

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



FISCAL YEAR

July 2018

2019



Concert Night at the Garden

Board of Directors Briefing Materials

July 30, 2018

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

Improve Service Efficiency

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

Improve Passenger Services & Communication

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

Sponsor Capital Projects to improve service quality and efficiency

- Complete MBTA Haverhill Line Project
- Initiate Royal Junction Siding Construction
- Support Kennebunk Station development
- Participate in Portland Station improvements
- Secure Funding for and complete Rockingham Siding Rehabilitation
- 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
- Explore implementation of seasonal service on Rockland Branch
- Identify opportunities for additional service growth

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

July 30, 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 projects.

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

- Welcome & Introductions
- Approval of Minutes from June 2018 Board Meeting
- Downeaster Performance Update
- Finance Report
 - Budget Variance Report
- Project Updates
- Other Business
- Public Comment

Next Meeting:
September 24, 2018
Location TBD

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

June 25, 2018
NNEPRA
Portland, ME

Directors in attendance:

Mr. Ron McKinnon, Mr. John Melrose, Mr. Charles Large, Mr. Steve Lyons, Mr. Dana Connors, and Ms. Mary Ann Hayes; Maine DOT

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. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach; Mr. Bill Lord; TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Stephen Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Chris Osterrieder; Town of Kennebunk, Mr. Jim Black; Town of Kennebunk, Mr. Steve Sawyer; Sebago Technics; and Ms. Allison Harris, Town of Brunswick

Opening Remarks

Motion to open Public Session at 12:25 pm

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

Motion to enter Executive Session at 12:28 pm

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

Motion: Ms. Hayes
Seconded: Mr. McKinnon
Accepted: All

Motion to reopen Public Session at 1:06pm

Motion: Ms. Hayes
Seconded: Mr. McKinnon
Accepted: All

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff

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

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

- Ms. Quinn presented the Downeaster Performance Report:
 - FY18 ridership from July 2017 through May 2018 was 502,546, 6% above target of 472,800.
 - May 2018 ridership of 42,755, 2% above target of 42,000.
 - May 2018 revenue of \$787,031, \$65,015 above target of \$722,016.
 - FY18 to date revenue July 2017 through May 2018 of \$9,344,908, 13% above target of \$8,261,612. FY18 to Date Average fare per passenger is \$18.60.
 - May 2018 CSI score is 90%. FY18 to date CSI is 89%. Amtrak national is 78%
 - June 2018 ridership goal of 1500 riders a day, pacing at 1575 a day. On target to meet projections.
 - OTP month-to-date is 68%
 - Mr. Large asked how OTP is measured
 - Mr. Corcoran replied that a delay occurs when the train is over 10 minutes late. Delays on Downeaster are typically under 20minutes.
 - Mr. Large asked if NNEPRA or Amtrak anticipates future improvements in OTP.
 - Mr. Corcoran replied yes, NNEPRA and Amtrak continue to work to improve OTP with infrastructure improvements as well as communication with Pan Am and the MBTA.

Marketing Update- Natalie Bogart & Jennifer Crosby

- Ms. Bogart provided an overview of marketing initiatives:
 - NNEPRA continues to promote tourism travel with the Train to Maine Campaign in the Greater Boston market. This campaign includes digital, television, and large format advertising in the MBTA subway station. Northbound ridership to Maine has been steadily picking up, especially on the weekends.
 - NNEPRA launched the Discover Maine Rail Pass at the end of May. These passes are valid for up to 10 one-way trips between any Maine stations within a 7-day period for just \$19 per person. This pass will primarily be promoted to tourists, hotels/ motels, visitor's centers, campgrounds, seasonal properties, etc. In addition, the Discover Maine Pass earned media through WCSH 6, The Portland Press Herald, Travel Pulse, a variety of local radio stations, and NECN.
 - Mr. Large asked how many Discover Maine Rail Passes have sold since launch.
 - Ms. Bogart responded that Amtrak's real time data lags 1-2 months behind. The anecdotal response from station hosts has been positive.
 - Ms. Bogart played a video produced by featuring car free travel to Old Orchard Beach.
 - Planning is underway for FY19.
- Ms. Crosby reported that group travel remains strong, 40 groups traveled in June 2018 representing 1332 passengers.

FINANCE REPORT – Marina Douglass

Ms. Douglass reviewed the May 2018 preliminary finance report.

Vote to accept preliminary variance Report

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

Vote to accept FY19 Operating Budget as approved by Maine DOT Commissioner

Motion: Mr. Connors
Seconded: Ms. Hayes
Accepted: All

Project Updates – Jim Russell

Mr. Russell provided an update on the following projects:

- Royal Siding is 30% complete and on schedule to be complete by Thanksgiving.
 - Pam Am is upgrading signals for the Royal Junction project.
 - 7,000 feet of track has been skeletonized.
 - The crossover, prebuilt section connecting new rail to the old, is being delivered this week.
- Four Grade crossings are scheduled to be rehabilitated during the Fall Tie Replacement 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.
- Mr. Large asked who drives projects
 - Ms. Quinn replied projects are a combined effort between NNEPRA and Pan AM. The capital assets belong to Pan Am.

Executive Director Report – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Quinn updated the board on the following:

- The Amtrak Great Dome Car is returning to the Downeaster August 11, 2018. The Dome Car will operate in Maine only on weekdays in September during the tie job.
- 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. No meetings have been set at this time.
- Ms. Quinn and Mr. Russell met with the Town of Brunswick to discuss the possibility of turning the Cedar Street lot into overflow parking. The MaineDOT has agreed to look into funding.
- Amtrak has awarded the contract for local turnaround and layover servicing of their equipment to Rail Plan, replacing former contractor Drummac.

Ms. Quinn reviewed the FY18 Action Plan Goals.

Mr. Beeler commented that NNEPRA hosted a successful Ambassador Appreciation Luncheon in June. Ninety-five Train Hosts and Station Volunteers attended. The luncheon is a wonderful opportunity to both thank and educate our volunteers.

NNEPRA has developed direction cards that are now available at each station and is working on completing an Ambassador Handbook which is currently in the final stages of design.

Kennebunk Station

Jim Black and Chris Osterieder from the Town of Kennebunk along with Steve Sayer with Sebago Technics presented an update to the Board on the Kennebunk Downeaster seasonal stop. The Town of Kennebunk Board voted unanimously six to zero to move forward with building a platform to accommodate seasonal Downeaster service to Kennebunk.

- MaineDOT has agreed to fund \$800,000. The Town of Kennebunk agreed to fund the remaining \$300,000 needed. Project must be completed by December 2018.
- There will be 19 parking spots on-site.

Public Comment

Ms. Quinn noted that this is the first NNEPRA board meeting she recall that Mr. Davis has missed. The staff and Board sends best wishes to Mr. Davis for a speedy recovery.

Ms. Harris noted that parking is a challenge in Brunswick and commended the MaineDOT for pursuing the Cedar Street parking option.

Vote to adjourn at 2:20 pm

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

NEXT MEETING: July 23, 2018

FY2018 Downeaster Performance Report: July 2017 – June 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%	3,420,400
June	45,889	48,492	45,000	3,492	8%	3,879,360
Total	511,422	551,038	517,800	33,238	6%	37,637,102

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
June	\$ 739,876	\$ 900,154	\$ 755,376	\$ 144,778	19%	\$ 18.56
Total	\$ 8,620,119	\$ 10,245,062	\$ 9,016,988	\$ 1,228,074	14%	\$ 18.59

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

Performance						
Calendar	January	February	March	April	May	June
2018	66%	76%	78%	73%	68%	64%
2017	82%	74%	80%	89%	76%	70%

PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - JUNE 2017							
	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	739,876	737,472	2,404	8,620,121	8,074,600	545,521	7%
Food Service Revenue	76,615	61,740	14,875	709,678	658,000	51,678	8%
Advertising Revenue	0	0	0	5,010	1,000	4,010	401%
Parking Lot Revenue	31,900	31,420	480	486,065	380,000	106,065	28%
Interest on Accounts	375	255	120	2,063	3,500	(1,437)	-41%
Other Revenue	21,960	28,510	(6,550)	311,960	258,005	53,955	21%
Total Operating Revenues	870,726	859,397	11,329	10,134,896	9,375,105	759,791	8%
Expenses							
Wages and Benefits							
Permanent Full-Time	32,940	41,827	(8,887)	372,604	384,219	(11,614)	(0)
Benefits	20,723	22,166	(1,443)	227,021	229,158	(2,137)	(0)
Total Wages and Benefits	53,663	63,993	(10,329)	599,625	613,377	(13,751)	-2%
Administration							
Office Expenses	19,564	21,627	(2,063)	122,649	131,662	(9,013)	(0)
Professional Services	5,628	10,778	(5,150)	135,070	138,778	(3,708)	(0)
Insurance	2,478	3,282	(804)	29,717	31,077	(1,359)	(0)
Board Operations	2,016	1,404	612	19,339	17,146	2,193	0
Total Administration Expenses	29,686	37,091	(7,405)	306,776	318,663	(11,887)	-4%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Operations	1,328,302	1,325,197	3,105	14,800,000	14,428,953	371,046	3%
Train Fuel Cost	142,646	171,000	(28,354)	1,580,334	2,052,000	(471,666)	-23%
PanAm	112,685	116,035	(3,350)	1,138,521	1,344,341	(205,820)	-15%
Other Train Operations	3,795	5,266	(1,471)	33,925	41,800	(7,875)	(3)
Insurance	0	2,300	(2,300)	2,000	25,000	(23,000)	-92%
Facilities	17,606	10,179	7,426	281,507	211,496	70,011	33%
Capital Maintenance	38,396	38,396	0	778,199	778,199	(0)	0%
Total Train Operations	1,643,430	1,668,374	(24,944)	18,614,485	18,881,789	(267,305)	-1%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	29,900	38,379	(8,479)	394,654	396,121	(1,467)	0%
Platform Ins	10,972	15,080	(4,108)	131,289	136,955	(5,666)	-4%
Station Platform Leases	7,365	13,311	(5,946)	39,368	46,715	(7,347)	-16%
Other Station Improvements	0	7,900	(7,900)	2,100	10,000	(7,900)	(1)
Total Station Operations	48,237	74,670	(26,434)	567,412	589,791	(22,380)	-4%
Food Service							
Regular	94,654	77,056	17,598	872,896	822,500	50,396	6%
Total Food Service	94,654	77,056	17,598	872,896	822,500	50,396	6%
Marketing	96,426	96,670	(245)	519,029	520,000	(971)	0%
Total Marketing	96,426	96,670	(245)	519,029	520,000	(971)	0%
Total Expenses	1,966,096	2,017,854	(51,758)	21,480,222	21,746,120	(265,898)	-1%
Additional Funding Required	1,095,371	1,158,457	(63,086)	11,345,326	12,371,015	(1,025,689)	-8%
Ridership	45,889	43,000		511,422	470,000		
Revenue Per Passenger	18.97	19.99		19.82	19.95		
Cost Recovery	44%	43%		47%	43%		
Café Cost Recovery	81%	80%		81%	80%		

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