

# Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



## Annual Meeting

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### Board of Directors Briefing Materials

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October 21, 2015

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

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



# **BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA**

October 21, 2015

6:00pm

1. Motion to open Public Session
2. Welcome and Introduction
3. Approval of Minutes from August 2015 Meeting
4. The Year in Review
  - a. Presentation by NNEPRA Staff including Audit Report from MacPage.
5. Finance Report
  - a. FY2016 budget variance
6. Other Business
7. Public Comment
8. Next Scheduled Meeting: November 23, 2015



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

August 24, 2015  
Portland, Maine

**Directors in attendance:**

Mr. Martin Eisenstein, Mr. Dana Connors, Mr. John Bubier, Ms. Sue Moreau, Mr. Ronald McKinnon and Mr. George Gervais (conference call)

**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. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Ms. Emily Boochever, All Aboard Brunswick; Mr. Bill Lord, TrainRiders Northeast; Ms. Alison Harris, All Aboard Brunswick; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines, and Mr. Nat Rosenblatt (via phone).

**Commencement:**

Vote to open Public Session at 12:45 pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

Vote to go into Executive Session at 12:47 pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

Per 1 MRS Section 405(6) (E) to discuss with counsel the pending appeal to the Board of Environmental Protection of NNEPRA's stormwater management permit for the Brunswick layover facility.

Motion to re-open Public Session

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

Out of Executive Session into Public Session at 1:05 pm

**Minutes of July 10, 2015 Meeting**

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff.

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

## **DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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### **FY2015 end of year Performance**

June ridership was 19,496 with revenue of \$323,084. Ridership for FY2015 was 438,364, which is about 18.3% less than Amtrak reported numbers in FY14 – but factoring the change in ridership allocations which impacted the first quarter of FY15, it is actually about 11% less than FY14. More than 500 trains were cancelled during the year due primarily to weather and construction.

### **FY2016 July & August Performance**

Preliminary data for July reflects ridership of 37,349 and revenue of \$587,570. There were no full cancellations during July however 5 trains each day, half of the service, operated limited service, significantly constraining ridership.

Track work was completed at the end of July. Month to date ridership in August is about 36,000.

As a result of the tie project, there is now less than 1 mile of track with restricted speed and most trains are operating on time.

Mr. Corcoran said noted that Amtrak is carefully monitoring delays ... some of which are being caused by work on the MBTA line and as well as lightning strikes and some anomalies.

Ms. Quinn noted that significant effort was made to keep passengers informed about service inconsistencies and delays noting that Ms. Bogart and Mr. Beeler worked diligently in partnership with Amtrak to provide notification. A press release was sent out in advance of the project. A special graphic was prepared to highlight construction information on all printed materials including an alert page on the AmtrakDowneaster website. An e-mail was sent out twice each day throughout the project to than 800 subscribers. Updates were placed on on social media (Face Book and Twitter). Stations and station hosts were sent weekly updates. Conductors informed passengers of delays prior to boarding, there were seat drops, signs as stations. This was all in addition to the standard notification processes managed and implemented by Amtrak.

Ms. Quinn said that there were many unanticipated challenges with the tie project, but that NNEPRA, Amtrak and Pan Am were committed to making future projects work more smoothly.

Among things to look forward to in FY16, the Downeaster will participate in the new pets-on-board program being rolled out by Amtrak in the northeast; PIDS signs are expected to be installed, the Brunswick layover is expected to be built, and by early FY17 there should be more Downeaster trains serving Brunswick and a new seasonal station stop in Kennebunk.

Mr. Eisenstein inquired into the legislation to study passenger rail service to Lewiston/Auburn and asked NNEPRA to stay involved with that as well.

**FINANCE REPORT – Marina Douglass**

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**a. FY2015 June variance**

Ms. Douglass reviewed the variance report for June. FY15 final numbers will be available in October at the annual meeting.

**b. FY2016 July budget variance**

Ms. Douglass reviewed the variance report for July.

Vote to accept Finance Report for June 2015 and July 2015

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF REPORTS**

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**Brunswick Layover**

The Brunswick West Neighborhood Coalition requested a stay on proceeding with the Brunswick Layover and was denied by the MDEP. They are appealing the MDEP decision and the process is ongoing. NNEPRA had to meet the conditions set forth in the permit issued in June prior to the start of construction. Two conditions requiring DEP approval, a dewatering plan completed and a drawing, were MDEP on August 4. NNEPRA is also finalizing a contract with a Third Party Inspector as required by the DEP, and are planning a preconstruction meeting to discuss stormwater related issues with the construction team.

Mr. Russell reported that the auxiliary power unit in Brunswick is on line and complete.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted a triennial review of NNEPRA in early July. Follow up is required to address some of the administrative findings noted, and it is expected that they will all be resolved by mid-October. Ms. Quinn recognized the significant efforts of Ms. Douglass in preparing for the Triennial and for all her work maintaining compliance with countless regulations. Ms. Quinn also noted that OPEGA staff were invited to observe the Triennial process.

Ms. Douglass presented NNEPRA’s Title VI policy for adoption by the Board.

Vote to accept Title VI Policy

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

On a national level, there is activity in Washington regarding a transportation reauthorization bill. An issue of concerning is increasing liability.

Ms. Quinn mentioned the next board meeting will be in September, with an annual meeting planned for the week of October 19<sup>th</sup> at GPCOG. Mr. Bubier suggested holding it at another location.

Ms. Bogart reported that marketing activities had resumed, particularly featuring off-peak promotions, the Buy-One-Get-One for tourists traveling to Maine and the 25% Fan Fare discount for Boston-bound sports fans. Ms. Bogart has attended a number of various events to increase Downeaster visibility. Social media such as facebook and twitter are helpful tools.

**Other Business**

Mr. Bubier congratulated the staff for all the efforts they made during the tie project.

Mr. Lord inquired whether Amtrak is going to implement any new security in light of the train attack in France. Mr. Corcoran stated they were looking into it.

Mr. Davis commented that passengers were quite understanding during construction and said that customers are pleased to see the Downeaster operating on time again.

**Public Comment**

Vote to adjourn: 2:30 pm

Motion: Mr. Bubier

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

**NEXT MEETING: September 28, 2015**

<b>PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - August 2015</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	819,638	816,850	2,788	1,407,208	1,379,500	27,708	2%
Food Service Revenue	62,318	77,435	(15,117)	111,275	128,585	(17,310)	-13%
Advertising Revenue	840	840	0	840	840	0	0%
Parking Lot Revenue	27,866	26,200	1,666	69,802	68,136	1,666	2%
Interest on Accounts	211	334	(123)	583	701	(117)	-17%
Other Revenue	25,905	12,547	13,358	51,811	28,556	23,255	81%
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>936,778</b>	<b>934,206</b>	<b>2,572</b>	<b>1,641,519</b>	<b>1,606,317</b>	<b>35,202</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Wages and Benefits</b>							
Permanent Full-Time	30,217	30,217	0	60,290	60,290	0	0
Benefits	15,513	15,513	0	31,106	31,106	0	0
<b>Total Wages and Benefits</b>	<b>45,730</b>	<b>45,730</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>91,396</b>	<b>91,396</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Administration</b>							
Office Expenses	8,669	10,519	(1,849)	17,060	20,301	(3,241)	-16%
Professional Services	25,000	8,583	16,417	51,207	17,167	34,040	198%
Insurance	2,446	2,447	(1)	4,892	4,893	(1)	0%
Board Operations	1,451	1,294	158	2,807	2,588	219	8%
<b>Total Administration Expense</b>	<b>37,567</b>	<b>22,843</b>	<b>14,724</b>	<b>75,966</b>	<b>44,948</b>	<b>31,018</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>Train Operations</b>							
Amtrak Operations	967,337	973,472	(6,135)	1,934,675	1,933,101	1,574	0%
Train Fuel Cost	140,447	299,250	(158,803)	280,894	598,500	(317,606)	-53%
PanAm	107,188	108,454	(1,267)	214,015	216,549	(2,533)	-1%
Other Train Operations	3,314	3,908	(593)	6,473	7,256	(782)	-11%
Insurance	1,290	1,290	0	2,580	2,589	(9)	0%
Layover Facility	6,194	9,013	(2,819)	17,653	18,248	(595)	-3%
Capital Maintenance	17,771	465	17,306	19,656	2,350	17,306	0%
<b>Total Train Operations</b>	<b>1,243,541</b>	<b>1,395,853</b>	<b>(152,311)</b>	<b>2,475,946</b>	<b>2,778,593</b>	<b>(302,647)</b>	<b>-11%</b>
<b>Station Operations</b>							
Portland Station	28,100	28,100	0	56,200	56,200	0	0%
Platform Ins	10,767	10,767	0	21,534	21,534	0	0%
Station Platform Leases	19,109	19,109	0	19,109	19,109	0	0%
Other Station Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total Station Operations</b>	<b>57,976</b>	<b>57,976</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96,843</b>	<b>96,843</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Food Service</b>							
Regular	73,028	95,929	(22,902)	131,747	159,014	(27,267)	-17%
<b>Total Food Service</b>	<b>73,028</b>	<b>95,929</b>	<b>(22,902)</b>	<b>131,747</b>	<b>159,014</b>	<b>(27,267)</b>	<b>-17%</b>
Marketing	26,958	26,958	0	40,325	40,325	0	0%
<b>Total Marketing</b>	<b>26,958</b>	<b>26,958</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40,325</b>	<b>40,325</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,484,799</b>	<b>1,645,288</b>	<b>(160,489)</b>	<b>2,912,222</b>	<b>3,211,119</b>	<b>(298,896)</b>	<b>-9%</b>
<b>Additional Funding Required</b>	<b>548,021</b>	<b>711,081</b>	<b>(163,061)</b>	<b>1,270,703</b>	<b>1,604,801</b>	<b>(334,098)</b>	<b>-21%</b>

<b>PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - September 2015</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	696,095	716,940	(20,845)	2,103,303	2,096,440	6,863	0%
Food Service Revenue	61,236	67,685	(6,449)	171,710	200,074	(28,365)	-14%
Advertising Revenue	0	0	0	840	840	0	0%
Parking Lot Revenue	29,160	28,000	1,160	98,962	96,136	2,826	3%
Interest on Accounts	773	334	439	1,356	1,035	321	31%
Other Revenue	15,419	12,547	2,872	67,230	41,103	26,127	64%
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>802,683</b>	<b>825,506</b>	<b>(22,824)</b>	<b>2,443,400</b>	<b>2,435,628</b>	<b>7,772</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Wages and Benefits</b>							
Permanent Full-Time	29,658	29,658	0	89,948	89,948	0	0
Benefits	15,063	15,063	0	46,169	46,169	0	0
<b>Total Wages and Benefits</b>	<b>44,721</b>	<b>44,721</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>136,117</b>	<b>136,117</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Administration</b>							
Office Expenses	9,062	10,504	(1,441)	26,123	30,805	(4,682)	-15%
Professional Services	30,977	19,083	11,893	74,642	36,250	38,392	106%
Insurance	2,446	2,447	(1)	7,338	7,340	(2)	0%
Board Operations	854	1,294	(440)	3,661	3,881	(220)	-6%
<b>Total Administration Expense</b>	<b>43,339</b>	<b>33,328</b>	<b>10,012</b>	<b>111,763</b>	<b>78,276</b>	<b>33,487</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Train Operations</b>							
Amtrak Operations	969,211	973,472	(4,261)	2,903,886	2,906,573	(2,687)	0%
Train Fuel Cost	140,447	140,447	(0)	421,341	738,947	(317,606)	-43%
PanAm	107,188	108,454	(1,267)	321,203	325,003	(3,800)	-1%
Other Train Operations	5,153	3,707	1,446	11,480	10,963	517	5%
Insurance	1,290	1,988	(698)	3,870	4,577	(707)	-15%
Layover Facility	12,584	9,802	2,782	30,238	28,051	2,187	8%
Capital Maintenance	2,067	465	1,602	21,722	2,815	18,907	0%
<b>Total Train Operations</b>	<b>1,237,941</b>	<b>1,238,336</b>	<b>(395)</b>	<b>3,713,740</b>	<b>4,016,929</b>	<b>(303,188)</b>	<b>-8%</b>
<b>Station Operations</b>							
Portland Station	28,100	28,100	0	84,300	84,300	0	0%
Platform Ins	10,767	10,767	0	32,301	32,301	0	0%
Station Platform Leases	12,704	12,704	0	31,813	31,813	0	0%
Other Station Improvements	834	834	0	834	834	0	0%
<b>Total Station Operations</b>	<b>52,405</b>	<b>52,405</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>149,248</b>	<b>149,248</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Food Service</b>							
Regular	80,861	86,576	(5,715)	213,773	242,440	(28,667)	-12%
<b>Total Food Service</b>	<b>80,861</b>	<b>86,576</b>	<b>(5,715)</b>	<b>213,773</b>	<b>242,440</b>	<b>(28,667)</b>	<b>-12%</b>
Marketing	15,660	15,660	0	55,967	55,985	(18)	0%
<b>Total Marketing</b>	<b>15,660</b>	<b>15,660</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55,967</b>	<b>55,985</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,474,927</b>	<b>1,471,026</b>	<b>3,901</b>	<b>4,380,608</b>	<b>4,678,994</b>	<b>(298,386)</b>	<b>-6%</b>
<b>Additional Funding Required</b>	<b>672,244</b>	<b>645,520</b>	<b>26,725</b>	<b>1,937,208</b>	<b>2,243,366</b>	<b>(306,158)</b>	<b>-14%</b>