
Board Briefing Materials

February 22, 2021

Virtual Meeting

10:00am Public Session



For More Information

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**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY**



NNEPRA FY2021 Action Plan

FY21 will focus on weathering the COVID-19 pandemic, recovering from its impacts, and preparing for an unknown and new “normal” going forward.

Core Objectives:

- **Support and maintain a culture of health and safety.**
- **Provide a high-quality service at levels which meet the needs of the travelling public.**
- **Seek and secure funding opportunities to support operations and service improvement projects.**
- **Remain informed, nimble and positioned to adjust and adapt to changing circumstances.**

Goals/Action Items:

- **Continue to implement, support and/or communicate practices which maximize the health and safety of our riders, our front-line service providers, and our team.**
- **Develop a Business Plan and strategic framework to address the challenges and opportunities in the post-pandemic world.**
- **Improve communication with riders and keep our partners and stakeholders engaged with efforts to enhance service.**
- **Advance Capital Projects to Improve Safety, Service Quality and Efficiency**
 - Wells Siding Project
 - State of Good Repair Projects
 - Positive Train Control
- **Explore Options for Service Improvement/Expansions**
 - Portland Station options and alternatives on the Mainline
 - A platform at West Falmouth Crossing
 - Enhanced connectivity to Amtrak’s national network
 - Other planning initiatives as appropriate

NNEPRA BOARD of DIRECTORS

February 22, 2021

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Virtual Zoom Meeting

10:00am Vote to open meeting

- Welcome and Introductions
 - Ground rules for virtual format
- Approval of Minutes from January 11, 2021 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
- Finance Update
 - Approval of Variance Report
- Project Updates
- GPCOG Presentation on *Transit Tomorrow Strategic Plan*
- Other Business
- Public Comment

Next Meeting: March 22, 2021



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

January 11th, 2021

Directors in Attendance via Zoom Teleconference:

Chairman John Melrose, Chair; Mr. Dana Connors; Mr. Brian Hobart; Mr. Steve Lyons; Ms. Nina Fisher

Staff in Attendance via Zoom Teleconference:

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

Interested Parties via Zoom Teleconference:

Mr. Ralph Cusack, Nexdine; Mr. Greg Girard, Nexdine; Ms. Kathleen DeSilva, Rinck Advertising; Dean Rybolt, Amtrak.

Opening Remarks

Motion to Open Public Session at 10:02am

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

Motion to Approve the November 23th, 2020 Minutes

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. McKinnon

Accepted: All

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn reviewed the Downeaster performance report noting ridership and revenue roughly 15% and 17% of last year for the same period. These percentages are in line with Amtrak nationally and not unexpected in given the lack of demand factors. Extra cleaning and other Amtrak protocols, including 50% capacity and face covering requirements continue to be in place.

Natalie Bogart provided an update on the Downeaster marketing and communication strategy. Safety messaging and brand awareness have been the focus of digital media with very little paid advertising and mass media, aligning strategies with Amtrak when appropriate.

Dean Rybolt, Amtrak, noted that passenger feedback has been positive and that Amtrak has been encouraged and is satisfied with the comfort level expressed by crews. Chairman Melrose inquired about the COVID vaccination status of Amtrak crews. Dean noted that crews are currently in Tier 2 within the State of Maine and that no timeline has been released.

Ralph Cusack and Greg Girard from NexDine provided an update of Café service noting positive Customer feedback and an increase in Café patronage percentages noting that the enhanced level of passenger engagement will continue moving forward.

VARIANCE REPORT– Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn reviewed the variance report noting the importance of CARES Act funding.

Motion to Approve Variance Report

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

Patricia Quinn reviewed NNEPRA's FY20 Audit and procedures put in place moving forward to address the two findings relating to the timing of the booking of expenditures.

Motion to Approve the FY20 Audit

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

William Gayle provided an overview of the 2020 Legislative Council Report.

Motion to Approve the 2020 Legislative Council Report

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

PROJECT UPDATES – James Russell

James Russell provided an update of projects including the capital maintenance program noting that the Wells project continues to work through NEPA and provided an update on the work occurring adjacent to the Portland Layover Facility.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn reported that cash sales have resumed on the Downeaster and that staff continues to work with other States and Amtrak on additional federal relief funding. NNEPRA continues to work with PACTS and the Transit Committee on the long-range Transit Tomorrow plan.

Chairman Melrose asked for an update on the funding available for positive train control. Patricia Quinn noted both Amtrak and Pan Am Railways are working to develop a PTC implementation plan.

Chairman Melrose noted that vacancies on the NNEPRA Board will need to be acted on during this legislative session and concluded the meeting noting that the 20-year Amtrak operating agreement was being renewed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

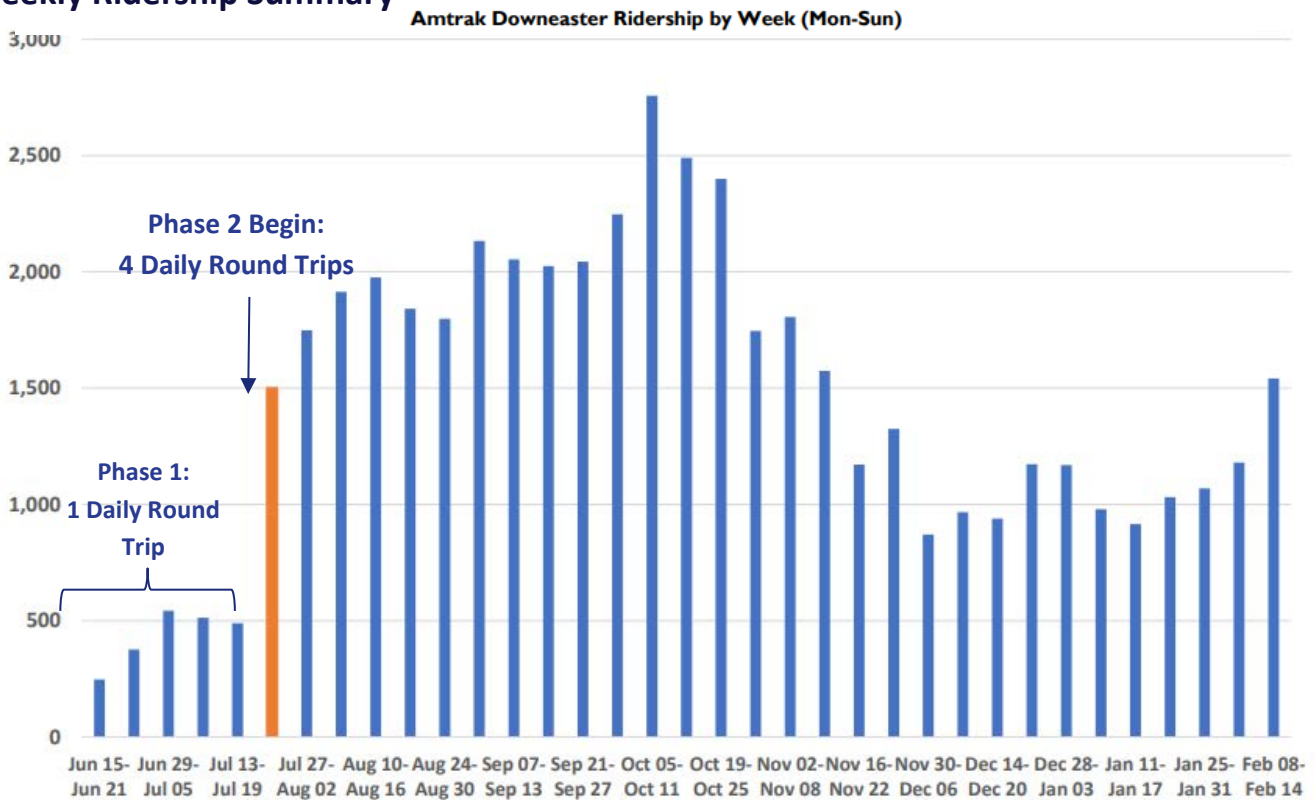
There was no public comment.

Downeaster Pandemic Recovery Period Summary

FY2021 Performance			
Period	Trains Operated	Riders	Ticket Revenue
Jul-20	122	4,028	\$ 99,833
Aug-20	248	8,099	\$ 187,759
Sep-20	240	8,538	\$ 189,765
Oct-20	248	10,383	\$ 234,442
Nov-20	240	6,233	\$ 140,090
Dec-20	244	4,408	\$ 98,587
Jan-21	248	4,447	\$ 96,657
Total	1,590	46,136	\$ 1,047,133

Note: Ticket Revenue not reflected in variance report due to CARES Act funding calculation.

Weekly Ridership Summary



On Time Performance

FY2021 Draft Budget Variance Report December 2020

NNEPRA Draft FY21 Board Variance Report Dec-20

Revenues	Current Month				Fiscal Year to Date			
	Dec. Actual	Dec. Budget	Variance	Percent	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue								
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ -	\$ 342,550	\$ (342,550)		\$ -	\$ 1,253,400	\$ (1,253,400)	0.0%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 9,595	\$ 20,150	\$ (10,555)	-52%	\$ 62,007	\$ 75,800	\$ (13,793)	-22.2%
Advertising Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 731	\$ 13,075	\$ (12,344)	-94%	\$ 14,297	\$ 22,300	\$ (8,003)	0.0%
Interest and Other Revenue	\$ 14,177	\$ 15,000	\$ (823)	-5%	\$ 50,001	\$ 90,000	\$ (39,999)	-80.0%
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 24,503	\$ 390,775	\$ (366,272)	-94%	\$ 126,305	\$ 1,441,500	\$ (1,315,195)	-1041.3%
Expenses								
Administration								
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 72,556	\$ 69,000	\$ 3,556	5%	\$ 420,057	\$ 414,000	\$ 6,057	1.4%
Office Expenses	\$ 8,092	\$ 9,000	\$ (908)	-11%	\$ 57,773	\$ 54,000	\$ 3,773	6.5%
Professional Services	\$ 8,645	\$ 10,000	\$ (1,355)	-16%	\$ 84,415	\$ 70,000	\$ 14,415	17.1%
Insurance	\$ 2,246	\$ 2,246	\$ 0	0%	\$ 14,135	\$ 14,241	\$ (106)	-0.7%
Board Operations	\$ 358	\$ 1,000	\$ (642)	-179%	\$ 3,346	\$ 6,000	\$ (2,654)	-79%
Total Administration Expenses	\$ 91,897	\$ 91,246	\$ 651	1%	\$ 579,726	\$ 558,241	\$ 21,485	3.7%
Train Operations								
Amtrak Operations	\$ 669,427	\$ 1,541,291	\$ (871,864)	-130%	\$ 4,016,562	\$ 6,626,476	\$ (2,609,914)	-65.0%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ -	\$ 135,317	\$ (135,317)		\$ -	\$ 408,783	\$ (408,783)	#DIV/0!
Other Train Operations	\$ 284	\$ 5,000	\$ (4,716)		\$ 2,274	\$ 30,000	\$ (27,726)	0.0%
Facilities	\$ 16,711	\$ 20,000	\$ (3,289)	-20%	\$ 121,617	\$ 120,000	\$ 1,617	1.3%
Capital Maintenance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	#DIV/0!	\$ 9,940	\$ 10,000	\$ (60)	-0.6%
Total Train Operations	\$ 686,422	\$ 1,701,609	\$ (1,015,187)	-148%	\$ 4,150,393	\$ 7,195,260	\$ (3,044,867)	-73.4%
Station Operations								
Portland Station Rent	\$ 9,100	\$ 9,300	\$ (200)	-2%	\$ 54,600	\$ 55,800	\$ (1,200)	-2.2%
Portland Station CAMS	\$ 21,800	\$ 22,100	\$ (300)	-1%	\$ 131,100	\$ 132,600	\$ (1,500)	-1.1%
Platform Ins.	\$ 10,000	\$ 11,145	\$ (1,145)	-11%	\$ 53,436	\$ 66,873	\$ (13,436)	-25.1%
Station Platform Leases	\$ 3,813	\$ 3,813	\$ -	0%	\$ 19,064	\$ 22,877	\$ (3,812)	-20.0%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 3,500	\$ (3,500)		\$ 8,000	\$ 21,000	\$ (13,000)	0.0%
Total Station Operations	\$ 44,713	\$ 49,858	\$ (5,145)	-12%	\$ 266,201	\$ 299,149	\$ (32,949)	-12.4%
Food Service	\$ 46,806	\$ 66,800	\$ (19,994)	-43%	\$ 245,397	\$ 341,480	\$ (96,083)	-39.2%
Marketing	\$ 25,878	\$ 41,667	\$ (15,789)	-61%	\$ 204,239	\$ 250,000	\$ (45,761)	-22.4%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 920,219	\$ 2,341,954	\$ (1,421,736)	-154%	\$ 5,572,261	\$ 10,085,629	\$ (4,513,369)	-81.0%
Additional Funding Required	\$ 895,716	\$ 1,951,179	\$ (1,055,464)	-118%	\$ 5,445,956	\$ 8,644,129	\$ (3,198,173)	-58.7%

Note: NNEPRA has a net fixed-price agreement with Amtrak based on a national formula derived to allocated Amtrak CARES Act funding among Amtrak state partners. As such, Amtrak ticket revenue and some other train-related expenses are not reflected in this report.