

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority



March 2017



Board of Directors Briefing Materials

March 27, 2017

**NNEPRA Office
75 W. Commercial Street, Suite 104
Portland, Maine**

AmtrakDowneaster.com

FY2017 Draft Action Plan

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority 75 W. Commercial Street, Portland, ME 04101 207-780-1000

Draft July 28, 2016

Meet or exceed projected Performance Benchmarks

- Achieve 45% total cost recovery
- Achieve 85% OTP
- Achieve 80% Café Cost Recovery in Café.
- Exceed 90% in specified CSI categories

Improve Service Efficiency

- Eliminate Deadhead Trips.
- Improve equipment utilization.
- Increase performance on peak trains.
- Increase performance of off-peak trains.
- Seek cost saving measures in Café.

Improve Passenger Services & Communication

- Initiate 3rd Round Trip to Brunswick
- Improve Group process & Sales
- Implement PIDS
- Develop Station Ambassador Standards
- Improve Station Communication
- Explore ways to improve bicycle access

Sponsor Capital Projects to improve service quality and efficiency

- Complete Brunswick Layover
- Replace 15,000 Ties Portland-Wells
- Support implementation of Kennebunk Station
- Develop Wells Siding/Platform concept into a potential program.
- Significantly complete MBTA Project
- Initiate Royal Junction Siding Project
- Participate in Portland Station improvements

Explore Options for Service Expansions

- Continue work on L/A Study

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 and dedicated funding mechanism to sustain Downeaster operations and continued capital investments in the Downeaster Corridor.



BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING AGENDA

March 27, 2017

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

1. Motion to go into executive session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) to discuss possible future changes to the Portland Transportation Center.
2. Motion to go into executive session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) and 23 MRS § 8115-A to discuss negotiations with Amtrak.

1:00pm (time approximate)

- Approval of Minutes from March 1, 2017 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
 - Downeaster performance
 - Marketing update
- Finance Report
 - February 2017 Budget Variance Report
- Project Updates
- Executive Director's Report
- Other Business
- Public Comment

Next Meeting: April 24, 2017



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

Directors in attendance:

Mr. Martin Eisenstein, Mr. Dana Connors, Mr. Ron McKinnon, Mr. John Melrose, Ms. Sue Moreau,

Staff in attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn, Ms. Natalie Bogart, Mr. James Russell, Mr. Brian Beeler and, Mr. Stephen Houdlette

Interested parties:

Mr. Stephen Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. George O'Keefe, TrainRiders Northeast; Ms. Deb Novak; Tri-County Literacy, Mr. Mark Novak, Tri-County Literacy; Mr. Bill Lord, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Tony Donovan; MRTC; Ms. Alison Harris, Brunswick Town Council; Kelly Edwards, Freeport USA; Mr. Charles Large;

Opening Remarks

Motion to open Public Session

Motion: McKinnon
Seconded: Moreau
Accepted: All

Vote to go into Executive Session

Motion: Melrose
Seconded: McKinnon
Accepted: All

Motion to reopen Public Session

Motion: Connors
Seconded: Moreau
Accepted: All

Vote to accept minutes as presented by the staff

Motion: Melrose
Seconded: McKinnon
Accepted: All

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

- Ms. Quinn provided a performance update noting that January ridership and revenue were exceeded the previous record set in 2014. Preliminary ridership numbers for February suggest that it also exceeded best-ever ridership.
- Mr. Beeler provided an overview of On Time Performance and Customer Satisfaction Index reports.
- Ms. Quinn noted that NNEPRA Staff participated in information briefings for Train Crews and that they were well received.

FINANCE REPORT – Patricia Quinn

- Ms. Quinn presented the January 2017 Variance report.

Vote to accept January 2017 Variance Report

Motion: Mr. Eisenstein

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF REPORTS

Staff provided an update of the following:

- Ms. Bogart noted that NNEPRA's ad agency is working on a full website redesign focused on user experience/mobile friendly. The Downeaster Travel Packages brochure is also being updated and will include expanded offerings. The Train to Maine Campaign is again expected to launch in late spring.
- Mr. Russell provided an overview of NNEPRA Projects. Noting that there are still a few minor projects to be completed this summer which will improve the efficiency of the Brunswick layover facility, the MBTA/Haverhill line project is on target to be completed by June 30, 2017 and the MBTA is fully prepared to pick up any costs acquired after that date. He also reported that the annual maintenance program with Pan Am is underway. And that the Royal Siding Project is expected to be completed end of 2018.

Mr. Eisenstein commented that Board members had contemplated whether or not NNEPRA should operate special trains as holiday event fundraisers for non-profits entities. He reported that the Board generally supports working with non-profits and enabling them to work with NNEPRA and create fundraising opportunities on regularly scheduled trains. Ms. Quinn stated that NNEPRA commits to working with Tri County Literacy and Freeport USA and would try to develop a new approach to holiday event trains. The Board agreed to support that notion as a pilot project.

Vote to accept the recommendation that special trains should not be operated to support 3rd party non-profit entities and to support the development of holiday event trains in conjunction with the Downeaster's schedule as a pilot program.

Motion: Mr. Eisenstein

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

Other Business

Ms. Quinn noted that Amtrak's Government Affairs Office selected to showcase the Downeaster in a video featuring the economic and community benefits associated with intercity passenger rail services and showed the video to the Board and members of the public present.

She also gave an overview of the following:

- NNEPRA hosted an informational tour and train ride for members of the Transportation Committee on January 31, 2017.
- Amtrak is proposing to eliminate QuikTrak Machines from all stations. NNEPRA opposes this idea and is working with Amtrak to encourage another solution.
- A draft of the RFQ for the Lewiston /Auburn Service Plan is being circulated through the committee for feedback.
- The schedule for Train 689/699 has been modified to leave Boston 35 minutes later on nights when there are events at the TD Garden. This change was made based on feedback received from our passengers.
- NexDine has introduced at-seat beverage and snack service on select trains, particularly on game days, to generate sales and revenue.
- Staff has received a couple of requests for tours of the Brunswick layover from members of the public. Given that it is a secure facility, that precedent cannot be set, however staff will consider hosting an open house later in the year.

Public Comment:

- Mr. Donovan commented on the Lewiston/Auburn RFP, asking if there would be opportunity for public comment/ are meetings. Ms. Quinn responded that a public meeting will be held at least at the completion of each task. Mr. Donovan also noted that there are many bills in the legislature associated with rail noting that his ultimate goal is passenger rail service to Montreal.
- Mr. O'Keefe noted that he and Mr. Davis had recently attended a Congressional event in Washington DC. He noted the good quality of food served in the Downeaster Café.

Vote to adjourn: (meeting was 1hr 15 min)

Motion: Mr. Eisenstein

Seconded: McKinnon

Accepted: All

NEXT MEETING: March 27, 2017

Downeaster Performance Summary

Fiscal Year 2017 To Date

July 1, 2016 - February 28, 2017

Ridership						
	FY2016	FY2017	FY2017	Variance	Var	Passenger
	Actual	Actual	Target	to Target	%	Miles
July	37,349	51,402	51,305	97	0%	4,376,310
August	46,215	53,627	53,165	462	1%	4,532,238
September	40,622	45,315	34,330	10,985	32%	3,661,021
October	41,868	38,979	26,000	12,979	50%	2,529,061
November	39,588	35,599	25,000	10,599	42%	2,396,395
December	38,010	38,259	39,750	(1,491)	-4%	3,107,583
January	30,949	37,915	33,500	4,415	13%	3,093,267
February	35,954	37,275	36,000	1,275	4%	-
Total	310,555	338,371	299,050	39,321	13%	23,695,875

Revenue						
	FY2016	FY2017	FY2017	Variance	Var	Average
	Actual	Actual	Target	to Target	%	Fare
July	\$ 587,570	\$ 921,482	\$ 897,838	\$ 23,645	3%	\$ 17.93
August	\$ 819,638	\$ 942,790	\$ 943,679	\$ (889)	0%	\$ 17.58
September	\$ 696,095	\$ 752,830	\$ 585,498	\$ 167,332	29%	\$ 16.61
October	\$ 707,151	\$ 550,988	\$ 418,860	\$ 132,128	32%	\$ 14.14
November	\$ 689,592	\$ 539,612	\$ 408,750	\$ 130,862	32%	\$ 15.16
December	\$ 670,971	\$ 660,248	\$ 699,600	\$ (39,352)	-6%	\$ 17.26
January	\$ 523,381	\$ 651,837	\$ 561,125	\$ 90,712	16%	\$ 17.19
February	\$ 618,814	\$ 675,094	\$ 621,000	\$ 54,094	9%	\$ 18.11
Total	5,313,211	\$ 5,694,881	5,136,349	558,532	7%	16.83

Customer Satisfaction			
February	Downeaster	Amtrak	FY to Date
Overall Customer Satisfaction	89	85	90
Value of Amtrak Service for Price Paid	86	81	88
Overall Cleanliness of Train	89	85	90
Clarity of Announcements	80	80	83
Friendliness/Helpfulness of Train Conductor	90	89	91
Friendliness/Helpfulness of Café Car Personnel	95	87	93
Quality/Freshness of Food in Café Car	86	78	85
Overall Experience in Café Car	87	80	85

Performance					
Calendar	October	November	December	January	February
2017	75%	66%	61%	82%	71%
2016	67%	85%	86%	79%	78%

PRELIMINARY VARIANCE REPORT - FEBRUARY 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	675,094	621,000	54,094	5,694,882	5,136,350	558,532	11%
Food Service Revenue	54,321	52,853	1,468	435,206	418,739	16,467	4%
Advertising Revenue	1,677	0	1,677	4,345	1,000	3,345	335%
Parking Lot Revenue	31,900	26,899	5,001	302,540	245,474	57,066	23%
Interest on Accounts	175	295	(121)	1,094	2,360	(1,266)	-54%
Other Revenue	37,064	21,225	15,839	219,913	165,820	54,093	33%
Total Operating Revenues	800,230	722,272	77,958	6,657,981	5,969,743	688,238	12%
Expenses							
Wages and Benefits							
Permanent Full-Time	30,226	30,820	(594)	246,059	248,788	(2,729)	(0)
Benefits	18,830	19,068	(238)	149,276	150,794	(1,518)	(0)
Total Wages and Benefits	49,056	49,888	(832)	395,334	399,582	(4,248)	-1%
Administration							
Office Expenses	8,281	9,875	(1,594)	77,724	80,510	(2,786)	(0)
Professional Services	11,037	9,750	1,287	104,427	98,250	6,177	0
Insurance	2,478	2,595	(117)	19,807	20,010	(203)	(0)
Board Operations	1,419	1,416	3	12,210	11,064	1,146	0
Total Administration Expenses	23,215	23,636	(421)	214,168	209,834	4,334	2%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Operations	1,229,191	1,229,734	(544)	9,410,218	9,410,236	(18)	0%
Train Fuel Cost	149,320	171,000	(21,680)	1,047,681	1,368,000	(320,319)	-23%
PanAm	114,360	114,360	0	723,199	888,576	(165,377)	-19%
Other Train Operations	553	3,276	(2,723)	13,804	26,708	(12,904)	(2)
Insurance	0	2,300	(2,300)	2,000	15,800	(13,800)	-87%
Layover Facility	35,406	22,018	13,388	170,743	156,603	14,141	9%
Capital Maintenance	0	0	0	196,257	201,450	(5,193)	-3%
Total Train Operations	1,528,829	1,542,688	(13,859)	11,563,903	12,067,373	(503,470)	-4%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	29,900	29,900	0	268,515	268,042	473	0%
Platform Ins	10,972	11,325	(353)	87,401	87,900	(499)	-1%
Station Platform Leases	0	0	0	32,004	33,404	(1,400)	-4%
Other Station Improvements	0	0	0	2,100	2,100	0	0
Total Station Operations	40,872	41,225	(353)	390,020	391,446	(1,426)	0%
Food Service							
Regular	75,446	66,066	9,380	551,350	523,542	27,808	5%
Total Food Service	75,446	66,066	9,380	551,350	523,542	27,808	5%
Marketing	30,180	30,200	(20)	304,292	303,700	592	0%
Total Marketing	30,180	30,200	(20)	304,292	303,700	592	0%
Total Expenses	1,747,598	1,753,703	(6,105)	13,419,067	13,895,477	(476,410)	-3%
Additional Funding Required	947,368	1,031,431	(84,063)	6,761,086	7,925,734	(1,164,648)	-15%
Cost Recovery	46%	41%		50%	43%		