Anniversary Amtrak Museum Train-** August 13 & 14th Freeport Maine.

Vote to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Gannett Fleming to prepare the Downeaster Service Development Plan. FRA FY10 HSIPR Grant will fund approximately 80% of the work with the remainder funded using the NNEPRA Restricted Cash Account.

Motion: Mr. Bubier
Seconded: Ms. Garrand
Accepted: All

Vote to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Rinck Advertising to provide marketing services for the Downeaster in FY2012. The cost is included in the FY2012 Marketing line item in the NNEPRA Budget.

Motion: Ms. Garrand
Seconded: Mr. Bernhardt
Accepted: All

Public Comment

Ms. Vinal, a resident of Brunswick, said the Church Road is an inappropriate location for the layover facility. Mr. Connors stated all input will be taken and evaluated.

Mr. Connors thanked Commissioner Bernhardt for all his help and effort.

DECD Commissioner George Gervais was welcomed as our new board member.

VOTE: Motion to adjourn 2:05 pm

Motion: Mr. Clifford
Seconded: Ms. Garrand
Accepted: All

NEXT MEETING: July 25, 2011

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE STATISTICS					
June 2011					
Performance Stats	Ridership	Revenue	Fare/Pax	Pass Mi	Mi/Pax
Actual June 2011	45,699	\$ 623,153	\$ 13.64	3,792,219	83
Actual June 2010	43,365	\$ 590,477	\$ 13.62	3,538,832	82
FY2011 Year to date	509,986	\$ 7,097,961	\$ 13.92	41,417,536	81
FY2010 Year to date	474,056	\$ 6,660,812	\$ 14.05	37,854,621	80
City Pair Ridership June 2011	# Riders	Revenue	Avg Fare	% Total Riders	% Total Revenue
Portland -Boston	15,154	\$ 264,177	\$ 17.43	33%	42%
Exeter-Boston	7,105	\$ 63,466	\$ 8.93	16%	10%
Durham-Boston	2,480	\$ 28,912	\$ 11.66	5%	5%
Wells-Boston	4,209	\$ 61,475	\$ 14.61	9%	10%
Saco-Boston	3,419	\$ 51,580	\$ 15.09	7%	8%
Dover-Boston	3,955	\$ 48,384	\$ 12.23	9%	8%
Haverhill-Boston	2,403	\$ 16,549	\$ 6.89	5%	3%
On Time Performance	Average overall OTP for June 2011				
	73.00%				
100%	None				
90-99%	680,682,689				
80-89%	687,690,693				
Below 80%	681,683,684,685,686,688,691,692,694,695,696,697,698,699				
Customer Satisfaction Score	Downeaster May 2011		Amtrak May2011		
Overall CSI	95%		83%		
Value for Price Paid	94%		79%		
Overall Cleanliness of Train	94%		77%		
Friend. /Helpful of Conductors	95%		83%		
Friendliness of Café Attendent	87%		81%		
Quality of Café Food	75%		67%		
Overall Café Experience	78%		70%		

VARIANCE REPORT - June 2011							
	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	623,153	613,158	9,995	7,097,961	6,859,851	238,110	3%
Food Service Revenue	61,273	48,177	13,096	577,712	533,652	44,060	8%
Advertising Revenue	280	701	(421)	12,579	13,000	(421)	-3%
Parking Lot Revenue	29,653	14,301	15,352	337,901	214,653	123,248	57%
Interest on Accounts	229	208	21	2,912	2,500	412	16%
Other Revenue	4,436	5,480	(1,043)	59,996	66,940	(6,944)	-10%
Total Operating Revenues	719,024	682,025	36,999	8,089,061	7,690,596	398,465	5%
Expenses							
Wages and Benefits							
Permanent Full-Time	28,220	38,612	(10,392)	312,191	322,590	(10,399)	0%
Benefits	11,114	15,883	(4,769)	135,061	139,884	(4,823)	-3%
Total Wages and Benefits	39,334	54,495	(15,161)	447,252	462,474	(15,222)	-3%
Administration							
Office Expenses	14,790	15,045	(254)	122,673	126,255	(3,582)	-3%
Professional Services	2,560	1,208	1,352	26,447	29,500	(3,053)	-10%
Insurance	2,375	2,526	(151)	28,730	29,516	(786)	-3%
Board Operations	1,042	1,661	(619)	14,501	19,379	(4,878)	-25%
Total Administration Expense	20,768	20,440	328	192,351	204,650	(12,299)	-6%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Operations	703,806	734,589	(30,783)	8,504,441	8,605,185	(100,744)	-1%
Train Fuel Cost	220,000	233,750	(13,750)	2,323,670	2,805,000	(481,330)	-17%
PanAm	98,695	98,778	(83)	1,045,500	1,185,339	(139,839)	-12%
MBTA	19,963	19,963	(0)	217,441	239,558	(22,117)	-9%
Other Train Operations	1,198	5,597	(4,399)	35,559	67,164	(31,605)	-47%
Insurance	1,250	1,765	(515)	15,616	19,987	(4,371)	-22%
Layover Facility	7,189	8,973	(1,785)	97,405	110,843	(13,438)	-12%
Layover Tractor	0	0	0	29,484	30,000	(516)	-2%
Capital Maintenance	0	0	0	496,055	500,000	(3,945)	-1%
Total Train Operations	1,052,101	1,103,416	(51,315)	12,765,171	13,563,076	(797,905)	-6%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	25,673	23,961	1,712	359,045	316,501	42,544	13%
Platform Ins	10,462	12,506	(2,044)	126,254	146,471	(20,217)	-14%
Station Platform Leases	6,743	7,049	(306)	18,423	19,580	(1,157)	-6%
Other Station Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total Station Operations	42,878	43,516	(638)	503,722	482,552	21,170	4%
Food Service							
Regular	77,718	72,367	5,350	773,680	795,922	(22,241)	-3%
Total Food Service	77,718	72,367	5,350	773,680	795,922	(22,241)	-3%
Marketing	124,713	172,397	(47,684)	459,434	480,000	(20,566)	-4%
Total Marketing	124,713	172,397	(47,684)	459,434	480,000	(20,566)	-4%
Total Expenses	1,357,511	1,466,631	(109,120)	15,141,610	15,988,673	(847,063)	-5%
Additional Funding Required	638,487	784,606	(146,119)	7,052,549	8,298,077	(1,245,528)	-15%