
Board Briefing Materials

April 25, 2022

Location:
Virtual Meeting

1:00pm Executive Session
1:30pm 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

April 25, 2022

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

1:00pm Vote to Open Meeting and Enter Executive Session

- 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) and 23 MRS § 8115-A to discuss negotiations with Maine DOT and Midcoast Railservice, Inc. regarding operating agreements.

1:30pm Vote to End Executive Session and Enter Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from March 28, 2022 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
- Finance Update
 - Approval of January Variance Report
- Marketing Update
- Project Updates
- Other Business

Next Meeting: May 23, 2022



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

March 28, 2022

Directors in Attendance via Zoom Teleconference:

Chairman Jim Cohen, Chair; Ms. Maggie Fleming; Mr. Alan Casavant; Ms. Carol Murray; Ms. Alison Harris; Mr. Steve Lyons; Mr. Bruce Van Note;

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; Ms. Natalie Bogart.

Interested Parties via Zoom Teleconference:

Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. William Lord, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Nat Rosenblatt, Farrell, Rosenblatt & Russell; Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Mr. Irwin Gratz, Maine Public Radio; Mr. Stephen Betts; Ms. Shannon Rawlin, NexDine; Mr. Peter Rinck, Rinck Advertising; Ms. Kathleen DeSilva, Rinck Advertising; Mr. Tom Wilheight; Mr. Richard Rudolph, Maine Rail Transit Coalition; Mr. Peter Cole.

OPENING REMARKS

Opened meeting at 1:00pm.

Mr. William Gayle conducted the roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to Approve the February 28, 2022 Minutes.

Motion: Ms. Murray
Seconded: Mr. Lyons
Accepted: All

APPOINTMENT OF TREASURER

Chairman Cohen discussed the need to appoint a new Board Treasurer and nominated Carol Murray.

Motion to Appoint Carol Murray Treasurer of the Board

Motion: Ms. Harris
Seconded: Ms. Fleming
Accepted: Mr. Cohen, Ms. Harris, Ms. Fleming, Mr. Casavant, Mr. Lyons, Mr. Van Note
Abstention: Ms. Murray

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the ridership and revenue for February noting that February 2022 ridership was 68 percent of FY19 levels.

Patricia Quinn reviewed Downeaster performance report and discussed the initiatives related to service enhancement and improvements which have been made over the past two years to set the foundation for ridership and revenue growth including scheduling, accessibility, and technology.

VARIANCE REPORT– Leslie Guerrette

Leslie Guerrette reviewed the February 2022 budget variance report.

Director Harris asked what was included in “other” train operations. Leslie Guerrette noted this line item includes host railroad, business comps, and impacts of delay expenses.

Motion to Approve the February Variance Report

Motion: Ms. Murray

Seconded: Mr. Lyons

Accepted: All

MARKETING UPDATE – Natalie Bogart

Natalie Bogart provided the marketing update noting that efforts are currently underway to refresh content of the AmtrakDowneaster.com website. Building on the success of the \$20 round-trip fare promotion in January and February, and upon consideration of ridership patterns, a \$20 fare will be offered for mid-week travel in April. A “Station Experience” project is underway to strengthen the Downeaster brand presence in and around stations and to improve the overall customer experience. A request for proposals for advertising agency services is posted on NNEPRA.com. Proposals are due April 8, 2022.

Director Harris commented that the train schedule is very clear and easy to read.

PROJECT UPDATE– Patricia Quinn

Patricia provided a high-level overview of the Wells Area Improvement Project.

James Russell provided an update on the Project status. Subgrade work is underway, necessary tree cutting has occurred and the contractor is in process of chipping trees to make room for the new track. Siding work will continue through this construction season. It is expected that the final installation of track will occur next summer as well as the construction of the new platform and pedestrian access bridge. The procurement process for long lead items, specifically continuously welded rail and turnouts, is underway.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided additional updates noting that the Amtrak Service agreement is expected to be executed in June, the Downeaster System Safety Plan is nearly complete, a STB decision is pending regarding the PAR/CSX merger, and the NNEPRA’s FTA Triennial Review is scheduled for late May. Patricia also expressed concerns that PACTS staff prepared and presented federal pandemic relief funding requests/recommendations on NNEPRA’s behalf which were inconsistent with the requests submitted by NNEPRA and developed without consultation.

Additional discussion was held regarding national initiatives NNEPRA staff has been participating in associated with affiliations in the States for Passenger Rail Coalition (SPRC), the State Amtrak Intercity Rail Committee (SAIPRC) and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment.

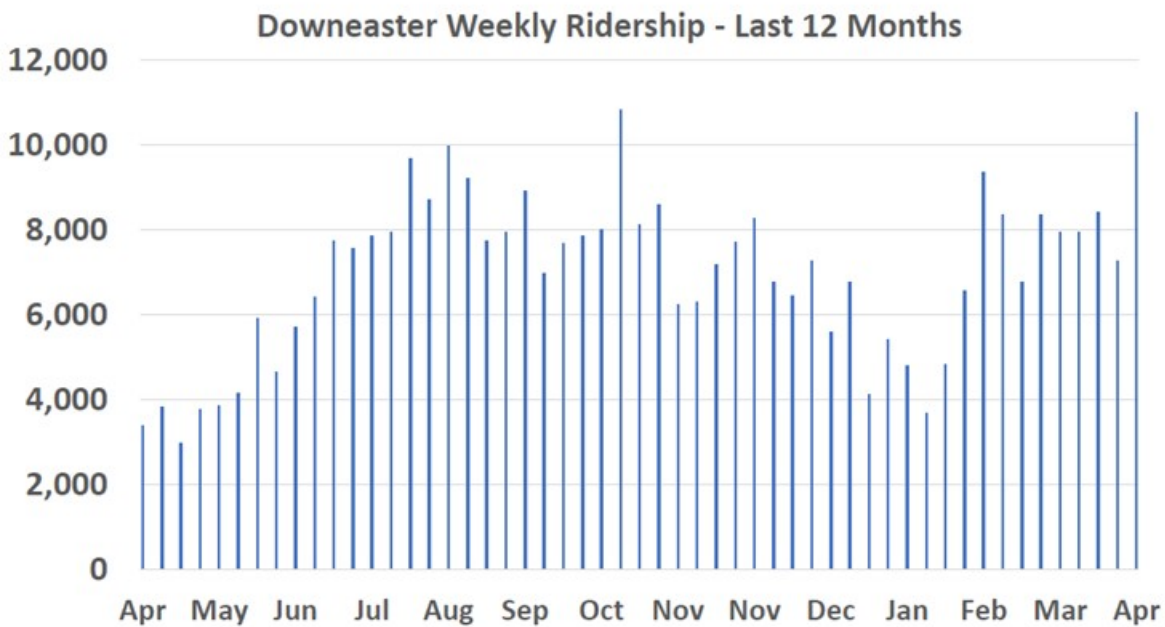
Mr. Tom Wilheight from Camden noted that a passenger rail expansion map released by Amtrak last year included a service extension to Rockland, however there was no mention of Augusta, Lewiston or Bangor. He further asked where Rockland fits into NNEPRA's priorities and what the results were of the inspection train Amtrak operated on the Rockland Branch in 2019? Patricia Quinn responded that Amtrak's map was a conversation starter, not a complete plan. The inspection train determined that the Rockland Branch was viable for passenger service. NNEPRA continues to look at this service as a pilot to determine market demand for residents and visitors.

Mr. Stephen Betts also asked about the consideration of a summer pilot service to Rockland. Patricia Quinn responded we are continuing to explore pilot service.

Meeting adjourned via roll call vote.

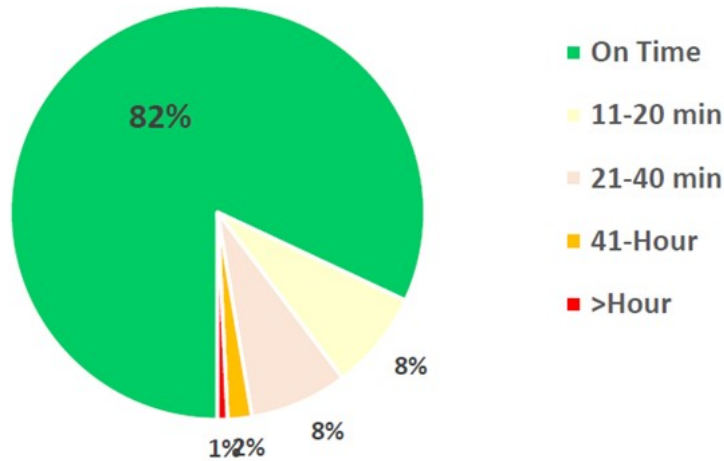
Downeaster FY2022 Performance to Date

Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. 2019	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Mar 22	FY22	31,519	28,188	3,331	67%	\$ 657,202	\$ 521,470	\$ 135,732	\$20.85
Feb 22	FY22	27,600	24,653	2,947	68%	\$ 527,474	\$ 456,072	\$ 71,402	\$19.11
Jan 22	FY22	20,396	22,594	-2,198	54%	\$ 407,690	\$ 417,993	\$ (10,303)	\$19.99
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		287,062	236,603	50,459	66%	\$ 5,672,707	\$ 4,405,180	\$ 1,267,528	\$19.76
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



Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Trains Operated	Passenger Miles	On Time Performance		Downeaster Café			CSI
				End Point	Customer	Sales	Capture Ratio	Check AVG	
Mar-22	FY22	310	2,947,118	77%	82%	\$ 49,368	18%	\$ 8.22	90
Feb 22	FY22	280	2,521,546	75%	81%	\$ 40,225	16%	\$ 8.66	91
Jan-22	FY22	310	1,858,131	79%	88%	\$ 34,126	19%	\$ 8.78	88
Dec 21	FY22	308	2,568,592	87%	91%	\$ 44,947	18%	\$ 8.60	94
Nov-21	FY22	297	2,566,478	66%	76%	\$ 39,665	16%	\$ 7.85	85
Oct 21	FY22	306	3,257,121	71%	79%	\$ 52,600	17%	\$ 8.03	88
Sep-21	FY22	296	2,730,658	70%	81%	\$ 46,983	17%	\$ 8.43	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		2,711	24,945,805	73%	81%	\$ 431,396	18%	\$ 8.36	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

Delay Intensity (By Rider)



NNEPRA Draft FY22 Budget Variance Report

July 2021-March 2022

Revenues	Mar-22				Fiscal Year to Date			
	March Actual	March Budget	Variance	%	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue								
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 657,202	\$ 521,470	\$ 135,732	26%	\$ 5,672,708	\$ 4,405,180	\$ 1,267,528	29%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 53,097	\$ 40,679	\$ 12,418	31%	\$ 413,809	\$ 341,454	\$ 72,355	21%
Advertising Revenue		\$ -	\$ -			\$ -	\$ -	
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 29,204	\$ 27,111	\$ 2,093	8%	\$ 224,905	\$ 222,205	\$ 2,700	1%
Interest and Other Revenue	\$ 57,307	\$ 13,400	\$ 43,907	328%	\$ 442,017	\$ 245,600	\$ 196,417	80%
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 796,810	\$ 602,660	\$ 194,150	32%	\$ 6,753,439	\$ 5,214,439	\$ 1,539,000	30%
Expenses								
Administration								
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 69,615	\$ 68,000	\$ 1,615	2%	\$ 603,521	\$ 612,000	\$ (8,479)	-1%
Office Expenses	\$ 8,817	\$ 8,000	\$ 817	10%	\$ 76,240	\$ 72,000	\$ 4,240	6%
Professional Services	\$ 5,035	\$ 13,500	\$ (8,465)	-63%	\$ 169,092	\$ 191,500	\$ (22,408)	-12%
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 58,147	\$ 50,374	\$ 7,773	
Board Operations	\$ 755	\$ 1,250	\$ (495)	-40%	\$ 8,247	\$ 11,250	\$ (3,003)	-27%
Total Administration Expenses	\$ 84,222	\$ 90,750	\$ (6,528)	-7%	\$ 915,247	\$ 937,124	\$ (21,877)	-2%
Train Operations								
Amtrak Operations	\$ 1,349,830	\$ 1,517,295	\$ (167,465)	-12%	\$ 11,487,124	\$ 13,013,541	\$ (1,526,417)	-13.3%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 293,115	\$ 173,330	\$ 119,785	41%	\$ 1,733,286	\$ 1,494,579	\$ 238,707	13.8%
Other Train Operations	\$ 122,527	\$ 142,500	\$ (19,973)	-16%	\$ 1,187,379	\$ 1,282,500	\$ (95,121)	-8.0%
ARPA Relief Credit	\$ (300,000)	\$ (300,000)	\$ -	0%	\$ (3,016,034)	\$ (3,016,034)	\$ -	0.0%
Facilities	\$ 35,931	\$ 32,000	\$ 3,931	11%	\$ 243,612	\$ 282,784	\$ (39,172)	-16.1%
FY22 Capital Maintenance	\$ 109,119	\$ 50,000	\$ 59,119		\$ 345,089	\$ 730,000	\$ (384,911)	-111.5%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,610,522	\$ 1,615,125	\$ (4,603)	0%	\$ 11,980,456	\$ 13,787,370	\$ (1,806,914)	-15.1%
Station Operations								
Portland Station Rent	\$ 9,200	\$ 9,200	\$ -	0%	\$ 82,200	\$ 82,800	\$ (600)	-0.7%
Portland Station CAMS	\$ 22,000	\$ 31,000	\$ (9,000)	-41%	\$ 201,800	\$ 212,000	\$ (10,200)	-5.1%
Platform Ins.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 197,740	\$ 197,012	\$ 728	0.4%
Station Platform Leases	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 46,853	\$ 52,000	\$ (5,147)	-11.0%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ (2,000)	#DIV/0!	\$ 3,855	\$ 18,000	\$ (14,145)	
Total Station Operations	\$ 31,200	\$ 42,200	\$ (11,000)	-35%	\$ 532,448	\$ 561,812	\$ (29,364)	-5.5%
Food Service	\$ 85,612	\$ 65,303	\$ 20,309	24%	\$ 624,579	\$ 574,211	\$ 50,368	8.1%
Marketing	\$ 34,471	\$ 40,000	\$ (5,529)	-16%	\$ 273,644	\$ 400,000	\$ (126,356)	-46.2%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,846,027	\$ 1,853,378	\$ (7,351)	0%	\$ 14,326,374	\$ 16,260,517	\$ (1,934,143)	-13.5%
Additional Funding Required	\$ 1,049,218	\$ 1,250,719	\$ (201,501)	-19%	\$ 7,572,936	\$ 11,046,079	\$ (3,473,142)	-45.9%