

# Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



## August 2011

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FY2011 Ridership to Old Orchard Beach was 10% greater than FY2010.

### Board of Directors Briefing Materials

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August 22, 2011  
12:00pm

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University of Southern Maine  
Abromson Community Education Center  
Room 214  
Bedford Street  
Portland, Maine

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



## BOARD MEETING AGENDA

August 22, 2011  
Abromson Center, Room 214  
University of Southern Maine  
Bedford Street  
Portland, Maine

**12:00pm** Meeting Called to Order  
Vote to enter Executive Session

**1:00pm**

- I. Vote to open Public Session
- II. Approval of Minutes, July 25, 2011 Meeting (page 3)
- III. Performance Update - Patricia Quinn (page 8)
- IV. Finance Report - Marina Douglass (page 9)
- V. Brunswick Layover Update -
- VI. Executive Director's Report – Patricia Quinn
- VII. Passenger Services Report – Brian Beeler
- VIII. Marketing Report – Natalie Allen
- IX. Special Projects Report – James Russell
- X. Other Business
- XI. Public Comment
- XII. Next Meeting: August 22, 2011



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

July 25, 2011  
Portland, Maine

### **Directors in attendance:**

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

### **Staff in attendance:**

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

### **Interested parties:**

Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders NE; Mr. Jeffrey Edmunds, Brunswick; Ms. Kristen Fortier, Brunswick; Mr. Steve Fortier, Brunswick; Ms. Toni Kemmerle, MDOT; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Trailways; Mr. Bill Lord; Ms. Amanda Swanberg, Brunswick; and, Ms. Nicole Vinal, Brunswick

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### **Commencement:**

The meeting was called to order at 1:20 pm

### **Minutes of June 27, 2011 Meeting**

The minutes were accepted as presented by the staff

Motion: Ms. Garrand

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

### **PERFORMANCE REPORT – PATRICIA QUINN**

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- June 2011 ridership was 45,699 and revenue was \$623,153. Both were up more than 5% over June 2010.
- FY 2011 ridership was 509,986, highest yet.
- CSI scores are strong.
- OTP average for June was 73%.

## **FINANCE REPORT – MARINA DOUGLASS**

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### **Budget Variance Report**

- Ms. Douglass reviewed the June 2011 Variance Report

Motion to accept the June 2011 Variance Report:

Motion: Ms. Garrand

Seconded: Mr. Gervais

Accepted: All

## **OPERATIONS REPORT – BRIAN BEELER**

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- Amtrak plans to roll out its WIFI offering on the Downeaster in October. Amtrak is in the process of upgrading the Am Fleet 1 coach and café cars and should have them complete by September. We have agreed to help test the WIFI service prior to the October launch and as such Mr. Beeler is a member of the Amtrak Working group.
- The E-Ticketing Pilot project is scheduled to kick-off at the end of August. The Downeaster has been chosen to be a final testing ground for the technology before it is rolled out nationally. Once it is implemented, passengers will have a true print at home ticket with no need to see a station agent or visit a Quik-Trak to obtain their tickets for the train.
- The July station operation meeting was hosted by Old Orchard Beach at The Pier. It was very well attended by the station community representatives further emphasizing the support the Downeaster has from the communities it passes through. Each representative was given time to share information on what is happening at their station. Representatives from Amtrak, Operation Life Saver, TSA, and FRA were also in attendance.
- The pilot for the second café attendant will take place in the middle of August. The second attendant will provide at-seat “express service” consisting of beverages and snacks. The second attendant will only be used on trains with high passenger counts. A food service cart from Amtrak will be placed in a rear coach for the attendant to work from. The goal of the second attendant is to provide faster service for passengers and to increase sales by targeting those passengers who do not leave their seats.
- Maine Day at Fenway went well. The Red Sox won. The train was on time both ways. The train was full.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS’ REPORT –PATRICIA QUINN**

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- A public meeting was held at the Brunswick Town Council Chambers July 14, 2011 to discuss the proposed Brunswick layover facility. As a result of that meeting, NNEPRA’s Consultants, Parsons Brinkerhoff (PB), will evaluate the three proposed sites: the Industrial Park, Brunswick West (between Church Road and Stanwood Street) and Brunswick East (just east of Cooks Corner) and create a white paper with the results of their evaluation. Ms. Quinn stated that all Board

members have been provided walking tours of the locations. Ms. Garrand asked that the capital and operating cost impact of each site be provided. Mr. Connors asked the impact on vehicular traffic -needs to be evaluated in relation to the three proposed sites. Mr. Eisenstein suggested that a video of the property sites be produced to depict the height dimensions of the building and height of the tree line. He also requested mitigation strategies and implementation costs. Mr. Bubier suggested that sound impacts be analyzed for the sites by recording a train in motion and a train idling.

Chairman Eisenstein proposed that the NNEPRA Board hold a special meeting in Brunswick on August 18, 2011 for PB to present their evaluation of the three proposed sites. This meeting would provide the public and the Board the opportunity to ask questions. Board members agreed and the attending Brunswick residents stated that they appreciated the opportunity.

Ms. Vinal and Mr. Fortier questioned whether a larger facility which costs more to build would result in elimination of any mitigation efforts and if a different size facility was being considered at alternate sites. She also inquired about mitigation strategies. Ms. Quinn replied that that consultant report would provide the additional information she was looking for.

- Regarding the grade crossing incident in North Berwick on July 11, Ms. Quinn commended the professionalism and quick actions of the on-board crews who successfully evacuated 112 passengers from the train. She thanked everyone for their help and support and expressed heartfelt sympathy for the driver of the truck and his family. She further noted that NNEPRA staff met with Amtrak and Epicurean staff to evaluate the event and enhance emergency procedures in the event of a future incident.
- The US House of Representatives voted to rescind any unobligated ARRA funds. The US Senate still needs to vote on the rescission. The only ARRA grant pending obligation to NNEPRA is the Downeaster MBTA Track Improvement Project. It would be beneficial for NNEPRA board members and TrainRiders Northeast representatives to contact the Maine delegation opposing the rescission of the ARRA funds.

#### **MARKETING REPORT – NATALIE ALLEN**

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- The Train to Maine Campaign is underway. In August and September, North Station/TD Garden and the Orange Line Subway Station will be saturated with “Train to Maine” posters that use attention grabbing words/graphics to highlight items unique to Maine. The TrainToMaine.com website is also redesigned to provide users with useful information about riding the Downeaster to Maine. NNEPRA has invited regional tourism partners to promote car-free travel to Maine at North Station on Thursday, August 11.

- NNEPRA is partnering with the Old Town Trolley Tours and the New England Aquarium to host Maine school teachers on a field trip to Boston. This trip is intended to familiarize teachers with the Downeaster Discovery Program and give them ideas for booking their own field trips in the coming school season.
- Amtrak's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary "exhibit train" will be in Freeport on August 13 and 14. The event is free and open to the public. NNEPRA is coordinating with Pan Am Railways, Maine Eastern Railroad, Operation Lifesaver and TrainRiders Northeast to create a promotional event for the public to enjoy. The NNEPRA staff will distribute Downeaster literature, balloons, and samples of Maine Made products served in the Downeaster Café.

## **PROJECTS UPDATE –JAMES RUSSELL**

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### **Brunswick Expansion Project:**

- All drainage and track improvements in front of Brunswick station are complete.
- All foundation piles for the Brunswick platform have been driven and the platform is expected to be complete in early October.
- The contractor is expected to begin work on the Freeport platform in early September.
- Nearly all CWR has been installed and the welding contractor is in the field.
- Tie replacement is scheduled to begin in August and last 5-6 weeks.
- Eight grade crossings in Portland have been fully reconstructed. The remaining four crossings in Portland (Woodfords, Read, Forest & Allen) will be completed by August 13<sup>th</sup> and then grade crossing work will proceed to Freeport.
- Right of way improvements to drainage structures are anticipated to begin in the first week in August.

### **Other Business**

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No other business.

### **Public Comment**

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Ms. Vinal raised concerns about air quality impacts, sound, vibration and light that may impact her neighborhood from the proposed layover facility if it is located at the Church Road location. She asked that these concerns be seriously evaluated. She noted that the police department is relocating to the corner of Stanwood Street and Pleasant Street. Mr. Connors requested that NNEPRA check with the town to see how if layover facility at each site would be consistent with Town planning efforts. Ms. Quinn said she would ask the Town for their perspective.

Ms. Vinal requested a chart showing schedules and work that will be done at the proposed layover facility.

Mr. Eisenstein said Quiet Zones are one way to mitigate sound. A Quiet Zone is an area where the train engineer is not required to sound the horn at crossings. A Quiet Zone has to be applied for by the community to the FRA. A Quiet Zone does not stop the bells and lights from activating at the crossings. Concerns were raised as to the size and height of the layover facility. PB will evaluate the construction costs. Emphasis was made that railroads and buses must run on time, therefore, opportunity costs of turnaround time must be taken into consideration.

The date of Amtrak Downeaster train service to Brunswick is on schedule and is independent of the layover facility construction.

Mr. Clifford emphasized that there has been a great deal of investment in the Brunswick Maine Street Station in anticipation of train service.

Motion to adjourn 2:30 pm

**NEXT MEETING: August 22, 2011**

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Motion: Mr. Clifford

Seconded: Mr. Bubier

Accepted: All

<b>DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE STATISTICS</b>					
<b>July 2011</b>					
<b>Performance Stats</b>	Ridership	Revenue	Fare/Pax	Pass Mi	Mi/Pax
Actual July 2011	51,079	\$ 745,100	\$ 14.59	4,334,725	85
Actual July 2010	47,173	\$ 713,854	\$ 15.13	3,904,329	83
FY2012 Year to date	51,079	\$ 745,100	\$ 14.59	4,334,725	85
FY2011 Year to date	47,173	\$ 713,854	\$ 15.13	3,904,329	83
<b>City Pair Ridership July 2011</b>	<b>#Riders</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Avg Fare</b>	<b>% Total Riders</b>	<b>% Total Revenue</b>
Portland -Boston	17,504	\$ 312,221	\$ 17.84	34%	42%
Exeter-Boston	6,702	\$ 64,103	\$ 9.56	13%	9%
Durham-Boston	2,103	\$ 25,993	\$ 12.36	4%	3%
Wells-Boston	5,811	\$ 91,271	\$ 15.71	11%	12%
Saco-Boston	3,411	\$ 57,385	\$ 16.82	7%	8%
Dover-Boston	4,121	\$ 51,890	\$ 12.59	8%	7%
Haverhill-Boston	1,852	\$ 13,965	\$ 7.54	4%	2%
<b>On Time Performance</b>	<b>Average overall OTP for July 2011</b>				
	<b>52.80%</b>				
100%	690,699				
90-99%	680,682				
80-89%	None				
Below 80%	681,683,684,685,686,687,688,689,691,692,693,694,695,696,697,698				
<b>Customer Satisfaction Score</b>	<b>Downeaster June 2011</b>		<b>Amtrak June 2011</b>		
Overall CSI	88%		78%		
Value for Price Paid	93%		74%		
Overall Cleanliness of Train	88%		75%		
Friend. /Helpful of Conductors	95%		81%		
Friendliness of Café Attendent	93%		79%		
Quality of Café Food	81%		67%		
Overall Café Experience	82%		69%		



<b>VARIANCE REPORT - July 2011</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	745,100	731,252	13,848	745,100	731,252	13,848	2%
Food Service Revenue	59,402	53,933	5,469	59,402	53,933	5,469	10%
Advertising Revenue	3,780	3,780	0	3,780	3,780	0	0%
Parking Lot Revenue	25,000	27,046	(2,046)	25,000	27,046	(2,046)	-8%
Interest on Accounts	212	250	(38)	212	250	(38)	-15%
Other Revenue	4,436	4,436	0	4,436	4,436	0	0%
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>837,930</b>	<b>820,697</b>	<b>17,233</b>	<b>837,930</b>	<b>820,697</b>	<b>17,233</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Wages and Benefits</b>							
Permanent Full-Time	26,187	26,187	0	26,187	26,187	0	0
Benefits	10,550	10,550	0	10,550	10,550	0	0
<b>Total Wages and Benefits</b>	<b>36,736</b>	<b>36,736</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36,736</b>	<b>36,736</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Administration</b>							
Office Expenses	9,397	10,906	(1,509)	9,397	10,906	(1,509)	-14%
Professional Services	1,546	1,050	496	1,546	1,050	496	47%
Insurance	2,375	2,370	5	2,375	2,370	5	0%
Board Operations	1,491	912	579	1,491	912	579	64%
<b>Total Administration Expense</b>	<b>14,809</b>	<b>15,237</b>	<b>(428)</b>	<b>14,809</b>	<b>15,237</b>	<b>(428)</b>	<b>-3%</b>
<b>Train Operations</b>							
Amtrak Operations	720,715	720,597	118	720,715	720,597	118	0%
Train Fuel Cost	220,000	318,750	(98,750)	220,000	318,750	(98,750)	-31%
PanAm	99,034	98,778	256	99,034	98,778	256	0%
MBTA	20,384	20,384	(0)	20,384	20,384	(0)	0%
Other Train Operations	1,298	556	742	1,298	556	742	133%
Insurance	1,250	1,250	0	1,250	1,250	0	0%
Layover Facility	6,069	7,643	(1,574)	6,069	7,643	(1,574)	-21%
Capital Maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total Train Operations</b>	<b>1,068,750</b>	<b>1,167,959</b>	<b>(99,209)</b>	<b>1,068,750</b>	<b>1,167,959</b>	<b>(99,209)</b>	<b>-8%</b>
<b>Station Operations</b>							
Portland Station	25,646	26,415	(769)	25,646	26,415	(769)	-3%
Platform Ins	10,462	10,462	0	10,462	10,462	0	0%
Station Platform Leases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Other Station Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total Station Operations</b>	<b>36,108</b>	<b>36,877</b>	<b>(769)</b>	<b>36,108</b>	<b>36,877</b>	<b>(769)</b>	<b>-2%</b>
<b>Food Service</b>							
Regular	68,483	73,103	(4,620)	68,483	73,103	(4,620)	-6%
<b>Total Food Service</b>	<b>68,483</b>	<b>73,103</b>	<b>(4,620)</b>	<b>68,483</b>	<b>73,103</b>	<b>(4,620)</b>	<b>-6%</b>
Marketing	23,042	23,042	(0)	23,042	23,042	(0)	0%
<b>Total Marketing</b>	<b>23,042</b>	<b>23,042</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>23,042</b>	<b>23,042</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,247,929</b>	<b>1,352,955</b>	<b>(105,026)</b>	<b>1,247,929</b>	<b>1,352,955</b>	<b>(105,026)</b>	<b>-8%</b>
<b>Additional Funding Required</b>	<b>409,999</b>	<b>532,258</b>	<b>(122,259)</b>	<b>409,999</b>	<b>532,258</b>	<b>(122,259)</b>	<b>-23%</b>