
Board Briefing Materials

January 24, 2022

Location:
Virtual Meeting

1:00pm Public Session



For More Information

 207-780-1000 x 105

 info@nnepra.com



**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

January 24, 2022

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

1:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from November 22, 2021 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
- Finance Update
 - Approval of October Variance Report
- Marketing Update
- Project Updates
- Other Business
 - Approval of FY21 Legislative Council Report Approval of Annual Legislative Council Report response to Section 12023 to include:
 - Per subsection A: A list of procurements exceeding \$10,000 for which the competitive procurement process was waived;
 - Per subsection B: A list of contributions exceeding \$1,000; and,
 - Per subsection C: A description of changes made to applicable written policies and procedures.
 - Code of Ethics Policy

Next Meeting: February 28th, 2022



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

November 22, 2021

Directors in Attendance via Zoom Teleconference:

Chairman John Melrose, Chair; Mr. Jim Cohen; Mr. Brian Hobart; Mr. Steve Lyons; Mr. Nate Howard; Ms. Carol Murray

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance via Zoom Teleconference:

Ms. Patricia Quinn; Mr Brian Beeler; Mr. William Gayle; Ms. Leslie Guerrette; Mr. Stephen Houdlette; Mr. James Russell

Interested Parties via Zoom Teleconference:

Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Nat Rosenblatt, Farrell, Rosenblatt & Russell; Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Mr. Irwin Gratz, Maine Public Radio; Mr. David Willauer; Mr. Mark Bickford; Ms. Alison Harris.

OPENING REMARKS

Opened meeting at 1:00pm.

Mr. William Gayle conducted the roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to Approve the October 25, 2021 Minutes

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

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of Downeaster ridership and revenue Fiscal Year 2022 to date (July 2021-October 2021) noting that October 21 ridership was 74 percent of October 19 ridership.

Patricia Quinn reviewed the performance report. MBTA and Pan Am construction/maintenance projects caused a number of train delays and required service modifications.

Four round trips will operate on Thanksgiving Day 2021 in response to requests from the public for a balance day-trip schedule.

VARIANCE REPORT– Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the variance report for September 2021 noting a higher than usual “other revenue” amount due to a year-end adjustment related to the Amtrak Guest Rewards program.

Patricia Quinn noted on the expense side, Patricia Quinn explained that the balance of the Amtrak CRSSA credit (216,034) was applied in September and that the ARPA relief as a credit will be applied monthly throughout the remainder of the fiscal year.

Chairman Melrose asked for clarification on how food service is performing. Patricia Quinn responded that the budgeted cost recovery ratio was 65% through September, and that the actual rate was approximately 70%.

Motion to Approve the September Variance Report

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

Chairman Melrose suggested that the Board only be provided with variance reports for months for which the substantial invoices has been received to provide a more accurate financial status.

ADOPTION OF SFY21 AUDIT – Chairman Melrose

Chairman Melrose noted last month NNEPRA's audit firm, WIPFLI, presented the findings of NNEPRA's annual financial audit. Board members were provided with printed copies of the reports, and they are also posted on NNEPRA.com. No comments or questions related to the audit were received.

Motion to Approve the FY21 Audit

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

MARKETING UPDATE – Natalie Bogart

Natalie Bogart reported on efforts to promote Downeaster travel during the upcoming Thanksgiving travel period. Efforts to commemorate the 20 year anniversary of the Amtrak Downeaster are planned to thank crews, Station Ambassadors, and passengers for continued involvement and work to sustain and improve service the past 20 years. A landing page showcasing a video and timeline highlighting accomplishments over the past two decades will soon be live on the AmtrakDowneaster.com website. Additional marketing efforts are underway to recover ridership during the typically slow ridership period between January and February.

PROJECTS UPDATE – James Russell

Jim Russell provided highlights of the projects completed during the month, noting that a grade crossing at Elm Street in Exeter, NH had been completed. The Portland North Project, which replaced 8,000 ties between Portland and Brunswick, will be complete by Thanksgiving.

Chairman Melrose asked when the next tie replacement project would occur. Jim Russell noted that the next project would typically be scheduled for fall 2022, but that no specific plans are in place pending the CSX merger with Pan Am.

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the project variance report.

Chairman Melrose asked if it was expected that unfinished work elements from past projects would be completed. Patricia Quinn noted that NNERPA is currently working on an agreement which would sunset past incomplete project elements.

Patricia Quinn noted that the FY19 Wells CRISI grant agreement with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is ready to be signed and provided an overview of a two-fold event highlighting the 20th anniversary of the Downeaster as well as a groundbreaking for the Wells Area Improvement Project. The project sets the stage to improve reliability for freight and passenger trains and operate a 6th round trip between Brunswick and Wells.

Motion to Authorize the Executive Director to execute the FY19 CRISI Grant Agreement with the FRA for the Wells Area Improvement Project:

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

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Nathaniel Rosenblatt noted the current schedule of the CSX acquisition of Pan Am includes hearings on January 13th and 14th, 2022 with a final decision by the Surface Transportation Board (STB) in April, effective May 2022.

Brian Beeler reported that QuikTrak machines have been replaced with new Amtrak ticket kiosks in most Downeaster station locations. The new kiosk is not yet operational in Brunswick due to a technical issue being address by Amtrak and the outdoor QuikTrak in Exeter will not be replaced until a later date. Feedback regarding the new kiosks has been very positive from the public and station communities.

Patricia Quinn provided an update on a number of other items:

- Efforts to relocate Portland Station and add a station in W. Falmouth station continue.
- The potential for a pilot project for excursion service to Rockland, ME is still under consideration. Staff has received a number of emails from members of the public supporting service on the Rockland branch noting that we continue to work with Amtrak and MaineDOT on this initiative.
- A new service agreement with Amtrak cannot be finalized due to regulatory issues being worked on with Federal Transit Administration (FTA). A six-month extension to the 2-Year Service agreement scheduled to expire on December 14, 2021 has been executed.
- Updated station agreements have been signed by Old Orchard Beach, Saco, and Exeter. Agreement for Durham, Dover and Wells remain under review.
- NNEPRA staff continues to work on the various planning efforts with GPCOG/PACTS and with MaineDOT on the State Rail Plan.

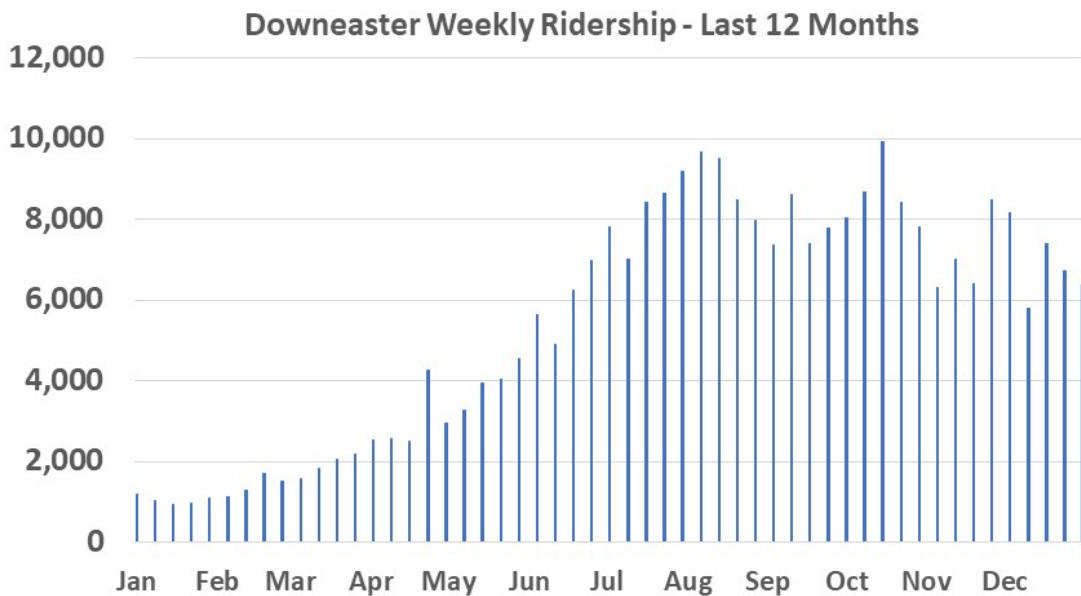
PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. David Willauer congratulated NNEPRA for 20 years of service for the Downeaster and noted it was great to see all the progress since the beginning of service.

Meeting adjourned via roll call vote.

Downeaster FY2022 Performance to Date

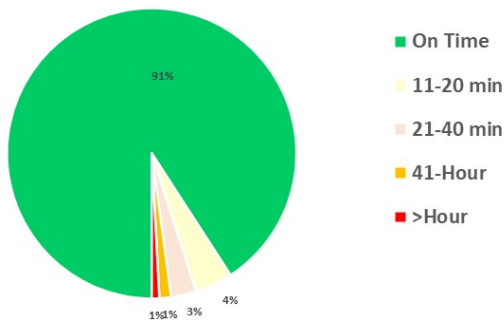
Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. 2019	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Dec 21	FY22	28,966	23,481	5,485	63%	\$ 604,116	\$ 434,406	\$ 169,710	\$20.86
Nov 21	FY22	32,722	25,562	7,160	69%	\$ 617,699	\$ 472,905	\$ 144,794	\$18.88
Oct 21	FY22	37,383	25,308	12,075	74%	\$ 748,767	\$ 474,517	\$ 274,250	\$20.03
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		207,547	161,168	46,379	67%	\$ 4,080,342	\$ 3,009,645	\$ 1,070,697	\$19.66
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



Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months

Period	FY	Trains Operated	Passenger Miles	On Time Performance		Downeaster Café		CSI
				End Point	Customer	Capture Ratio	Check AVG	
Dec-21	FY22	308	2,568,592	87%	91%	18%	\$ 8.60	87
Nov 21	FY22	297	2,566,478	66%	76%	16%	\$ 7.85	88
Oct-21	FY22	306	3,257,121	71%	79%	17%	\$ 8.03	89
Sep 21	FY22	296	2,730,658	70%	81%	17%	\$ 8.43	89
Aug-21	FY22	306	3,287,802	66%	77%	20%	\$ 8.27	86
Jul 21	FY22	298	3,208,359	64%	73%	19%	\$ 8.38	90
FY22 To Date		1,811	17,619,010	71%	79%	18%	\$ 8.26	88
Jun 21	FY21	296	2,200,782	58%	67%	22%	\$ 7.69	88
May 21	FY21	306	1,610,195	60%	71%	21%	\$ 7.63	93
Apr 21	FY21	236	1,100,506	75%	83%	20%	\$ 6.80	93
Mar 21	FY21	248	685,967	71%	82%	20%	\$ 7.28	93
Feb 21	FY21	224	449,228	76%	85%	21%	\$ 6.69	88
Jan 21	FY21	248	355,362	79%	84%	23%	\$ 6.77	88

Delay Intensity (By Rider)



NNEPRA Draft FY22 Budget Variance Report

July 2021- November 2021

Revenues	Current Month				Fiscal Year to Date			
	November Actual	November Budget	Variance	%	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue								
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 617,699	\$ 472,905	\$ 144,794	31%	\$ 3,476,225	\$ 2,575,239	\$ 900,986	35%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 34,909	\$ 36,891	\$ (1,982)	-5%	\$ 241,709	\$ 198,703	\$ 43,006	22%
Advertising Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 20,370	\$ 24,180	\$ (3,810)	-16%	\$ 126,235	\$ 118,051	\$ 8,184	7%
Interest and Other Revenue	\$ 30,256	\$ 13,400	\$ 16,856	126%	\$ 260,076	\$ 67,000	\$ 193,076	288%
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 703,234	\$ 547,376	\$ 155,858	28%	\$ 3,377,002	\$ 2,958,993	\$ 418,009	14%
Expenses								
Administration								
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 66,900	\$ 68,000	\$ (1,100)	-2%	\$ 329,537	\$ 340,000	\$ (10,463)	-3%
Office Expenses	\$ 7,715	\$ 8,000	\$ (285)	-4%	\$ 39,576	\$ 40,000	\$ (424)	-1%
Professional Services	\$ 5,670	\$ 13,500	\$ (7,831)	-58%	\$ 143,729	\$ 134,500	\$ 9,229	7%
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 5,743	\$ -	\$ 5,743	
Board Operations	\$ 1,099	\$ 1,250	\$ (151)	-12%	\$ 4,444	\$ 6,250	\$ (1,806)	-29%
Total Administration Expenses	\$ 81,384	\$ 90,750	\$ (9,367)	-10%	\$ 523,029	\$ 520,750	\$ 2,279	0%
Train Operations								
Amtrak Operations	\$ 1,309,153	\$ 1,515,658	\$ (206,505)	-16%	\$ 6,335,469	\$ 6,958,005	\$ (622,536)	-9.8%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 147,942	\$ 167,739	\$ (19,797)	-13%	\$ 852,084	\$ 818,032	\$ 34,053	4.0%
Other Train Operations	\$ 136,233	\$ 142,500	\$ (6,267)	-5%	\$ 642,321	\$ 712,500	\$ (70,179)	-10.9%
Relief Credit (ARPA)	\$ (300,000)	\$ (300,000)	\$ -	0%	\$ (1,816,034)	\$ (1,816,034)	\$ -	0.0%
Facilities	\$ 27,109	\$ 32,000	\$ (4,891)	-18%	\$ 130,514	\$ 154,784	\$ (24,270)	-18.6%
FY22 Capital Maintenance	\$ 192,066	\$ 125,000	\$ 67,066	35%	\$ 460,078	\$ 826,399	\$ (366,321)	-79.6%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,512,503	\$ 1,682,897	\$ (170,394)	-11%	\$ 6,604,432	\$ 7,653,686	\$ (1,049,254)	-15.9%
Station Operations								
Portland Station Rent	\$ 9,100	\$ 9,200	\$ (100)	-1%	\$ 45,500	\$ 46,000	\$ (500)	-1.1%
Portland Station CAMS	\$ 21,800	\$ 22,000	\$ (200)	-1%	\$ 109,000	\$ 110,000	\$ (1,000)	-0.9%
Platform Ins.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 14,298	\$ -	\$ 14,298	100.0%
Station Platform Leases	\$ -	\$ 12,000	\$ -		\$ 15,907	\$ 52,000	\$ (36,093)	-226.9%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ (2,000)		\$ 3,784	\$ 10,000	\$ (6,216)	-164.3%
Total Station Operations	\$ 30,900	\$ 45,200	\$ (14,300)	-46%	\$ 188,489	\$ 218,000	\$ (29,511)	-15.7%
Food Service	\$ 67,831	\$ 63,226	\$ 4,605	7%	\$ 370,019	\$ 323,945	\$ 46,074	12.5%
Marketing	\$ 33,303	\$ 50,000	\$ (16,697)	-50%	\$ 149,705	\$ 235,000	\$ (85,295)	-57.0%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,725,921	\$ 1,932,073	\$ (206,152)	-12%	\$ 7,835,674	\$ 8,951,381	\$ (1,115,707)	-14.2%
Additional Funding Required	\$ 1,022,688	\$ 1,384,699	\$ (362,011)	-35%	\$ 4,458,673	\$ 5,992,389	\$ (1,533,715)	-34.4%

Maintenance Project Budget Status				
	Project Budget	Expended through FY21	Expended FY22	Project Balance
Tie Pick-Up	\$ 4,556,976	\$ 4,185,000		\$ 371,976
CM2016	\$ 738,501	\$ 735,662		\$ 2,839
CM2017	\$ 716,913	\$ 688,199	\$ 22,988	\$ 5,726
CM2021	\$ 876,270	\$ 194,314	\$ 430,921	\$ 251,035
CM2022	\$ 826,399		\$ 460,078	\$ 366,321
P North	\$ 1,096,525	0	\$ 1,069,853	\$ 26,672
Project Total	\$ 8,811,584	\$ 5,803,175	\$ 1,983,840	\$1,024,569

Project ID		Description	Location	
TP15	1	Tie Pick up	POR-EXR	MP196-MP275
TP16	1	Tie Pick up	POR-WEM	MP196-MP222
TP18		Tie Pick up	WEM-DOV	MP222-MP43
CM16	8c	Stock Rail Replacement	Portland, ME	CPF 199
CM17	2h	Frog Replacement #15	Saco, ME	CPF 211
CM17	2a	Solar Flange Lubricator	Newfields, NH	MP 256.7
CM21	2c	#10 Frog Replacement	Monson Switch	MP 199.5
CM21	2d	#10 Frog Replacement	Cooks Switch	MP 201.3
CM21	2e	#15 Frog Replacement	Portland, ME	CPF 201
CM21	2f	#15 Frog Replacement (2)	Dover, NH	CPF 241
CM21	2g	#20 Frog Replacement	Kingston, NH	CPF 273
CM21	2h	Switch Points & Stock Rail	Portland, ME	CPF 201
PNS21	2a	#10 Frog Replacement	Portland, ME	CPF 196
CM22	2a	Joint Elimination Welding	Locations TBD	
CM22	4a	Culvert rehabilitation	Freeport, ME	
CM22	3b	Crossing Panel Replacement	Old Orchard Beach, ME - Old Orchard St,	MP 207.16
CM22	3c	Crossing Panel Replacement	Berwick, ME - Blackmore's Crossing,	MP 239.26