

# Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



## June 2018

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### Board of Directors Briefing Materials

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June 25, 2018

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**NNEPRA Office**  
**75 W Commercial St., Suite 104**  
**Portland, Maine**  
**1:00pm**

**AmtrakDowneaster.com**

## NNEPRA FY2018 Action Plan

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority 75 W. Commercial Street, Portland, ME 04101 207-780-1000  
Draft 9/30/2017

### Meet or exceed projected Performance Benchmarks

- 46% Total Cost Recovery
- 85% On Time Performance
- 84% Café Cost Recovery in Café
- 95% Overall Customer Satisfaction

### Improve Service Efficiency

- Increase revenue on peak trains
- Maximize equipment utilization
- Increase performance on off-peak trains
- Improve cost recovery in Café

### Improve Passenger Services & Communication

- Implement PIDS at Maine Stations
- Promote and improve connectivity to Amtrak network
- Formalize Station Ambassador Program
- Improve/promote last mile connectivity
- Improve customer interface on AmtrakDowneaster.com
- Seek ways to improve bicycle access

### Sponsor Capital Projects to improve service quality and efficiency

- Complete MBTA Haverhill Line Project
- Support Kennebunk Station development
- Secure Funding for and complete Rockingham Siding Rehabilitation
- Initiate Royal Junction Siding Construction
- Participate in Portland Station improvements
- Develop Wells Siding/Platform concept into a potential program.
- Plan FY19 tie replacement program

### Explore Options for Service Improvement/Expansions

- Manage Lewiston/Auburn Service Planning study
- Identify opportunities for additional service growth
- Explore implementation of seasonal service on Rockland Branch

### Maintain Compliance with all Regulations

- Improve and enhance written policies & procedures
- Improve and enhance data collection & reporting
- Improve internal documentation processes.

### Identify and Promote Economic and Public Benefits associated with the Downeaster.

Work to secure a stable, dedicated and equitable funding mechanisms to sustain Downeaster operations and continued capital investments in the Downeaster Corridor.

## BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA

June 25, 2018

12:15pm      Vote to open meeting and enter Executive Session

1. 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) and 23 MRS § 8115-A to discuss negotiations with Amtrak regarding the operating agreement.
2. 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) and 23 MRS § 8115-A to discuss negotiations with Pan Am regarding agreements for capital maintenance projects.

1:00pm      Vote to close Executive Session and open Public Session

- Welcome & Introductions
- Approval of Minutes from May 2018 Board Meeting
- Downeaster Performance Update
- Finance Report
  - Budget Variance Report
  - Acceptance of FY2019 operating budget
- Project Updates
- Other Business
  - Kennebunk Station update
- Public Comment

Next Meeting:

July 23, 2018 - *Tentative*

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

May 21, 2018  
NNEPRA  
Portland, ME

### **Directors in attendance:**

Mr. Brian Hobart, Mr. Ron McKinnon, Mr. John Melrose, Mr. George Gervais, Mr. Herb Thomson, and Mr. Charles Large

### **Staff in attendance:**

Ms. Patricia Quinn, Mr. James Russell, Ms. Marina Douglass, Ms. Natalie Bogart, Mr. Brian Beeler, Ms. Jennifer Crosby, and Mr. Stephen Houdlette

### **Interested parties:**

Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach; Mr. Bruce Sleeper; TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Stephen Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; and, Mr. Stanley C. Koski, Maine Rail Group

### **Opening Remarks**

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#### **Motion to open Public Session at 12:21 pm**

Motion: Mr. McKinnon  
Seconded: Mr. Hobart  
Accepted: All

#### **Motion to enter Executive Session at 12:23 pm**

1. 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) and 23 MRS § 8115-A to discuss negotiations with Amtrak regarding the operating agreement.

Motion: Mr. Hobart  
Seconded: Mr. McKinnon  
Accepted: All

#### **Motion to reopen Public Session at 1:00 pm**

Motion: Mr. Hobart  
Seconded: Mr. McKinnon  
Accepted: All

#### **Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff**

Motion: Mr. McKinnon  
Seconded: Mr. Hobart  
Accepted: All

## **DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT**

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Ms. Quinn reviewed the Performance Report highlighting the following:

- FY18 ridership from July 2017 through April 2018 was 459,791, 7% above target of 430,800.
- April 2018 ridership of 48,515, 4% above target of 46,700.
- April 2018 revenue of \$910,032, \$78,772 above target of \$831,260.
- FY18 to date revenue July 2017 through April 2018 of \$8,557,878, 14% above target of \$7,539,596. FY18 to Date Average fare per passenger is \$18.60.
- May 2018 ridership is lagging slightly behind projections but NNEPRA predicts a robust Memorial Day weekend.
- Overall CSI score through March 2018 is 89%. Amtrak national CSI scores are trending down.
- OTP month-to-date is 73%.

## **Marketing Update- Natalie Bogart & Jennifer Crosby**

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- Ms. Bogart provided an overview of marketing initiatives:
  - Once again NNEPRA is promoting tourism travel to Maine with our annual Train to Maine Campaign in the Greater Boston Area. The campaign includes digital, television, and large format advertising in the MBTA subway station that will run for a 6-week period, starting May 22.
  - NNEPRA is in the process of rolling out a new travel pass. The Discover Maine Rail Pass is designed to drive traffic and fill capacity between Maine stations. Passengers can enjoy up to 10 one-way trips between any Maine stations within a 7-day period for just \$19 per person.
- Ms. Bogart shared that from May 7-9 she had the opportunity to attend the SAIPRC Marketing Work Group in person meeting in Charlotte and Raleigh, NC with marketing colleagues from throughout the country and members of the Amtrak marketing team. The 3-day meeting focused on the development of a College/Universities marketing program and included tours of local transit options, a meeting with the University of North Carolina administrative team, and a rolling meeting on the North Carolina Piedmont Service. The experience was invaluable and left with new ideas and a list of to-dos', some of which have already been implemented.
- Ms. Crosby provided an update on the following:
  - Group travel is strong. In May 2018, 41 groups representing 1100 passengers and in June 2018 there are currently 32 groups representing 1200 passengers.
  - On April 24, 2018 NNEPRA partnered with the New England Aquarium to offer a Maine Recreation, Adult Education, and Senior Center program coordinators with a freeguided trip to Boston via the Amtrak Downeaster. Familiarizations trips provide the opportunity to experience travel on the Downeaster and Boston. 10 people attended.

## **FINANCE REPORT – Marina Douglass**

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Ms. Douglass reviewed the April 2018 preliminary finance report.

- Mr. Melrose asked to look into the \$29.09 revenue per passenger on page 9 as it appears high.

## **Vote to accept preliminary variance Report**

Motion: Mr. Hobart  
Seconded: Mr. Large  
Accepted: All

Ms. Douglass reviewed the FY19 Draft Operating Budget highlighting the following:

- Wages increased by 10% as NNEPRA plans to hire part time administrative support.
- Portland Transportation Center Rent and Parking costs are increasing.
- Marketing budget increase requested to support operating plan for service disruptions caused by Tie Job.

Mr. Melrose inquired if the fuel estimates are too low and asked to be looked into for possible modification. Ms. Douglass replied that she will look into this.

Mr. Thomson inquired if the presented budget took into consideration the potential for additional service in FY19 including, Rockland. Ms. Quinn replied that NNEPRA included more service between Brunswick and Portland after the Royal Siding project is complete. NNEPRA did not take into account other potential service expansions.

Mr. Large inquired if Amtrak costs decrease during the Tie Replacement Project. Ms. Quinn replied that no operating costs are reduced as Amtrak crews are still working and there is additional work associated with a modified service plan.

**Vote to accept and forward preliminary FY19 Draft Operating Budget to the Maine DOT Commissioner**

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

**Project Updates – Jim Russell**

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Mr. Russell noted that construction season has arrived and gave an update on projects:

- A mid-day outage is scheduled May 22 and 23 to replace frogs and stock rails in Plaistow, NH.
- Royal Siding will require a mid-day outage on June 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Pam Am to upgrade signals for the Royal Junction project.
- A project to replace 15,000 ties between Wells, ME and Dover, NH is scheduled for September 2018.
  - The Cross Tie Procurement should be awarded late June/early July.
  - Installation to begin after Labor Day and run for approximately 4 weeks.
- Four Grade crossings are scheduled to be rehabilitated during the Fall Tie Project service outage.
- MaineDOT is funding the replacement of the Saco Main street crossing bridge deck MaineDOT will try to schedule the work during the tie job to avoid additional outages.
- The Merrimack River Bridge project by the MBTA is complete.

**Executive Director Report – Patricia Quinn**

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Ms. Quinn updated the board on the following:

- There will be a 26-mile 15,000 tie replacement project between Wells-Dover beginning after Labor Day that will run approximately 4-weeks. NNEPRA will develop a communication and service plan. Modified train schedule Brunswick -Wells, Weekday Bus bridge between Wells-Dover, anticipate that trains will operate on schedule between Dover-Boston.
- The Amtrak Great Dome is returning to the Downeaster from August 18- September 23. The Dome Car will operate in Maine only on weekdays in September during the tie job.

- PIDS signs have been installed in Portland and Saco. Wells, Old Orchard Beach, Freeport, and Brunswick will be installed this summer.
- L/A Study is ongoing VHB has completed the ridership propensity study and are working on putting together an executive summary of their findings. The group decided to move forward with phase two.
- Parking in Brunswick continues to be an issue. Ms. Quinn and Mr. Russell will be meeting with the town to discuss the possibility of turning the Cedar Street lot into overflow parking.
- Amtrak will be soliciting proposals in June for new equipment to replace the P42 locomotives. Ms. Quinn will be attending a SAIPRC meeting in Indianapolis mid-June and will request an update on the new equipment.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Koski apologized for arriving late to the meeting.

Mr. Davis noted that he and Mr. Sleeper just returned from Capitol Hill where they met with elected officials including Senator Susan Collins.

**Vote to adjourn at 2:10 pm**

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

**NEXT MEETING: June 25, 2018**

Downeaster Draft Performance Update  
July 2017-May 2018

Ridership						
	FY2017 Actual	FY2018 Actual	FY2018 Target	Variance to Target	Var %	Passenger Miles
July	51,402	57,652	50,000	7,652	15%	4,865,639
August	53,627	57,306	54,400	2,906	5%	4,767,867
September	45,315	50,016	46,000	4,016	9%	4,034,228
October	38,979	47,174	40,000	7,174	18%	3,812,780
November	35,599	42,110	39,000	3,110	8%	3,369,379
December	38,259	43,557	38,500	5,057	13%	3,578,943
January	37,915	34,458	36,800	(2,342)	-6%	2,793,462
February	37,275	37,498	36,900	598	2%	3,015,529
March	41,829	41,505	42,500	(995)	-2%	3,387,004
April	46,318	48,515	46,700	1,815	4%	4,012,271
May	39,015	42,755	42,000	755	2%	3,463,155
<b>Total</b>	<b>511,422</b>	<b>502,546</b>	<b>517,800</b>	<b>29,746</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>37,637,102</b>

Revenue						
	FY2017 Actual	FY2018 Actual	FY2018 Target	Variance to Target	Var %	Average Fare
July	\$ 921,482	\$ 1,042,712	\$ 887,500	\$ 155,212	17%	\$ 18.09
August	\$ 942,790	\$ 1,052,422	\$ 965,600	\$ 86,822	9%	\$ 18.36
September	\$ 752,830	\$ 933,017	\$ 772,800	\$ 160,217	21%	\$ 18.65
October	\$ 550,988	\$ 875,607	\$ 685,403	\$ 190,204	28%	\$ 18.56
November	\$ 539,612	\$ 791,778	\$ 679,677	\$ 112,102	16%	\$ 18.80
December	\$ 660,248	\$ 831,519	\$ 667,845	\$ 163,674	25%	\$ 19.09
January	\$ 651,837	\$ 623,626	\$ 630,915	\$ (7,288)	-1%	\$ 18.10
February	\$ 675,094	\$ 698,382	\$ 668,306	\$ 30,076	5%	\$ 18.62
March	\$ 730,978	\$ 798,783	\$ 750,291	\$ 48,492	6%	\$ 19.25
April	\$ 822,495	\$ 910,032	\$ 831,260	\$ 78,772	9%	\$ 18.76
May	\$ 631,889	\$ 787,031	\$ 722,016	\$ 65,015	9%	\$ 18.41
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,620,119</b>	<b>9,344,908</b>	<b>9,016,988</b>	<b>1,083,296</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>\$ 18.60</b>

Customer Satisfaction			
May	Downeaster	Amtrak	FY to Date
Overall Customer Satisfaction	90	78	89
Value of Amtrak Service for Price Paid	88	80	88
Overall Cleanliness of Train	92	85	90
Clarity of Announcements	81	79	83
Friendliness/Helpfulness of Train Conductor	93	88	93
Friendliness/Helpfulness of Café Car Personnel	90	86	93
Quality/Freshness of Food in Café Car	82	78	84
Overall Experience in Café Car	93	80	87

Performance						
Calendar	December	January	February	March	April	May
2018	67%	66%	76%	78%	73%	68%
2017	61%	82%	74%	80%	89%	76%



**PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - MAY 2018**

	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	787,031	722,016	65,015	9,365,023	8,261,613	1,103,410	13%
Food Service Revenue	70,712	65,100	5,612	768,815	732,840	35,975	5%
Advertising Revenue	0	500	(500)	4,008	2,000	2,008	100%
Parking Lot Revenue	47,324	30,000	17,324	549,319	431,645	117,674	27%
Interest on Accounts	805	141	664	9,732	1,551	8,181	527%
Other Revenue	22,013	26,463	(4,450)	309,801	300,932	8,869	3%
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>927,885</b>	<b>844,220</b>	<b>83,665</b>	<b>11,006,698</b>	<b>9,730,581</b>	<b>1,276,117</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Wages and Benefits</b>							
Permanent Full-Time	30,748	30,748	0	345,959	346,564	(605)	0%
Benefits	20,841	20,392	449	226,788	226,092	696	0%
<b>Total Wages and Benefits</b>	<b>51,590</b>	<b>51,140</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>572,747</b>	<b>572,656</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Administration</b>							
Office Expenses	11,737	11,475	262	103,936	108,188	(4,252)	-4%
Professional Services	7,683	13,334	(5,652)	62,647	116,674	(54,027)	-46%
Insurance	2,439	2,552	(113)	27,020	27,702	(682)	-2%
Board Operations	1,669	1,638	31	16,155	17,968	(1,813)	-10%
<b>Total Administration Expenses</b>	<b>23,527</b>	<b>28,999</b>	<b>(5,472)</b>	<b>209,758</b>	<b>270,532</b>	<b>(60,774)</b>	<b>-22%</b>
<b>Train Operations</b>							
Amtrak Operations	1,301,942	1,301,942	0	14,600,732	14,447,292	153,440	1%
Train Fuel Cost	152,646	160,000	(7,354)	1,647,157	1,760,000	(112,843)	-6%
PanAm	106,930	107,170	(240)	1,182,458	1,175,834	6,624	1%
Other Train Operations	2,677	2,802	(125)	46,229	32,322	13,907	43%
Facilities	20,271	23,944	(3,673)	317,452	260,324	57,128	22%
Capital Maintenance	3,103	3,103	0	232,859	233,803	(944)	0%
<b>Total Train Operations</b>	<b>1,587,569</b>	<b>1,598,961</b>	<b>(11,392)</b>	<b>18,026,887</b>	<b>17,909,575</b>	<b>117,312</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Station Operations</b>							
Portland Station	30,900	32,100	(1,200)	351,612	347,986	3,626	1%
Platform Ins	10,904	11,404	(500)	120,283	122,546	(2,263)	-2%
Station Platform Leases	0	0	0	32,689	32,964	(275)	-1%
Other Station Improvements	750	8,000	(7,250)	750	8,000	(7,250)	(1)
<b>Total Station Operations</b>	<b>42,554</b>	<b>51,504</b>	<b>(8,950)</b>	<b>505,333</b>	<b>511,496</b>	<b>(6,163)</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>Food Service</b>							
Regular	71,901	77,700	(5,799)	863,073	874,680	(11,607)	-1%
<b>Total Food Service</b>	<b>71,901</b>	<b>77,700</b>	<b>(5,799)</b>	<b>863,073</b>	<b>874,680</b>	<b>(11,607)</b>	<b>-1%</b>
Marketing	64,863	65,000	(137)	429,787	430,668	(882)	0%
<b>Total Marketing</b>	<b>64,863</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>(137)</b>	<b>429,787</b>	<b>430,668</b>	<b>(882)</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,842,004</b>	<b>1,873,304</b>	<b>(31,300)</b>	<b>20,607,584</b>	<b>20,569,608</b>	<b>37,977</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Additional Funding Required</b>	<b>914,119</b>	<b>1,029,084</b>	<b>(114,965)</b>	<b>9,600,886</b>	<b>10,839,027</b>	<b>(1,238,141)</b>	<b>-11%</b>
<b>Revenue Per Passenger</b>	<b>21.70</b>	<b>20.10</b>		<b>21.90</b>	<b>20.58</b>		
<b>Cost Recovery</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>45%</b>		<b>53%</b>	<b>47%</b>		
<b>Café Cost Recovery</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>84%</b>		<b>89%</b>	<b>84%</b>		

*Amtrak, Fuel, Host Railroad and Café expenses are estimated.*