
Draft Board Briefing Materials

February 24, 2025

Location:

*University of Southern Maine, Abromson Community Center
Room 216
88 Bedford Street, Portland ME 04101*

3:00pm Public Session



For More Information

 207-780-1000 x 105

 info@nnepra.com



**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY**

FY2025 NNEPRA Strategic Workplan:

1. Meet and exceed high standards for transportation safety.

- Elevate safety awareness by expanding information, communication and training efforts.
- Increase participation in Operation Lifesaver.
- Optimize safety signage and equipment at stations and facilities as needed

2. Maximize public awareness of the Downeaster service,

- Attract new riders and retain existing riders through multi-faceted marketing program.
- Optimize fare potential while maintaining cost controls and efficiencies.
- Monitor and analyze travel trends to align train schedules with consumer travel patterns.

3. Support efforts to provide customers with a travel experience that consistently exceeds their expectations, delivers value and benefit, and contributes to a modern, integrated public transportation system.

- Oversee successful transition to Horizon Fleet
- Support Station Ambassador Program & Recruitment efforts
- Assist stations in implementing wayfinding signage at stations
- Implement and expand e-voucher program
- Pursue Maine-made offerings in Café and improve Café CSI
- Collaborate with Amtrak and host railroads to maintain and improve reliability.
- Support efforts to provide and promote last mile connections and transit connectivity.
- Assure NNEPRA owned and Downeaster-related facilities remain in a state of good repair.

4. Support the reduction of vehicle miles travelled and State climate change initiatives by improving service accessibility and quality:

- Complete extension of double track and initiate platform and station project in Wells.
- Design and pursue and secure funding for a mainline Portland Station
- Develop Falmouth station concept into project phase
- Pursue opportunities to initiate passenger rail service on the Rockland Branch
- Update Downeaster Service Development Plan
- Prepare for new Amtrak trainsets

5. Monitor and support programs to sustain passenger rail growth and funding:

6. Pursue state and federal funding opportunities:

- Monitor and pursue grant opportunities
- Ensure NNEPRA is positioned to receive eligible federal funding
- Collaborate with MaineDOT to secure resources needed to leverage federal funding
- Streamline internal accounting, procurement, project delivery and reporting protocols to maximize efficiency, accuracy and transparency.

7. Remain engaged and involved with transportation planning studies, organizations and initiatives in support of transportation access, expansion and connectivity on the local, state and national level.



NNEPRA BOARD of DIRECTORS

February 24, 2025

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

3:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Safety Briefing
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from January 9, 2025 Board Meeting
- Fiscal Year 2025 Downeaster Operations
 - Downeaster Performance FY25 to date
 - FY25 Ridership and Revenue Generating Strategies
- Finance updates
 - Budget Variance Report July -December 2024
- Horizon Transition
- Project Updates
 - Wells Area Improvement Project
 - Tie Replacement Project
 - Capital Maintenance Projects
 - Portland Station Relocation
 - West Falmouth
 - Downeaster Service Development Plan
- Other Business & Updates
- Public Comment
- Motion to Enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(E) for the purpose of discussing the acquisition of real property.

Next Meeting: March 24, 2025



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

January 9, 2025

Directors in Attendance:

Chairman Jim Cohen; Ms. Alison Harris; Mr. Nate Moulton; Ms. Maggie Edson

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn; Ms. Natalie Bogart; Mr. Brian Beeler; Ms. Belle Askinasi; Ms. Catherine Kruglak; Ms. Taylor Auclair; Ms. Emily Bedard; Mr. Jim Russell

Interested Parties:

Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Ms. Patty Barber, Rail Passenger Association; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Luke Irvine, Amtrak

OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm, and a safety briefing was provided.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment.

Ms. Patty Barber, Rail Passenger Association noted that the City of Westbrook and Town of Windham's request for a Rail Use Advisory Council (RUAC) process to allow an interim recreational trail in the rail bed along sections of the Mountain Branch had been declined by the Commissioner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve November 25, 2024 Minutes

Motion: Ms. Alison Harris

Seconded: Ms. Maggie Edson

Approved: All

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Patricia Quinn provided ridership and revenue updates. Ridership data was available through November, while financial data was current through October. Patricia provided an overview of passenger type and highlighted that group and bike transportation remained strong.

Patricia reviewed On-Time Performance (OTP) noting a significant reduction in delay minutes since November, contributing to improved Downeaster Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) scores. Mr. Luke Irvine with Amtrak commented on ongoing efforts to mitigate delays.

MARKETING UPDATE – Taylor Auclair

Ms. Taylor Auclair provided an update on the 10-Millionth Rider Campaign. A celebration was held on Downeaster Train 684 on December 18, where "Golden Tickets" valid for a free round-trip were distributed to passengers boarding

between Brunswick and Wells. Additionally, the 10 Millionth Rider Campaign included a website giveaway, t-shirt giveaways at the Maine Celtics and Maine Mariners games, as well as a partnership with DownEast Magazine.

FINANCE UPDATE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia presented the October variance report, noting that NNEPRA is running approximately \$1 million under budget.

Motion to accept October Budget Variance Report

Motion: Mr. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Alison Harris

Approved: All

HORIZON UPDATE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia reported that there were no updates on the Horizon transition. Currently, The Downeaster operates with three (3) Amfleet coaches and one (1) Horizon coach.

PROJECT UPDATES – Jim Russell

Mr. Jim Russell provided updates on capital projects:

- The double-track extension of the Wells project has been completed by CSX. Amtrak and CSX will begin using the new track in the coming weeks.
The procurement process for a contractor to build the new platform and overhead pedestrian bridge at Wells Station has been completed. The contract will be awarded to Great Falls Construction.

Patricia provided an update on the Portland Station Relocation (PSR) project. The site alternative analysis is complete and the final report has been published on NNEPRA.com. VHB continues to work on preliminary engineering and environmental in preparation for a federal funding request. Preliminary estimates project a cost of approximately \$55 million dollars, and the Benefit Cost Analysis yielded a score of 1.7 which demonstrates a positive return on the investment.

There were no updates on the West Falmouth project, but a stakeholder meeting is scheduled later in the month.

Patricia mentioned that the Downeaster Service Development Plan (SDP) grant had been obligated, with the plan aiming to improve reliability, increase service frequency, and reduce travel time.

Mr. Nate Moulton reported that MainedOT has tentatively selected Maine Switching Services (MSS) as the new operator for the Rockland Branch. MSS expects to provide freight service starting in spring of 2025 and potentially excursion services later in the year. Nate also noted that a vendor announced the purchase of the Dragon Cement plant in Thomaston.

Patricia noted that renovations at the Portland Layover Facility (PLF) nearly completed by contractor Mr. Handyman of Portland. The renovations will improve the facility and support Amtrak crew training and operations.

Patricia provided an update on upcoming service disruptions:

- Positive Train Control (PTC) work will begin in February and last through November, with anticipated train cancellations on the second Wednesday of each month. Bus service will be provided.
- The tie replacement project funded by the Fed-State Partnership grant is anticipated to begin March 30th and conclude in mid-July.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment.

No public comment.

Motion to Enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(E) for the purpose of discussing the acquisition of real property.

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Alison Harris

Approved: All

Executive Session began at 3:46 pm

Motion to End Executive Session

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Alison Harris

Approved: All

Executive Session ended at 4:41 pm

Motion to adjourn

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson





Second: Ms. Alison Harris

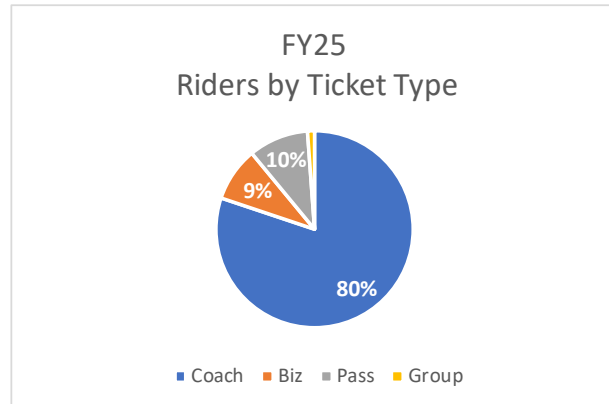
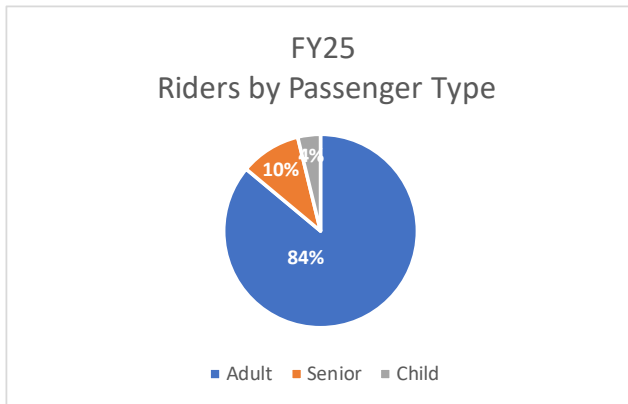
Approved: All

Meeting Adjourned at 4:42 pm.



| Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Period | FY | Ridership | | | | Revenue | | | |
| | | Actual | Budget | Variance | vs. FY24 | Actual | Budget | Variance | \$/Rider |
| Jan 25 | FY25 | 39,431 | 41,238 | -1,807 | 96% | \$ 908,997 | \$ 950,536 | \$ (41,539) | \$23.05 |
| Dec 24 | FY25 | 47,027 | 46,905 | 122 | 100% | 1,159,068 | \$ 1,099,922 | \$ 59,146 | \$24.65 |
| Nov 24 | FY25 | 46,828 | 48,005 | -1,177 | 98% | \$ 1,154,368 | \$ 1,125,717 | \$ 28,651 | \$24.65 |
| Oct 24 | FY25 | 52,059 | 52,075 | -16 | 95% | \$ 1,234,285 | \$ 1,218,560 | \$ 15,725 | \$23.71 |
| Sep 24 | FY25 | 51,640 | 45,045 | 6,595 | 97% | \$ 1,216,884 | \$ 1,045,246 | \$ 171,638 | \$23.56 |
| Aug 24 | FY25 | 56,667 | 62,856 | -6,189 | 92% | \$ 1,372,957 | \$ 1,458,268 | \$ (85,311) | \$24.23 |
| Jul 24 | FY25 | 57,854 | 59,034 | -1,180 | 100% | \$ 1,368,838 | \$ 1,369,578 | \$ (740) | \$23.66 |
| FY25 To Date | | 351,506 | 355,158 | -3,652 | 97% | \$8,415,397 | \$8,267,827 | \$ 147,570 | \$23.94 |
| Jun 24 | FY24 | 50,853 | 48,530 | 2,323 | 113% | \$ 1,191,491 | \$ 965,829 | \$ 225,662 | \$23.43 |
| May 24 | FY24 | 46,412 | 45,167 | 1,245 | 118% | \$ 1,074,148 | \$ 880,764 | \$ 193,384 | \$23.14 |
| Apr 24 | FY24 | 48,976 | 51,405 | -2,429 | 109% | \$ 1,156,686 | \$ 989,546 | \$ 167,140 | \$23.62 |
| Mar 24 | FY24 | 46,537 | 40,191 | 6,346 | 122% | \$ 1,105,299 | \$ 783,722 | \$ 321,577 | \$23.75 |
| Feb 24 | FY24 | 42,045 | 36,742 | 5,303 | 126% | \$ 1,009,621 | \$ 707,287 | \$ 302,334 | \$24.01 |
| FY24 Total | | 598,428 | 556,618 | 41,810 | 127% | 13,051,548 | 10,882,278 | 2,169,270 | \$21.81 |

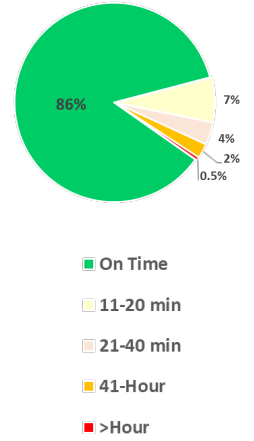
| Fiscal Year 2025 To Date | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  3,295 |  4,275 |  623 |  1,402 |



| FY25 Performance Targets | | Modified 10/28/24 | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Ridership | 542,462 | Train On Time Performance | 75% |
| Revenue | \$ 12,639,493 | Café Cost Recovery | 78% |
| Average Fare | \$ 23.30 | Customer On Time Performance | 85% |
| Overall Cost Recovery | 47% | Overall Customer Satisfaction | 90% |
| | | Café Capture Ratio | 17% |
| | | Café Check Average | \$10.95 |

| Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Period | FY | Trains Operated | Passenger Miles | On Time Performance | | Downeaster Café | | CSI |
| | | | | End Point | Customer | Capture Ratio | Check AVG | |
| Jan 25 | FY25 | 308 | 3,532,050 | 77% | 86% | 17% | \$ 10.72 | 90 |
| Dec 24 | FY25 | 308 | 4,233,423 | 72% | 84% | 17% | \$ 11.27 | 90 |
| Nov 24 | FY25 | 296 | 4,047,137 | 63% | 78% | 16% | \$ 10.76 | 87 |
| Oct 24 | FY25 | 303 | 4,454,370 | 43% | 58% | 16% | \$ 9.84 | 83 |
| Sep 24 | FY25 | 295 | 4,384,718 | 70% | 82% | 17% | \$ 10.28 | 93 |
| Aug 24 | FY25 | 293 | 5,010,367 | 64% | 75% | 18% | \$ 10.47 | 90 |
| Jul 24 | FY25 | 308 | 5,444,093 | 65% | 78% | 18% | \$ 10.47 | 90 |
| FY25 To Date | | 2,111 | 31,106,158 | 65% | 77% | 17% | \$ 10.54 | 89 |

January 2025 Delay Intensity by Rider



| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------|--------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Jun 24 | FY24 | 298 | 4,529,993 | 55% | 70% | 19% | \$ 10.28 | 88 |
| May 24 | FY24 | 310 | 4,037,621 | 73% | 86% | 17% | \$ 9.92 | 90 |
| Apr 24 | FY24 | 294 | 4,307,349 | 74% | 84% | 18% | \$ 10.61 | 90 |
| Mar 24 | FY24 | 306 | 4,058,625 | 82% | 86% | 19% | \$ 10.88 | 88 |
| Feb 24 | FY24 | 290 | 3,655,150 | 83% | 89% | 18% | \$ 10.79 | 90 |
| FY24 Total | | 3,622 | 52,332,352 | 71% | 81% | 18% | \$ 10.43 | 90 |

| FY 2025 Downeaster Customer Satisfaction | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|
| | Sample Size | Overall Score | Train | | | OTP | Train Status Info | | Café | WiFi | Station Staff | Station Overall |
| | | | Comfort | Cleanliness | Crew | | | | | | | |
| Jan | 1,056 | 90.1 | 89 | 86 | 93 | 87 | 84 | 76 | 79 | 92 | 83 | |
| Dec | 1,139 | 89.5 | 89 | 87 | 96 | 85 | 84 | 76 | 76 | 92 | 84 | |
| Nov | 654 | 87.5 | 87 | 87 | 92 | 75 | 82 | 77 | 77 | 91 | 81 | |
| Oct | 1,186 | 83.2 | 81 | 76 | 88 | 57 | 71 | 66 | 66 | 87 | 85 | |
| Sep | 1,126 | 92.8 | 87 | 89 | 93 | 87 | 88 | 77 | 72 | 94 | 83 | |
| Aug | 786 | 89.7 | 86 | 86 | 91 | 75 | 79 | 80 | 81 | 87 | 86 | |
| Jul | 1,335 | 92.2 | 91 | 90 | 94 | 81 | 85 | 79 | 81 | 92 | 86 | |
| FY25 to Date | 7,282 | 89.3 | 87 | 86 | 92 | 78 | 82 | 76 | 76 | 91 | 84 | |
| Jun | 746 | 89.8 | 86 | 82 | 90 | 70 | 75 | 73 | 68 | 90 | 83 | |
| May | 604 | 92.2 | 89 | 88 | 96 | 88 | 85 | 76 | 76 | 91 | 84 | |
| Apr | 546 | 90.3 | 88 | 85 | 95 | 86 | 82 | 78 | 77 | 95 | 83 | |
| Mar | 529 | 88.2 | 86 | 85 | 94 | 83 | 79 | 76 | 70 | 91 | 88 | |
| Feb | 528 | 90.3 | 86 | 84 | 93 | 86 | 84 | 75 | 72 | 91 | 88 | |
| FY24 Year End | 11,292 | 90.4 | 88 | 86 | 93 | 83 | 82 | 77 | 74 | 91 | 85 | |

NNEPRA Fiscal Year 2025
 Operating Budget Variance Report
 November & December 2024

v3p0

| | Nov & Dec 24 | | | Fiscal Year to Date Nov & Dec 2024 | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| | Actual | Budget | Variance | Actual | Budget | Variance | % |
| Operating Revenue | | | | | | | |
| Amtrak Ticket Revenue | \$ 2,313,436 | \$ 2,225,640 | \$ 87,796 | \$ 7,506,400 | \$ 7,317,291 | \$ 189,109 | 3% |
| Food Service Revenue | \$ 165,946 | \$ 169,356 | \$ (3,410) | \$ 530,197 | \$ 577,677 | \$ (47,480) | -8% |
| Parking Lot Revenue | \$ 94,144 | \$ 88,318 | \$ 5,826 | \$ 285,121 | \$ 300,217 | \$ (15,096) | -5% |
| Interest & Other Revenue | \$ 93,814 | \$ 93,200 | \$ 614 | \$ 342,862 | \$ 294,788 | \$ 48,074 | 16% |
| Total Operating Revenue | \$ 2,667,340 | \$ 2,576,514 | \$ 90,826 | \$ 8,664,580 | \$ 8,489,973 | \$ 174,607 | 2% |
| Expenses | | | | | | | |
| Administration | | | | | | | |
| Salaries and Benefits | \$ 171,347 | \$ 196,497 | \$ (25,150) | \$ 549,411 | \$ 591,973 | \$ (42,562) | -7% |
| Office Expenses | \$ 17,489 | \$ 24,054 | \$ (6,565) | \$ 76,138 | \$ 94,812 | \$ (18,674) | -20% |
| Professional Services | \$ 18,267 | \$ 29,030 | \$ (10,763) | \$ 84,000 | \$ 117,715 | \$ (33,715) | -29% |
| Insurance | \$ 68,787 | \$ 60,605 | \$ 8,182 | \$ 81,158 | \$ 60,605 | \$ 20,553 | 34% |
| Board Operations | \$ 12,489 | \$ 11,642 | \$ 847 | \$ 19,237 | \$ 15,570 | \$ 3,667 | 24% |
| Total Admin Expenses | \$ 288,379 | \$ 321,828 | \$ (33,449) | \$ 809,944 | \$ 880,675 | \$ (70,731) | -8% |
| Train Operations | | | | | | | |
| Amtrak Train Operations | \$ 1,159,941 | \$ 1,246,666 | \$ (86,725) | \$ 3,491,529 | \$ 3,817,141 | \$ (325,612) | -9% |
| Amtrak Equipment Maintenance | \$ 1,470,859 | \$ 1,598,630 | \$ (127,771) | \$ 4,245,835 | \$ 4,617,642 | \$ (371,807) | -8% |
| Amtrak Support Services | \$ 360,656 | \$ 371,838 | \$ (11,182) | \$ 1,139,258 | \$ 1,138,742 | \$ 516 | 0% |
| Train Fuel Cost | \$ 354,570 | \$ 397,982 | \$ (43,412) | \$ 1,082,009 | \$ 1,277,611 | \$ (195,602) | -15% |
| Other Train Operations | \$ 326,236 | \$ 336,463 | \$ (10,227) | \$ 939,545 | \$ 1,014,200 | \$ (74,655) | -7% |
| Facilities | \$ 151,903 | \$ 182,520 | \$ (30,617) | \$ 316,665 | \$ 385,435 | \$ (68,770) | -18% |
| FY24 Capital Maintenance | \$ 6,685 | \$ 6,685 | \$ - | \$ 6,685 | \$ 6,685 | \$ - | 0% |
| Total Train Operations | \$ 3,830,850 | \$ 4,140,784 | \$ (309,934) | \$ 11,221,526 | \$ 12,257,456 | \$ (1,035,930) | -8% |
| Station Operations | | | | | | | |
| Portland Station | \$ 88,959 | \$ 86,483 | \$ 2,476 | \$ 263,457 | \$ 258,474 | \$ 4,983 | 2% |
| Platform Insurance | \$ 309,722 | \$ 215,157 | \$ 94,565 | \$ 309,722 | \$ 215,157 | \$ 94,565 | 44% |
| Station Platform Leases | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 38,063 | \$ 42,314 | \$ (4,251) | -10% |
| Station Improvements | \$ 71,440 | \$ 26,000 | \$ 45,440 | \$ 95,766 | \$ 102,000 | \$ (6,234) | -6% |
| Total Station Operations | \$ 470,121 | \$ 327,640 | \$ 142,481 | \$ 707,008 | \$ 617,945 | \$ 89,063 | 14% |
| Total Food Service | \$ 222,633 | \$ 226,339 | \$ (3,706) | \$ 666,754 | \$ 707,840 | \$ (41,086) | -6% |
| Total Marketing | \$ 86,434 | \$ 105,388 | \$ (18,954) | \$ 215,893 | \$ 268,460 | \$ (52,567) | -20% |
| Total Expenses | \$ 4,898,417 | \$ 5,121,979 | \$ (223,562) | \$ 13,621,125 | \$ 14,732,376 | \$ (1,111,251) | -8% |
| Add'l Funding Required | \$ 2,231,077 | \$ 2,545,465 | \$ (314,388) | \$ 4,956,545 | \$ 6,242,403 | \$ (1,285,858) | -21% |
| Downeaster Ridership | 93,855 | 94,910 | (1,055) | \$ 312,075 | \$ 313,920 | (1,845) | |
| Overall cost recovery | 54% | 50% | | 64% | 58% | | |
| Café Recovery | 75% | 75% | | 80% | 82% | | |