

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



February 2018



Board of Directors Briefing Materials

February 26, 2018

**University of Southern Maine
Abromson Center - Room 214/215
98 Bedford Street
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

February 26, 2018

12:00pm 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.

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

- Welcome & Introductions
- Approval of Minutes from January 29, 2018 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
 - Ridership & Revenue
 - Reliability & Customer Satisfaction
- Finance Report
 - Budget Variance Report
- Project Updates
 - Construction Projects
 - “Coastal Connection” Pilot
 - Lewiston/Auburn Passenger Rail Service Plan
- Other Business
 - Special Presentation: Waterstone Retail Development Project
- Public Comment

Next Meeting:
March 26, 2018



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

January 29, 2018
University of Southern Maine
Portland, ME

Directors in attendance:

Mr. Brian Hobart, Mr. Ron McKinnon (via telephone), 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. George O’Keefe, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach; Mr. Bill Lord; TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Bernie Breitbart, All Aboard Brunswick; Ms. Alison Harris, Brunswick Resident; Mr. Gordan Page, Rockland Main Street; Mr. Tom Peaco, Penobscot Bay Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Jerry Anger, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Stephen Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Mr. Richard Rudolph, Rail Users Network; Mr. Stanley C. Koski, Maine Rail Group; and, Ms. Mary Ellen Barnes, Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission.

Opening Remarks

Motion to open Public Session at 12:07 pm

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

Motion to enter Executive Session at 12:09 pm for:

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

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

Motion to reopen Public Session at 1:04 pm

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

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff

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

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

Ms. Quinn reviewed the Performance Report highlighting the following:

- FY18 to Date ridership July 2017 through December 2017 of 297,815 11% above target of 267,900.
- Through January 29 ridership of 31,709 averaging 1093 daily. Anticipate 33,000 for the month.
- FY18 to Date revenue July 2017 through December 2017 of 5,527,054, 19% above target of 4,658,825. FY to Date Average fare per passenger was \$18.56.
- FY18 to Date ridership from Brunswick and Freeport has increased by 13,000.
- FY18 to Date ridership from Portland has increased by 15,000.
- Overall CSI score through October 2017 is 83%.

Marketing Update- Natalie Bogart

- Ms. Bogart provided an overview of the Santa Trains. Approximately 1,200 passengers rode the train with Santa creating magical holiday moments for riders.
- Ms. Bogart provided an overview of marketing initiatives noting the \$15 January Fare promotion and continued promotion of sporting events and concerts at the TD Garden and Thompson's Point.
- Ms. Crosby noted that NNEPRA partnered on a promotion with The Maine Brewers Guild and that station specific itineraries to the Maine Flower Show which will be held at Thompson's point in March.

FINANCE REPORT – Marina Douglass

Ms. Douglass reviewed the November 2017 preliminary finance report.

Vote to accept preliminary variance Report

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

Project Updates – Jim Russell

- Royal siding project is on hold through the winter. The earthwork is 80% complete. The entire project is scheduled to be complete by fall 2018.
- Pan Am replaced a signal control for an interlocking at the Brunswick Layover Facility that will improve efficiency of train movements.
- The Town of Brunswick has applied for quiet zones at several grade crossings.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS

Downeaster Coastal Connection

NNEPRA is exploring the potential to operate seasonal, weekend service to Rockland with interim station stops in Bath, Wiscasset and Newcastle on Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays from June 29th through October 15th.

The Coastal Connection would operate as an extension of existing Amtrak Downeaster services via the scenic Rockland branch rail line between Brunswick and Rockland. The service would utilize existing crews and equipment.

Community meetings have been held in Newcastle and Rockland and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Bath and Wiscasset community meetings are scheduled to take place over the next two weeks.

Mr. Russell, who attended several of the community meetings with Ms. Quinn, said that most all participants are in favor of the service. Ms. Bogart expressed the same sentiment.

The anticipated cost is \$200,000 with projected revenue of \$100,000 leaving a \$100,000 funding gap.

Mr. Melrose opened the discussion to the public for comment.

- Mr. Peaco, Executive Director of the Penobscot Bay Chamber of Commerce, presented a letter on behalf of the Rockland community in support of service.
- Mr. Page, representing Rockland Main Street, stated that the City Manager and City Council fully endorse this project.
- Ms. Harris, Brunswick resident, said that the community is very excited to see this opportunity of extended service.
- Ms. Barnes, Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission, the service should alleviate traffic on Route 1 which is an issue during the summer months. She offered to assist in trolley services and marketing efforts.

Ms. Quinn stated that tourism is a \$6 billion economy in Maine and the mid-coast, where this service would travel, it is the 2nd largest producer in the state.

Mr. Large requested that each community provide NNEPRA with additional information to demonstrate a partnership in the success of the service including the anticipated investments and economic benefits.

Mr. Melrose stated that a decision could be made in February to go forward with the service this summer reiterating the importance of partnerships with the station communities and an effort to document the economic impacts of the service should it operate this summer.

Ms. Quinn stated that NNEPRA would reach out to the communities and discuss the suggestions of Mr. Large and Mr. Melrose.

Other Business

Rockingham Siding, New Hampshire

NNEPRA was successful in competing for a CMAQ grant from the NH DOT to rehabilitate Rockingham siding in New Hampshire. The University of New Hampshire was also granted funding from the CMAQ application for upgrades to the passenger train platform.

Lewiston Auburn Passenger Rail Service Plan

The steering committee has met twice. Public meetings are expected to occur in March or April.

PIDS

Mr. Beeler reported that Passenger Information Display Signs (PIDS) are expected to be installed in Portland and Saco stations beginning in February 2018.

States and Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Coalition (SAIPRC)

Ms. Quinn presented a letter from another SAIPRC member, David Kutrosky, to the board requesting that NNEPRA be the administrator for SAIPRC to hire 2 to 3 employees. NNEPRA currently administers the SAIPRC grant and serves as the Treasurer of the organization. This would add a minimal amount of NNEPRA administrative time and NNEPRA would be compensated from the grant.

Vote to proceed with the request per Mr. Kutrosky's letter subject to final review of an employment agreement from the Board.

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. Large

Accepted: All

FTA Triennial

The NNEPRA Triennial on-site review by FTA is scheduled for April. The initial paperwork will be submitted by January 31, 2018.

North Station Renovation, Boston

Renovations to North Station in Boston include direct access to the subway system and new signage NNEPRA staff is assisting the MBTA with appropriate signage.

Portland Transportation Center (PTC)

Discussions of the parking challenges at the PTC and Thompson's Point are ongoing between Concord Coach Lines, NNEPRA and MaineDOT.

The Children's Museum has purchased property on Thompson's Point and will be relocating from downtown Portland and construction on a hotel is scheduled to begin this year.

February Agenda

Greg Day from Waterstone Properties will be giving a presentation on their Transit Oriented Development project in Westbrook at the next meeting.



Public Comment:

Mr. Chittenden introduced himself as the new regional manager for the Downeaster service.

Mr. Melrose stated that he is a member of the Maine Turnpike Authority's Advisory Group discussing widening Route 95 through Portland.

Mr. Corcoran said that the Dome car is scheduled to come to Maine in August 2018.

Vote to adjourn at 2:25 pm

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. Gervais

Accepted: All

NEXT MEETING: February 26, 2018 at The University of Southern Maine

Fiscal Year 2018 Performance Update

July 2017-January 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% | 2,791,098 |
| Total | 301,096 | 332,273 | 304,700 | 27,573 | 9% | 27,219,934 |

| 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 |
| Total | 5,019,787 | 6,150,680 | 5,289,740 | \$ 860,941 | 16% | \$ 18.51 |

| Customer Satisfaction | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|
| Nov-17 | Downeaster | Amtrak | FY to Date |
| Overall Customer Satisfaction | 87 | 83 | 88 |
| Value of Amtrak Service for Price Paid | 87 | 79 | 87 |
| Overall Cleanliness of Train | 90 | 83 | 89 |
| Clarity of Announcements | 79 | 78 | 82 |
| Friendliness/Helpfulness of Train Conductor | 91 | 88 | 92 |
| Friendliness/Helpfulness of Café Car Personnel | 95 | 87 | 93 |
| Quality/Freshness of Food in Café Car | 86 | 78 | 84 |
| Overall Experience in Café Car | 89 | 79 | 87 |

| On Time Performance | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|
| Calendar | July | August | September | October | November | December |
| 2017 | 54% | 72% | 65% | 58% | 67% | 67% |
| 2016 | 65% | 66% | 51% | 75% | 66% | 61% |



| PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - January 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 |
| Revenues | | | | | | | |
| Operating Revenue | | | | | | | |
| Amtrak Ticket Revenue | 623,626 | 630,915 | (7,289) | 6,150,681 | 5,289,740 | 860,941 | 16% |
| Food Service Revenue | 50,494 | 57,040 | (6,546) | 500,045 | 472,285 | 27,760 | 6% |
| Advertising Revenue | 835 | 1,000 | (165) | 3,512 | 1,500 | 2,012 | 134% |
| Parking Lot Revenue | 53,446 | 34,000 | 19,446 | 351,990 | 284,500 | 67,490 | 24% |
| Interest on Accounts | 943 | 141 | 802 | 5,699 | 987 | 4,712 | 477% |
| Other Revenue | 19,196 | 23,657 | (4,461) | 153,889 | 192,498 | (38,609) | -20% |
| Total Operating Revenues | 748,540 | 746,753 | 1,787 | 7,165,816 | 6,241,510 | 924,306 | 15% |
| Expenses | | | | | | | |
| Wages and Benefits | | | | | | | |
| Permanent Full-Time | 31,285 | 31,280 | 5 | 220,821 | 220,970 | (149) | 0% |
| Benefits | 20,864 | 21,042 | (178) | 144,112 | 144,070 | 42 | 0% |
| Total Wages and Benefits | 52,149 | 52,322 | (173) | 364,933 | 365,040 | (107) | 0% |
| Administration | | | | | | | |
| Office Expenses | 9,511 | 9,450 | 61 | 59,303 | 65,808 | (6,505) | -10% |
| Professional Services | 7,239 | 13,334 | (6,096) | 47,567 | 78,338 | (30,771) | -39% |
| Insurance | 2,439 | 2,552 | (113) | 17,266 | 17,494 | (228) | -1% |
| Board Operations | 1,754 | 1,638 | 116 | 10,207 | 11,416 | (1,209) | -11% |
| Total Administration Expenses | 20,942 | 26,974 | (6,032) | 134,343 | 173,056 | (38,713) | -22% |
| Train Operations | | | | | | | |
| Amtrak Operations | 1,300,442 | 1,300,442 | 0 | 9,132,650 | 9,133,808 | (1,158) | 0% |
| Train Fuel Cost | 152,646 | 160,000 | (7,354) | 1,077,338 | 1,120,000 | (42,662) | -4% |
| PanAm | 107,170 | 107,170 | 0 | 788,033 | 747,154 | 40,879 | 5% |
| Other Train Operations | 4,402 | 2,802 | 1,600 | 29,815 | 21,114 | 8,701 | 41% |
| Facilities | 59,769 | 30,944 | 28,825 | 198,974 | 162,548 | 36,426 | 22% |
| Capital Maintenance | 574 | 600 | (26) | 30,202 | 26,200 | 4,002 | 15% |
| Total Train Operations | 1,625,003 | 1,601,958 | 23,045 | 11,257,013 | 11,210,824 | 46,189 | 0% |
| Station Operations | | | | | | | |
| Portland Station | 35,865 | 39,600 | (3,735) | 221,265 | 219,000 | 2,265 | 1% |
| Platform Ins | 10,904 | 11,302 | (398) | 76,667 | 77,134 | (467) | -1% |
| Station Platform Leases | 0 | 0 | 0 | 32,689 | 32,964 | (275) | -1% |
| Other Station Improvements | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Station Operations | 46,769 | 50,902 | (4,133) | 330,621 | 329,098 | 1,523 | 0% |
| Food Service | | | | | | | |
| Regular | 69,204 | 68,080 | 1,124 | 560,913 | 563,695 | (2,782) | 0% |
| Total Food Service | 69,204 | 68,080 | 1,124 | 560,913 | 563,695 | (2,782) | 0% |
| Marketing | | | | | | | |
| Marketing | 48,514 | 48,643 | (129) | 267,044 | 267,300 | (256) | 0% |
| Total Marketing | 48,514 | 48,643 | (129) | 267,044 | 267,300 | (256) | 0% |
| Total Expenses | 1,862,581 | 1,848,879 | 13,702 | 12,914,867 | 12,909,013 | 5,853 | 0% |
| Additional Funding Required | 1,114,041 | 1,102,126 | 11,915 | 5,749,050 | 6,667,503 | (918,453) | -14% |
| Cost Recovery | 40% | 40% | | 55% | 48% | | |
| Revenue Per Passenger | 21.72 | 20.29 | | 21.56 | 21.18 | | |