
Board Briefing Materials

June 27, 2022

Location:

*Casco Bay Lines Terminal Conference Room
56 Commercial Street, Portland, Maine 04101*

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

June 27, 2022

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

1:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from May 23, 2022 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
- Finance Update
 - Approval of May Variance Report
- FY2023
 - Adoption of FY23 Budget, pending MaineDOT approval
 - Review FY22 Workplan
- Project Updates
- Other Business

Next Meeting: July 25, 2022



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

May 23, 2022

Directors in Attendance via Zoom Teleconference:

Chairman Jim Cohen, Chair; Mr. Alan Casavant; Ms. Carol Murray; Ms. Alison Harris; Mr. Steve Lyons; Mr. Nate Moulton; Ms. Maggie Fleming.

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. Nat Rosenblatt, Farrell, Rosenblatt & Russell; Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Mr. Irwin Gratz, Maine Public Radio; Ms. Kathleen DeSilva, Rinck Advertising; Mr. Blaise Dupoy; Ms. Shannon Merlin, NexDine; Ms. Jane Brophy, Amtrak;

OPENING REMARKS

Opened meeting at 1:04pm

William Gayle opened Public Session by Roll Call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to Approve the April 25, 2022 Minutes.

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

NOMINATION OF VICE CHAIR TO THE BOARD

Motion to appoint Mayor Casavant as Vice Chair

Motion: Ms. Harris
Seconded: Ms. Fleming
Accepted: All

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn



Patricia Quinn provided an overview of Downeaster ridership and revenue. April ridership was 78 percent of 2019, exceeding the budgeted forecast of 61 percent with continued growth into May. Patricia noted that effective May 16th, Old Orchard Beach Station will be served. Endpoint On-Time Performance was 83 percent for the month with Customer On-Time Performance at 90 percent. While there was solid performance from the Café, the capture ratio was down slightly from budget as a result of the passenger mix. Patricia noted that the overall Customer Satisfaction Index score for the month was 91. Chairman Cohen stated that the trends are looking encouraging for ridership and revenue as we enter the summer. Patricia thanked Amtrak and NexDine which have kept the trains staffed with friendly and helpful crews.

VARIANCE REPORT– Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn reviewed the April 2022 budget variance report.

Chair Cohen asked a question regarding surplus line-item funds. Patricia noted that the NNEPRA would not have a budget surplus but would rather require less federal and state match funding.

Director Harris noted that she was pleased to see the increased fuel costs are being outpaced by the rise in ticket revenue so far.

Motion to Approve the April Variance Report

Motion: Mr. Lyons

Seconded: Ms. Murray

Accepted: All

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the draft FY23 Operating Budget for review noting that the approach was to try to keep the MaineDOT state match contribution consistent with past years in FY23.

Chair Cohen asked for clarification on the use of the federal funds through PACTS. Patricia responded that the reduced amount of emergency funds could have an impact in FY24 depending on ridership growth and costs. Chair Cohen noted that the focus will be on closely monitoring revenues and ridership this year to guide the budget conversation next year.

MARKETING UPDATE – Natalie Bogart

Natalie Bogart provided an overview of the new marketing campaign featuring passenger testimonials which is intended to be seasonally based. Natalie noted the April \$20 fare promotion attracted many first time riders and was successful during off-peak times. Natalie discussed upcoming promotions such as the annual Train to Maine campaign and noted significant effort to highlight Boston sports with Bruins, Celtics, and Red Sox all playing at the same time.

PROJECT UPDATE– Patricia Quinn & James Russell

Patricia Quinn provided a short update on the Wells Siding Improvement Project noting that utility relocation by AT&T will be starting. James Russell added the utility work should be completed by July 1st and provided an overview of the procurements to date noting that most items were coming in over budget. The difference in costs from the original estimates in 2019 versus the actual costs of the project are significant due to inflation and supply

chain issues. Patricia Quinn noted that FRA is aware of this problem, happening nationally, but has not provided insight regarding how to address shortfalls.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn reported that the Amtrak Service Agreement was being finalized. The Board had provided authorization for the Agreement to be signed previously, but given the new slate of Directors, Ms. Quinn requested a subsequent vote to affirm.

Motion to Continue the Authorization for the Executive Director to sign the Amtrak Service Agreement with Concurrence from the Chair

Motion: Ms. Murray
Seconded: Ms. Fleming
Accepted: All

Patricia Quinn noted that the current contract with our legal counsel will end at the end of the fiscal year and requested an extension of legal services for one year.

Motion to Extend by One Year the Legal Services of Farrell, Rosenblatt & Russell.

Motion: Ms. Murray
Seconded: Ms. Harris
Accepted: All

To conclude, Patricia provided an update on the status of the FTA Triennial, Rockland Service, and the PACTS ARPA split letter. She also noted that NNEPRA and Casco Bay Lines had agreed to modify the distribution of FY22 5337 funds among them to provide an additional \$2M in funding to Casco Bay Lines to meet cost overruns associated with ferry repairs. The two agencies will affirm the distribution in the split letter for this funding source.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment.

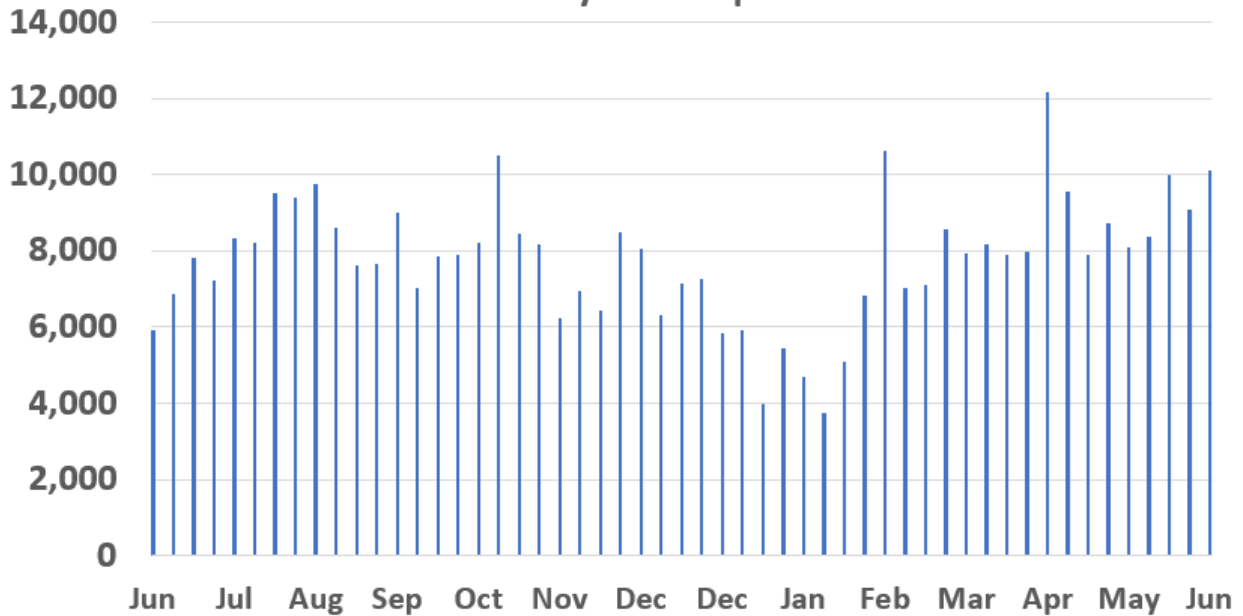
Wayne Davis, TrainRiders Northeast congratulated the NNEPRA Team on their hard work managing through COVID. He also noted that the TNE Annual Meeting will be held in September in Freeport with additional details to follow.

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
May 22	FY22	36,388	27,798	8,590	82%	\$ 789,302	\$ 514,255	\$ 275,047	\$21.69
Apr 22	FY22	37,745	29,867	7,878	78%	\$ 768,036	\$ 552,538	\$ 215,499	\$20.35
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		361,195	294,267	66,928	68%	\$ 7,230,045	\$ 5,471,972	\$ 1,758,073	\$20.02
Jun 21	FY21	25,668	27,000	-1,332	53%	\$ 515,857	\$ 459,000	\$ 56,857	\$ 20.10

Downeaster Weekly Ridership - Last 12 Months



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	
May-22	FY22	310	3,286,848	74%	81%	18%	\$ 8.20	92
Apr 22	FY22	300	3,376,072	83%	90%	16%	\$ 8.54	91
Mar-22	FY22	310	2,804,050	77%	82%	18%	\$ 8.22	90
Feb 22	FY22	280	2,521,546	75%	81%	16%	\$ 8.66	91
Jan-22	FY22	310	1,858,131	79%	88%	19%	\$ 8.78	88
Dec 21	FY22	308	2,568,592	87%	91%	18%	\$ 8.60	94
Nov-21	FY22	297	2,566,478	66%	76%	16%	\$ 7.85	85
Oct 21	FY22	306	3,257,121	71%	79%	17%	\$ 8.03	88
Sep-21	FY22	296	2,730,658	70%	81%	17%	\$ 8.43	88
Aug 21	FY22	306	3,287,802	66%	77%	20%	\$ 8.27	89
Jul-21	FY22	298	3,208,359	64%	73%	19%	\$ 8.38	89
FY22 To Date		3,321	31,465,657	74%	82%	18%	\$ 8.36	89
Jun 21	FY21	296	2,200,782	58%	67%	22%	\$ 7.69	86



NNEPRA Draft FY22 Budget Variance Report

July 2021 - May 2022

	May-22				Fiscal Year to Date			
	May Actual	May Budget	Variance	%	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Revenues								
Operating Revenue								
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 789,302	\$ 514,255	\$ 275,047	53%	\$ 7,230,046	\$ 5,471,972	\$ 1,758,074	32%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 47,546	\$ 40,116	\$ 7,430	19%	\$ 511,652	\$ 424,673	\$ 86,979	20%
Advertising Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 525	\$ -	\$ 525	
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 109,176	\$ 28,155	\$ 81,021	288%	\$ 334,081	\$ 277,961	\$ 56,120	20%
Interest and Other Revenue	\$ 73,851	\$ 13,400	\$ 60,451	451%	\$ 552,658	\$ 272,400	\$ 280,258	103%
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 1,019,875	\$ 595,926	\$ 423,949	71%	\$ 8,628,962	\$ 6,447,006	\$ 2,181,956	34%
Expenses								
Administration								
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 69,360	\$ 68,000	\$ 1,360	2%	\$ 739,750	\$ 748,000	\$ (8,250)	-1%
Office Expenses	\$ 12,106	\$ 8,000	\$ 4,106	51%	\$ 97,382	\$ 88,000	\$ 9,382	11%
Professional Services	\$ 6,060	\$ 13,500	\$ (7,440)	-55%	\$ 184,652	\$ 218,500	\$ (33,848)	-15%
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 58,147	\$ 50,374	\$ 7,773	
Board Operations	\$ 362	\$ 1,250	\$ (888)	-71%	\$ 9,696	\$ 13,750	\$ (4,054)	-29%
Total Administration Expenses	\$ 87,888	\$ 90,750	\$ (2,862)	-3%	\$ 1,089,627	\$ 1,118,624	\$ (28,997)	-3%
Train Operations								
Amtrak Operations	\$ 1,215,321	\$ 1,222,654	\$ (7,333)	-1%	\$ 14,122,399	\$ 16,052,299	\$ (1,929,900)	-13.7%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 308,070	\$ 173,330	\$ 134,740	44%	\$ 2,355,170	\$ 1,835,648	\$ 519,522	22.1%
Other Train Operations	\$ 143,905	\$ 142,500	\$ 1,405	1%	\$ 1,478,824	\$ 1,567,500	\$ (88,676)	-6.0%
ARPA Relief Credit	\$ (300,000)	\$ (300,000)	\$ -	0%	\$ (3,616,034)	\$ (3,616,034)	\$ -	0.0%
Facilities	\$ 31,136	\$ 32,000	\$ (864)	-3%	\$ 301,255	\$ 346,784	\$ (45,529)	-15.1%
FY22 Capital Maintenance	\$ 1,309	\$ 50,000	\$ (48,691)		\$ 347,605	\$ 830,000	\$ (482,395)	-138.8%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,399,741	\$ 1,320,484	\$ 79,257	6%	\$ 14,989,219	\$ 17,016,197	\$ (2,026,978)	-13.5%
Station Operations								
Portland Station Rent	\$ 9,300	\$ 9,200	\$ 100	1%	\$ 100,500	\$ 101,200	\$ (700)	-0.7%
Portland Station CAMS	\$ 29,490	\$ 22,000	\$ 7,490	25%	\$ 261,844	\$ 256,000	\$ 5,844	2.2%
Platform Ins.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 197,740	\$ 197,012	\$ 728	0.4%
Station Platform Leases	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 52,000	\$ 52,000	\$ -	0.0%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ (2,000) #DIV/0!		\$ 3,855	\$ 22,000	\$ (18,145)	
Total Station Operations	\$ 38,790	\$ 33,200	\$ 5,590	14%	\$ 615,939	\$ 628,212	\$ (12,273)	-2.0%
Food Service	\$ 77,571	\$ 64,995	\$ 12,576	16%	\$ 786,653	\$ 705,839	\$ 80,814	10.3%
Marketing	\$ 33,589	\$ 40,000	\$ (6,411)	-19%	\$ 343,060	\$ 480,000	\$ (136,940)	-39.9%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,637,579	\$ 1,549,429	\$ 88,150	5%	\$ 17,824,498	\$ 19,948,872	\$ (2,124,374)	-11.9%
Additional Funding Required	\$ 617,705	\$ 953,504	\$ (335,799)	-54%	\$ 9,195,537	\$ 13,501,867	\$ (4,306,329)	-46.8%