
Board Briefing Materials

October 25, 2021

Location:
Virtual Meeting

1:00pm Public Session



For More Information

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**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY**

NNEPRA FY2022 Strategic Workplan

NNEPRA was established under Maine law for the general purpose of supporting the operation of passenger rail service. (Section 8111). To accomplish this purpose, NNEPRA shall in part:

1. Take all actions reasonably necessary to initiate, establish, or reinstate regularly scheduled passenger rail service between points within this State and points within and outside this State. (Section 8003)
2. Seek and use all funds necessary to pay all expenses of this passenger rail service that are not met by fares and other funds or revenues. (Section 8006)
3. Set fares at reasonable levels to encourage the use of this service. (Section 8009)
4. Adopt a budget, make allocations and account transfers subject to the approval of Maine's Transportation Commissioner. (Section 8116)

In fulfillment of these statutory expectations, and in recognition of the 20th Anniversary of Downeaster service, the NNEPRA Board of Directors adopts the following FY2022 workplan:

1. Meet high standards for transportation safety including the provision of robust public health safeguards.
2. Maximize public awareness of the Downeaster service, attract new riders and retain existing riders through advertising, promotions, digital, traditional and earned media.
3. Support efforts to provide customers with a travel experience that consistently exceeds their expectations, delivers value and benefit, and contributes to a modern, integrated public transportation system.
4. Support the reduction of vehicle miles travelled and State climate change initiatives by improving service accessibility and quality by taking steps necessary to accomplish the following:
 - a. Extend double track and construct station improvements in Wells to improve service reliability, increase frequency and enhance efficiency.
 - b. Relocate the station in Portland to the railroad mainline to reduce travel times, improve access and operating efficiency.
 - c. Build a new station in Falmouth to improve access to I-95 and communities north of Portland.
 - d. Initiate passenger rail service on the Rockland Branch to expand access and provide traffic relief alternatives to coastal Route 1.
 - e. Prepare for new trainsets purchased by Amtrak which will replace legacy equipment and significantly reduce air emissions.
 - f. Collaborate with MaineDOT on studies and planning efforts associated with rail improvements and service expansions.
 - g. Participate as appropriate in national and regional planning initiatives to enhance access and connectivity.
5. Secure favorable terms for the continuation and expansion of passenger rail service to include the following:
 - a. Surface Transportation Board proceedings related to the Pan Am merger with CSX Transportation
 - b. Amtrak/NNEPRA operating agreement renewal
 - c. Downeaster Municipal Station agreement renewals
 - d. Portland Transportation Center agreement extension/renewal
6. Increase state and federal operational and capital funding opportunities:
 - a. Maximize the benefit of COVID-related assistance
 - b. Monitor federal discretionary grant opportunities including CRISI, RAISE, and State of Good Repair to supplement needs for applicable projects
 - c. Ensure NNEPRA is positioned to receive eligible federal funding made available through surface transportation reauthorization or supplemental infrastructure bills
 - d. Collaborate with MaineDOT to secure resources needed to leverage federal funding opportunities.



NNEPRA BOARD of DIRECTORS

October 25, 2021

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

1:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from September 27, 2021 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
- Finance Update
 - Approval of Variance Report
 - Review of FY2021 Audit
- Project Updates
- Other Business

Next Meeting: November 22, 2021



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority****September 27, 2021****Directors in Attendance:**

Chairman John Melrose; Mr. Dana Connors; Mr. Brian Hobart; Mr. Steve Lyons; Mr. Nate Howard;

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn; Mr. Brian Beeler; Ms. Leslie Guerrette; Mr. James Russell; Mr. William Gayle; Ms. Natalie Bogart

Interested Parties:

Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Ms. Allison Harris; Mr. Eric Conrad; Mr. Mark Bickford; Mr. Noah Potts; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Ms. Jane Brophy, Amtrak; Mr. Nathaniel Rosenblatt; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines.

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. William Gayle went through the roll call. Chairman Melrose noted the resolution declaring a limited emergency due to the ongoing spread of COVID-19 and requested a vote for approval.

Motion to Approve Resolution of Limited Emergency

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. Connors

Accepted: All

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Melrose open the floor to public comment. No public comments made.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to Approve the August 30th, 2021 Minutes

Motion: Mr. Hobart

Seconded: Mr. Lyons

Accepted: All

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the performance report for August 2021 noting that the travel patterns have changed this summer and that weekend travel was driving ridership to a higher degree than pre-COVID.

MARKETING UPDATE – Natalie Bogart

Natalie Bogart discussed the marketing efforts, to include paid media and grassroots outreach, that will continue through the fall and the holidays. Natalie noted that the 20th Anniversary of Downeaster service will be held on December 15, 2021. TrainRiders Northeast will also be hosting their annual meeting that day.

VARIANCE REPORT– Leslie Guerrette

Leslie Guerrette reviewed the draft Budget Variance Report. Total expenses for the month were within 1% of budgeted amount and year to date are within 6%.

Chairman Melrose asked about any anticipated changes in fuel costs in the future? Patricia Quinn responded that Amtrak has not indicated a significant change. Patricia Quinn noted that insurance costs are the most volatile and may need to be above what has been budgeted.

Chairman Melrose asked if there was any initial comment on the audit. Patricia Quinn noted that there were no preliminary findings.

Motion to Approve the Variance Report

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

FY22 WORKPLAN – Patricia Quinn

Chairman Melrose discussed the draft FY22 Strategic Workplan that was in the briefing materials. The plan will help guide the priorities in the year. Chairman Melrose asked if there were any comments from the Board. Director Hobart noted he was comfortable with the priorities outlined in the plan. Director Connors agreed that the priorities outlined are reasonable and that he was comfortable with the plan. Director Lyons noted he had read the plan and was likewise approved with the direction.

Motion to Approve the FY22 Strategic Workplan

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

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Chairman Melrose asked about if MaineDOT had anything to report. Nate Howard responded that he did not at this time.

Patricia Quinn noted work continues on the relocation of Portland station as well as on a potential new station in Falmouth. Patricia Quinn noted the passing of Downeaster Ambassadors Ed Bonney and Mike Duprey as well as Sue Maxell, a long time Downeaster Café attendant. NNEPRA is working with the town of Old Orchard Beach for the installation of a plaque to commemorate Ms. Maxell in recognition of her dedication to the Downeaster service.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Noah Potts asked about the possibility of electrifying the rail line. Brian Beeler responded that the new Amtrak trainsets would be able to operate on electrified lines, but there were no plans to electrify the line at this time.

Patricia Quinn noted she will be in Milwaukee for the remainder of the week to attend a series of passenger rail related meetings.

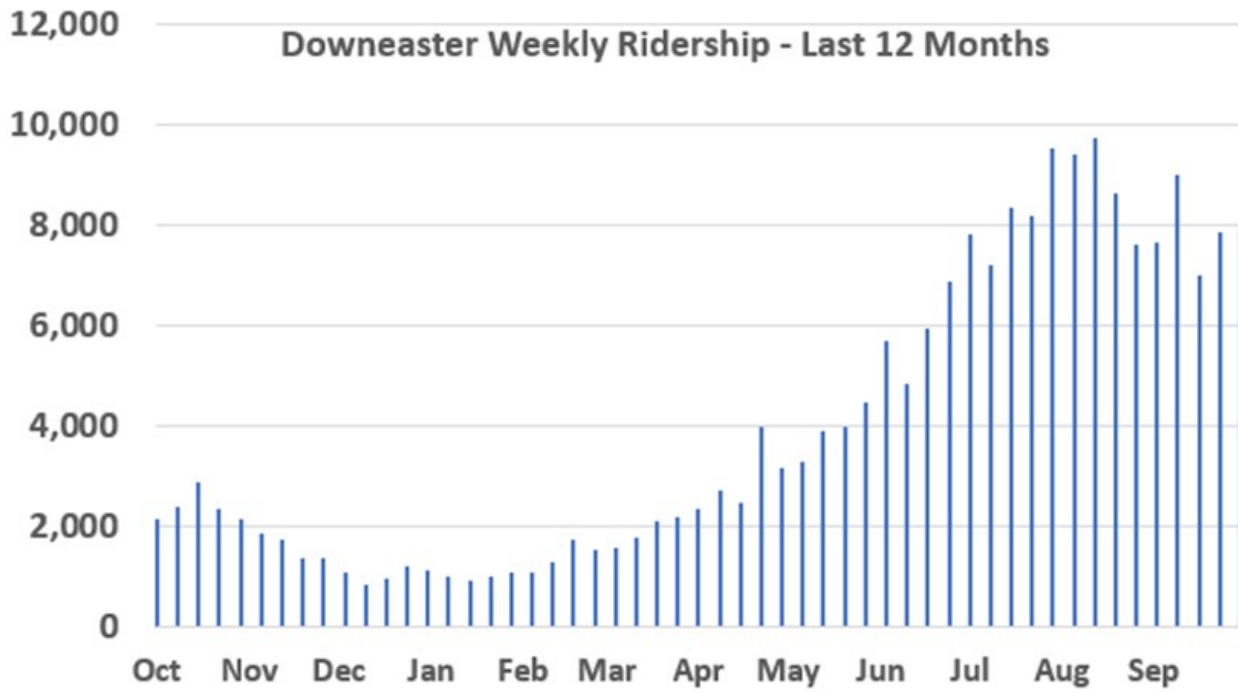
Chairman Melrose that if Board members are comfortable meeting in this format? All agreed that they were comfortable meeting via Zoom in October.

Meeting adjourned via roll call vote.

Downeaster FY2022 Performance

Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. 2019	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Sep 21	FY22	32,682	23,648	9,034	68%	\$ 632,226	\$ 443,404	\$ 188,822	\$19.34
Aug 21	FY22	38,534	32,632	5,902	63%	\$ 751,210	\$ 611,859	\$ 139,351	\$19.49
Jul 21	FY22	37,260	30,536	6,724	68%	\$ 726,323	\$ 572,553	\$ 153,770	\$19.49
FY22 To Date		108,476	86,817	21,659	66%	\$2,109,759	\$1,627,817	\$ 481,943	\$19.45
Jun 21	FY21	25,668	27,000	-1,332	53%	\$ 515,857	\$ 459,000	\$ 56,857	\$ 20.10
May 21	FY21	18,643	26,350	-7,707	42%	\$ 379,959	\$ 447,950	\$ (67,991)	\$ 20.38
Apr 21	FY21	13,054	25,500	-12,446	27%	\$ 256,539	\$ 433,500	\$ (176,961)	\$ 19.65
Mar 21	FY21	8,606	23,250	-14,644	18%	\$ 170,785	\$ 395,250	\$ (224,465)	\$ 19.84
Feb 21	FY21	5,756	21,000	-15,244	14%	\$ 127,509	\$ 357,000	\$ (229,491)	\$ 22.15
Jan 21	FY21	4,447	21,700	-17,253	12%	\$ 96,657	\$ 368,900	\$ (272,243)	\$ 21.74
Dec 20	FY21	4,408	20,150	-15,742	10%	\$ 98,587	\$ 342,550	\$ (243,963)	\$ 22.37
Nov 20	FY21	6,233	18,000	-11,767	13%	\$ 140,090	\$ 306,000	\$ (165,910)	\$ 22.48
Oct 20	FY21	10,383	17,050	-6,667	21%	\$ 234,442	\$ 289,850	\$ (55,408)	\$ 22.58

Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Trains Operated	Passenger Miles	On Time Performance		Downeaster Café			CSI
				End Point	Customer	Sales	Capture	Check	
Sep-21	FY22	296	2,730,658	70%	81%	\$ 46,443	17%	\$ 8.34	88
Aug 21	FY22	306	3,287,802	66%	77%	\$ 63,917	20%	\$ 8.27	89
Jul-21	FY22	298	3,208,359	64%	73%	\$ 59,565	19%	\$ 8.38	89
FY22 To Date		900	9,226,819	67%	77%	\$ 169,925	19%	\$ 8.33	89
Jun 21	FY21	296	2,200,782	58%	67%	\$ 43,730	22%	\$ 7.69	86
May 21	FY21	306	1,610,195	60%	71%	\$ 30,273	21%	\$ 7.63	90
Apr 21	FY21	236	1,100,506	75%	83%	\$ 17,743	20%	\$ 6.80	88
Mar 21	FY21	248	685,967	71%	82%	\$ 12,395	20%	\$ 7.28	93
Feb 21	FY21	224	449,228	76%	85%	\$ 8,130	21%	\$ 6.69	93
Jan 21	FY21	248	355,362	79%	84%	\$ 7,097	23%	\$ 6.77	93
Dec 20	FY21	244	367,574	62%	74%	\$ 7,349	23%	\$ 7.01	88
Nov 20	FY21	240	519,168	62%	78%	\$ 7,983	20%	\$ 6.39	88
Oct 20	FY21	248	865,300	52%	65%	\$ 13,125	18%	\$ 7.04	89



NNEPRA Draft FY22 Budget Variance Report

July 2021- September 2021

Revenues	Current Month				Fiscal Year to Date			
	September Actual	September Budget	Variance	%	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue								
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 632,226	\$ 443,404	\$ 188,822	43%	\$ 2,109,759	\$ 1,627,817	\$ 481,942	30%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 57,205	\$ 47,094	\$ 10,111	21%	\$ 161,417	\$ 125,290	\$ 36,127	29%
Advertising Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 13,010	\$ 22,255	\$ (9,245)	-42%	\$ 88,525	\$ 71,258	\$ 17,267	24%
Interest and Other Revenue	\$ 15,000	\$ 13,400	\$ 1,600	12%	\$ 82,888	\$ 40,200	\$ 42,688	106%
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 717,441	\$ 526,153	\$ 191,288	36%	\$ 2,442,589	\$ 1,864,565	\$ 578,023	31%
Expenses								
Administration								
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 65,833	\$ 68,000	\$ (2,167)	-3%	\$ 195,675	\$ 204,000	\$ (8,325)	-4%
Office Expenses	\$ 7,135	\$ 8,000	\$ (865)	-11%	\$ 23,321	\$ 24,000	\$ (679)	-3%
Professional Services	\$ 30,184	\$ 56,000	\$ (25,816)	-46%	\$ 82,488	\$ 104,000	\$ (21,512)	-21%
Insurance	\$ 482	\$ -	\$ 482	-	\$ 3,258	\$ -	\$ 3,258	-
Board Operations	\$ 317	\$ 1,250	\$ (933)	-75%	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,750	\$ (1,350)	-36%
Total Administration Expenses	\$ 103,951	\$ 133,250	\$ (29,299)	-22%	\$ 307,141	\$ 335,750	\$ (28,609)	-9%
Train Operations								
Amtrak Operations	\$ 1,308,496	\$ 1,308,496	\$ -	0%	\$ 3,887,843	\$ 3,925,501	\$ (37,657)	-1.0%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 160,446	\$ 160,446	\$ -	0%	\$ 486,052	\$ 480,730	\$ 5,322	1.1%
Other Train Operations	\$ 142,500	\$ 142,500	\$ -	0%	\$ 400,429	\$ 427,500	\$ (27,071)	0.0%
CRSSA Relief Credit	\$ (216,034)	\$ (216,034)	\$ -	0%	\$ (1,216,034)	\$ (1,216,034)	\$ -	0.0%
Facilities	\$ 34,772	\$ 32,000	\$ 2,772	8%	\$ 82,154	\$ 90,784	\$ (8,630)	-10.5%
FY22 Capital Maintenance	\$ 132,525	\$ 140,000	\$ (7,475)	-	\$ 161,180	\$ 440,000	\$ (278,820)	-
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,562,705	\$ 1,567,408	\$ (4,702)	0%	\$ 3,801,624	\$ 4,148,481	\$ (346,856)	-9.1%
Station Operations								
Portland Station Rent	\$ 9,100	\$ 9,200	\$ (100)	-1%	\$ 9,100	\$ 27,600	\$ (18,500)	-203.3%
Portland Station CAMS	\$ 21,800	\$ 22,000	\$ (200)	-1%	\$ 65,400	\$ 66,000	\$ (600)	-0.9%
Platform Ins.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	\$ 14,298	\$ 33,436	\$ (19,139)	-
Station Platform Leases	\$ 14,612	\$ 10,000	\$ -	-	\$ 15,907	\$ 30,000	\$ (14,093)	-
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ (2,000)	-	\$ 1,574	\$ 6,000	\$ (4,426)	0.0%
Total Station Operations	\$ 45,512	\$ 43,200	\$ 2,312	5%	\$ 106,278	\$ 163,036	\$ (56,758)	-53.4%
Food Service	\$ 82,278	\$ 61,712	\$ 20,566	25%	\$ 232,671	\$ 197,694	\$ 34,978	15.0%
Marketing	\$ 27,930	\$ 45,000	\$ (17,070)	-61%	\$ 81,192	\$ 135,000	\$ (53,808)	-66.3%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 2,539,817	\$ 2,376,722	\$ 163,094	6%	\$ 6,971,496	\$ 6,844,526	\$ 126,970	1.8%
Additional Funding Required	\$ 1,822,377	\$ 1,850,570	\$ (28,193)	-2%	\$ 4,528,909	\$ 4,979,962	\$ (451,052)	-10.0%

The Budget Variance may reflect work elements items complete but not yet invoiced.

