
Board Briefing Materials

October 24, 2022

Location:

**Regional Transportation Program (RTP) Conference Room
1 Ledgeview Drive, Westbrook, ME 04092**

1:00pm Public Session



For More Information

 207-780-1000 x 105

 info@nnepra.com



**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY**

FY2023 NNEPRA Strategic Workplan:

As approved by 7/25/22

- 1. The safety of passengers, crews and employees remains our first priority. Meet and exceed high standards for transportation safety including the provision of robust public health safeguards.**
 - Elevate safety awareness by expanding information, communication and training efforts.
 - Remain at the forefront of emerging opportunities.
- 2. Maximize public awareness of the Downeaster service, attract new riders and retain existing riders through advertising, promotions, digital, traditional and earned media.**
 - **Meet and exceed ridership goals and strive for 50% cost recovery.**
 - Optimize fare potential while maintaining cost controls and efficiencies.
 - Monitor and analyze travel trends to aligned train schedules with consumer travel patterns.
 - Participate in activities to assure that Downeaster service remains accessible to all.
 - Support efforts to provide and promote last mile connections and transit connectivity.
- 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.**
 - **Maintain 90%+ Customer Satisfaction**
 - Implement programs and initiatives to improve station experience including wayfinding and customer service
 - Improve website utility and information access
 - Collaborate with Amtrak enhance technology associated with reservations and customer information.
 - **Target OTP of 85% and COTP of 90%+**
 - Continue collaboration with Amtrak and host railroads to support investments and activities to maintain reliability.
 - **Assure NNEPRA owned and Downeaster-related facilities remain in a state of good repair.**
 - Develop programs and procedures to assure efficient and effective operation.
- 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:**
 - Complete extension of double track and construct station improvements in Wells to improve service reliability, increase frequency and enhance efficiency.
 - Relocate the station in Portland to the railroad mainline to reduce travel times, improve access and operating efficiency.
 - Build a new station in Falmouth to improve access to I-95 and communities north of Portland.
 - Initiate passenger rail service on the Rockland Branch to expand access and provide traffic relief alternatives to coastal Route
 - Prepare for new trainsets purchased by Amtrak which will replace legacy equipment and significantly reduce air emissions.
 - Collaborate with MaineDOT on studies and planning efforts associated with rail improvements and service expansions.
 - 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:**
 - Finalize Durham Municipal Station agreement
 - Review and updated contracts as needed
 - Monitor pending legislation and initiatives related to passenger transportation including those that put restrictions on state sponsors of rail activity.
- 6. Increase state and federal operational and capital funding opportunities:**
 - Maximize the benefit of COVID-related assistance
 - Monitor federal discretionary grant opportunities including CRISI, RAISE, and State of Good Repair to supplement needs for applicable projects
 - Ensure NNEPRA is positioned to receive eligible federal funding made available through surface transportation reauthorization or supplemental infrastructure bills
 - Collaborate with MaineDOT to secure resources needed to leverage federal funding opportunities
 - Assure project funding is sufficient to meet project needs.
 - Streamline internal accounting, procurement, project delivery and reporting protocols to maximize efficiency, accuracy and transparency.
- 7. Remain engaged and involved with transportation planning studies, organizations and initiatives in support of transportation access, expansion and connectivity on the local, state and national level.**



NNEPRA BOARD of DIRECTORS

October 24, 2022

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

1:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from September 26, 2022 Board Meeting
- Performance Update
- Finance Update
 - Approval of September Variance Report
- Project Updates
- Other Business

Next Meeting: November 28, 2022



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority****September 26, 2022****Directors in Attendance:**

Chairman Jim Cohen; Mr. Alan Casavant, Vice Chair; Ms. Alison Harris; Mr. Nate Moulton; Ms. Maggie Fleming

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn, Mr. Brian Beeler, Mr. James Russell, Ms. Natalie Bogart, Ms. Taylor Belanger

Interested Parties:

Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Wayne Davis, Train Riders Northeast

OPENING REMARKS

Opened meeting at 1:04pm**PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve July 25th, 2022, Minutes

Motion: Mr. Casavant

Seconded: Ms. Harris

Approved: All

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided update on new staff. Taylor Belanger was introduced as the new Marketing Manager. The Finance Manager position has recently filled by Olivia Richmond, who will start Wednesday, September 28th, 2022.

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of Downeaster Ridership, FY23 to date, noting ridership and revenue increases. Service interruptions in July lightly impacted ridership. On-time performance could see improvement.

Steve Corcoran, Amtrak, noted that high ridership and the increase on first-time riders and customers with luggage and bike can also lead to longer boarding times.

Patricia reviewed Café sales, and ridership mix changes leading to varying check averages. Overall, 91 percent of people riding Amtrak Downeaster are happy with services provided.

Jim Cohen, Chairman, opened board to questions. No questions presented.

The fall/winter Downeaster schedule takes effect October 11, 2022. The season suspension of service to Old Orchard Beach is the only change.

Natalie Bogart provided an overview of current marketing efforts which include the launch of a new campaign and a website refresh intended to simplify end user experience. Amtrak is allocating some COVID relief funding to supplement marketing of State Supported Routes.

Natalie opened the floor for questions or comments.

Allison Harris asked for a date we would expect to see the new website online. Natalie replied that the target date is November 28th, 2022.

VARIANCE REPORT– Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided a review of FY23 Budget Variance Report.

Chair Cohen requested clarification on the process for determining and implementing fare changes. Patricia explained the process noting that recommendations will be brought to the Board for approval prior to being publicly noticed. Natalie commented that Amtrak is looking at changes to their fare structure, which will be a factor in developing a Downeaster fare strategy. Chair Cohen asked if raising fares could impact ridership. Patricia noted that it can and that the goal is to balance ridership growth with revenue growth.

Motion to Approve July variance report

Motion: Ms. Fleming

Seconded: Mr. Moulton

Accepted: All

PROJECT UPDATES – James Russell

James Russell provided an update with on the Wells Area Improvement Project noting that design work continues on the second platform and that NNEPRA is working very closely with stakeholders and the Town of Wells. Final design is expected to be complete near the end of 2022, with construction bids expected to be advertised in Spring 2023.

James Russell opened floor for questions.

Chair Cohen wanted clarification on the logistics of using both platforms. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak, noted that the new platform will increase operational flexibility but that there will not be a designated northbound/southbound platform.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided overview of Title VI plan and requirements for updates. Recent passenger surveys did not reflect a change in the primary languages spoken by Downeaster ridership, but given the significant increase in Somali-speaking persons in the region, NNEPRA is recommending that Downeaster schedules be printed in Somali in addition to French and Spanish.

Motion to Approve Title VI Plan

Motion: Mr. Casavant

Seconded: Ms. Fleming

Chair Cohen suggested Policy edits to clarify the languages available for translation. Patricia responded NNEPRA will rework to clarify before submission.

Approved: All, subject to final review of all the different languages, unanimous.

Patricia reviewed the FY23 NNEPRA Workplan, including a focus on improving the passenger experience at stations. Many station community representatives expressed concerns about safety and security in and around stations at the August Station Committee, particularly given that staffing is limited. NNEPRA has reached out to the Federal Railroad Administration to explore funding possibilities to assist. Brian Beeler noted that NNEPRA is in the process of expanding the Downeaster Ambassador Program to including collaboration with TrainRiders Northeast to coordinate volunteer Ambassadors and the implementation of an incentive program for station staff and volunteers.

She also reported that Amtrak is working with NNEPRA to pilot their new Strategic Management structure on Downeaster service.

Patricia provided an overview of the George J Mitchell award and presented a candidate for approval which was approved by all.

PUBLIC COMMENT

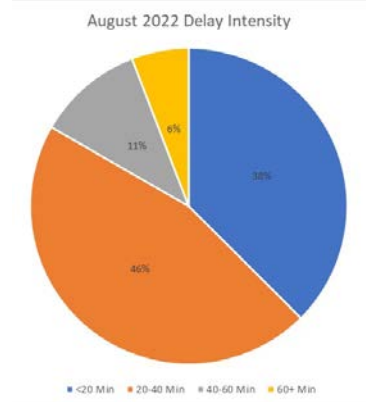
Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment. There were no public comments.

Meeting adjourned at 2:17pm.

Downeaster FY2023 Performance to Date

Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. 2019	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Aug 22	FY23	51,736	51,802	-66	85%	\$ 1,072,818	\$ 997,196	\$ 75,622	\$ 20.74
Jul 22	FY23	52,056	46,893	5,163	94%	\$ 1,080,956	\$ 902,686	\$ 178,270	\$ 20.77
FY23 To Date		103,792	98,695	5,097	90%	\$ 2,153,774	\$ 1,899,882	\$ 253,892	\$ 20.75
Jun 22	FY22	42,580	31,534	11,046	88%	\$ 876,874	\$ 583,387	\$ 293,487	\$ 20.59
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

Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months								
Period	FY	Trains Operated	Passenger Miles	On Time Performance		Downeaster Café		
				End Point	Customer	Capture Ratio	Check AVG	
Aug-22	FY23	306	4,551,810	59%	70%	19%	\$ 8.57	91
Jul 22	FY23	303	4,558,976	66%	83%	16%	\$ 7.87	91
FY23 To Date		609	9,110,786	63%	77%	18%	\$ 8.22	91
Jun-22	FY22	300	3,696,487	72%	83%	17%	\$ 8.04	91
May 22	FY22	310	3,205,050	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



Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

FISCAL YEAR 2023 OPERATING BUDGET VARIANCE REPORT

July 2022 - August 2022

	Current Month August 2023			Fiscal Year 2023 to Date			
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	YTD %
Revenues							
Operating Revenue							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 1,080,956	\$ 997,196	\$ 83,760	\$ 2,153,774	\$ 1,899,883	\$ 253,891	-13%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 86,377	\$ 78,247	\$ 8,130	\$ 155,239	\$ 149,088	\$ 6,151	-4%
Advertising Revenue	\$ 560	\$ -	\$ 560	\$ 560	\$ -	\$ 560	0%
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 28,301	\$ 30,438	\$ (2,137)	\$ 78,967	\$ 60,876	\$ 18,091	-30%
Interest and Other Revenue	\$ 82,348	\$ 33,887	\$ 48,461	\$ 93,753	\$ 67,774	\$ 25,979	-38%
Total Operating Revenues	\$ 1,278,543	\$ 1,139,768	\$ 138,774	\$ 2,482,293	\$ 2,177,621	\$ 304,672	-14%
Expenses							
Administration							
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 68,681	\$ 79,000	\$ (10,319)	\$ 135,194	\$ 158,000	\$ (22,806)	-14%
Office Expenses	\$ 7,891	\$ 11,135	\$ (3,244)	\$ 15,800	\$ 22,280	\$ (6,480)	-29%
Professional Services	\$ 16,620	\$ 12,400	\$ 4,220	\$ 22,628	\$ 24,500	\$ (1,873)	-8%
Insurance	\$ 2,642	\$ 4,489	\$ (1,847)	\$ 4,997	\$ 8,978	\$ (3,981)	-44%
Board Operations	\$ 1,104	\$ 1,802	\$ (698)	\$ 2,547	\$ 3,604	\$ (1,057)	-29%
Total Administration Expenses	\$ 96,938	\$ 108,826	\$ (11,888)	\$ 181,165	\$ 217,362	\$ (36,197)	-17%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Train Operations	\$ 606,981	\$ 574,950	\$ 32,031	\$ 1,210,164	\$ 1,152,900	\$ 57,264	5%
Amtrak Equipment Maintenance	\$ 636,898	\$ 628,414	\$ 8,484	\$ 1,206,524	\$ 1,256,828	\$ (50,304)	-4%
Amtrak Support Services	\$ 164,769	\$ 174,849	\$ (10,080)	\$ 325,286	\$ 350,656	\$ (25,370)	-7%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 269,969	\$ 311,197	\$ (41,228)	\$ 583,119	\$ 622,394	\$ (39,275)	-6%
Other Train Operations	\$ 149,148	\$ 184,791	\$ (35,643)	\$ 337,813	\$ 369,582	\$ (31,769)	-9%
ARPA Relief Credit	\$ (300,000)	\$ (300,000)	\$ -	\$ (600,000)	\$ (600,000)	\$ -	0%
Facilities	\$ 77,684	\$ 31,011	\$ 46,673	\$ 107,901	\$ 59,214	\$ 48,687	82%
FY23 Capital Maintenance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-81%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,636,511	\$ 1,781,921	\$ (145,410)	\$ 3,203,789	\$ 3,388,283	\$ (184,494)	-5%
Station Operations							
Portland Station Rent	\$ 28,600	\$ 28,600	\$ -	\$ 57,200	\$ 57,200	\$ -	\$ -
Portland Station CAMS	\$ 9,295	\$ 9,365	\$ (70)	\$ 20,827	\$ 16,330	\$ 4,497	\$ 0
Platform Insurance	\$ 16,328	\$ 18,750	\$ (2,423)	\$ 32,655	\$ 37,500	\$ (4,845)	\$ (0)
Station Platform Leases	\$ 3,833	\$ 3,835	\$ (2)	\$ 7,533	\$ 7,670	\$ (137)	\$ (0)
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 15,000	\$ (15,000)	\$ 39	\$ 35,000	\$ (34,961)	\$ (1)
Total Station Operations	\$ 58,056	\$ 75,550	\$ (17,494)	\$ 118,253	\$ 153,700	\$ (35,447)	-23%
Food Service	\$ 102,240	\$ 97,270	\$ 4,970	\$ 194,241	\$ 189,710	\$ 4,531	2%
Marketing	\$ 14,035	\$ 43,330	\$ (29,296)	\$ 20,691	\$ 86,661	\$ (65,969)	-76%
Total Expenses	\$ 1,907,780	\$ 2,106,897	\$ (199,118)	\$ 3,718,140	\$ 4,035,716	\$ (317,575)	-8%
Additional Funding Required	\$ 629,237	\$ 967,129	\$ (337,892)	\$ 1,235,847	\$ 1,858,095	\$ (622,248)	-8%