

Board Briefing Materials

January 23, 2023

Virtual Meeting:

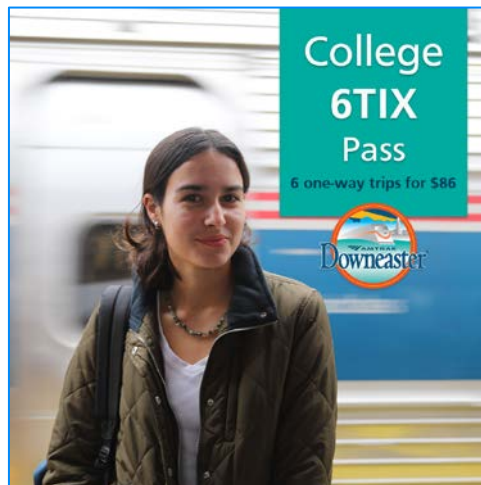
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89024380339?pwd=U3EvclZxcDZ2a0xSa2JVZGYxVll4dz09>

Meeting ID: 890 2438 0339

Passcode: 246469

1:00pm Public Session



For More Information

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**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

January 23, 2023

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

1:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from November 28, 2022 Board Meeting
- Downeaster Performance
 - Operating Statistics
 - Marketing Initiatives
 - Upcoming Service Disruptions
- Finance and Budget Overview
 - Approval of Budget Variance Report Through November 2022
- Status Report: Wells Area Improvement Project
- Workplan update
 1. Safety Initiatives
 2. Customer Experience
 4. Service Improvement Initiatives
 - 5-7 Planning, Studies & Grant Opportunities
- Other Business
 - Approval of Annual Legislative Council Report
- Motion to go into executive session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(C) to consider the potential acquisition or use of properties for a station location in Portland.
- Motion to return to public session.
- Meeting Adjourns

Next Meeting: February 27, 2023



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

November 28th, 2022

Directors in Attendance:

Chairman Jim Cohen; Ms. Carol Murray; Ms. Alison Harris; Ms. Maggie Fleming; Mr. Nate Moulton

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn, Mr. Brian Beeler, Mr. James Russell, Ms. Natalie Bogart, Ms. Taylor Belanger, Mr. William Gayle, Ms. Olivia Richmond

Interested Parties:

Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak; Mr. Luke Irvine, Amtrak; Mr. Bruce Sleeper, TrainRiders Northeast.

OPENING REMARKS

Opened meeting at 1:00pm

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve October 24th, 2022, Minutes

Motion: Mrs. Carol Murray

Seconded: Ms. Alison Harris

Approved: All

OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of Downeaster Ridership in September 2022, (FY23 to date. Amtrak was delayed in reporting October's operating statistics due to the beginning of their new fiscal year. Patricia noted that while on-time performance was poor for the month, NNEPRA and Amtrak continue to work with CSX to identify and correct slow orders. Despite the poor on-time performance for the month, it was noted the customer satisfaction index scores remain high indicating great customer service from the crews and café.

Patricia reviewed the planned Downeaster service disruptions scheduled for October 2022 through May 2023. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak, noted that the required disruptions will improve long term operations. Director Harris asked how bus bridges impact customer travel time. Steve Corcoran replied that generally the bus bridge impacts are minimal, except during peak travel times. Chair Cohen asked if a forecast on the impact to ridership has been developed for the outages yet. Patricia Quinn noted that it had not been developed yet but will be.

MARKETING UPDATE– Taylor Belanger

Taylor Belanger noted that the AmtrakDowneaster.com website update has been completed to provide better customer service. New promotional brochures have been developed and distributed to stations. Director Murray noted how great the pamphlets were for the station hosts and customers. Taylor discussed the new digital ad campaign and the upcoming ticket promotion.

FINANCE UPDATE– Olivia Richmond

Olivia Richmond provided a review of FY23 Budget Variance Report noting the strong month in revenue.

Motion to approve September variance report

Motion: Ms. Carol Murray

Seconded: Ms. Alison Harris

Accepted: All

FY 22 ANNUAL AUDIT PRESENTATION – Christian Smith, Wipfli

Christian Smith provided an overview to the Board of the FY22 Annual Audit noting it was a clean audit with no audit adjustments, recommendations, or findings. One change from last year was the handling of lease payments. The full audit report was distributed to the Board in October.

Directors Murray and Harris congratulated the team on a successful audit.

Motion to approve the FY22 Annual Financial Audit

Motion: Ms. Carol Murray

Seconded: Ms. Alison Harris

Accepted: All

PROJECT UPDATES – James Russell

James Russell provided an update on the Wells Area Improvement Project noting that the roadbed preparations continues with ballast distribution. Design of the new platform and pedestrian bridge has advanced to 50 percent final design. A project team meeting with the town of Wells, Maine Turnpike Authority, CSX, and Amtrak to review the plans for comments has been scheduled for later in the week.

OTHER BUSINESS

Natalie Bogart provided an overview of the Station Experience project noting that the installation of the new station signs and banners was complete and that the procurement package for the kiosk and digital signage is being finalized. Patricia Quinn noted that NNEPRA hosted virtual meeting for Downeaster station representatives to learn about safety and security funding available from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

Brian Beeler explained the Station Ambassador Incentive program which was implemented on November 1 to provide complimentary Downeaster tickets to station staff and volunteers. Director Murray expressed her strong support for the program and how excited station hosts are with this initiative.

Natalie Bogart provided an overview of Amtrak’s efforts to modify ticket pricing options. Patricia noted that with the changes to technology over the past five years there are opportunities to maximize fare recovery. Director Harris expressed frustration with the lack of transparency in ticket pricing on other modes, such as airlines, which vary pricing based on day of purchase. Natalie clarified that Amtrak is looking at the potential of pricing based on the number of available seats rather than than booking cycles.

Patricia Quinn provided an overview of MBTA’s Station North Bridge Project and request for a Letter of Support (LOS).

Motion to endorse the MBTA Bridge Project for RAISE Grant

Motion: Ms. Carol Murray

Seconded: Ms. Maggie Fleming

Accepted: All

William Gayle provided an overview of the various planning studies NNEPRA is participating in at the Federal, State, and Local levels such as the Corridor Identification Program and MaineDOT’s Rail Plan Update as well as the PACTS Connect 2045 and Transit Together Plans among others named.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Cohen opened floor for public comment. Bruce Sleeper, TrainRiders Northeast commented on the Ambassador Incentive Program and noted a concern about passengers not abiding by safety protocols while on station platforms, including at the Portland Transportation Center.

Meeting adjourned at 2:48pm.

Downeaster FY2023 Performance to Date

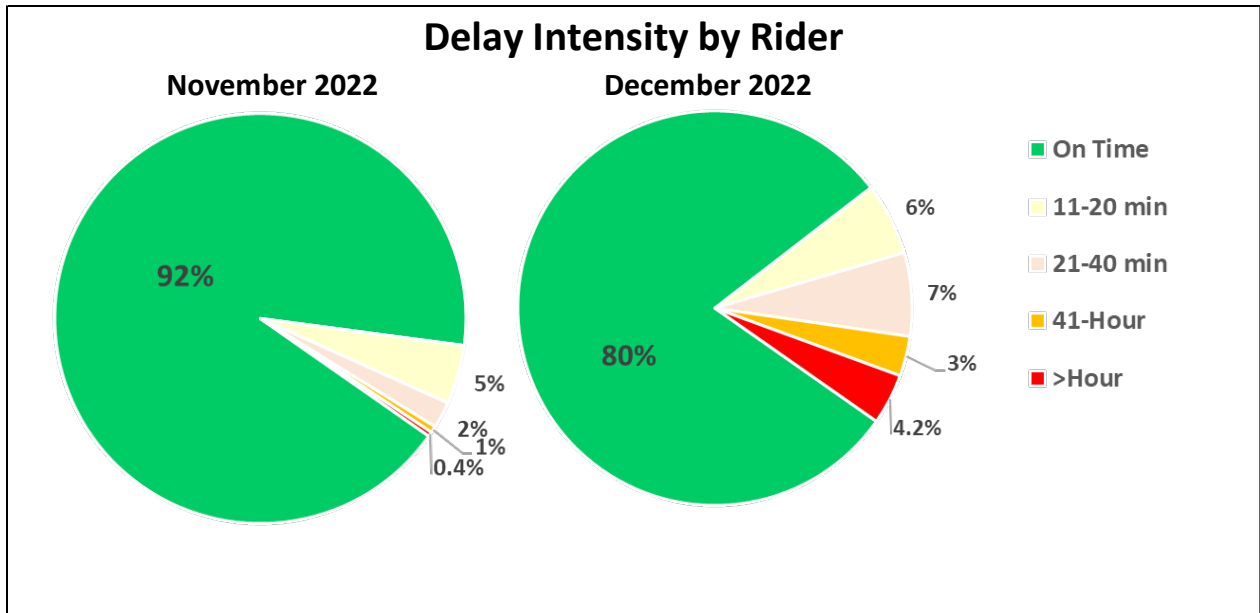
Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. 2019	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Dec 22	FY23	39,649	37,008	2,641	80%	\$ 1,036,170	\$ 712,404	\$ 323,766	\$26.13
Nov 22	FY23	43,636	38,058	5,578	92%	\$ 982,330	\$ 732,624	\$ 249,706	\$22.51
Oct 22	FY23	47,822	40,290	7,532	95%	\$ 1,264,423	\$ 775,590	\$ 488,833	\$26.44
Sep 22	FY23	45,677	40,644	5,033	96%	\$ 941,548	\$ 782,406	\$ 159,142	\$20.61
Aug 22	FY23	51,736	51,802	-66	85%	\$ 1,080,956	\$ 997,196	\$ 83,760	\$20.89
Jul 22	FY23	52,056	46,893	5,163	94%	\$ 1,072,818	\$ 902,686	\$ 170,132	\$20.61
FY23 To Date		280,576	254,696	25,880	77%	\$6,378,245	\$ 4,902,907	1,475,339	\$22.73
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
FY22 Final		403,775	323,157	80,618	70%	\$ 8,106,919	\$ 5,932,202	\$ 2,174,717	\$20.08

Ridership by Passenger Type

November - December 2022

 715	 795	 7,157
 102	 265	 1,406

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 22	FY23	308	3,449,463	72%	80%	19%	\$ 9.26	89
Nov 22	FY23	296	3,744,739	82%	92%	16%	\$ 8.76	88
Oct 22	FY23	310	4,094,733	60%	75%	16%	\$ 8.46	89
Sep 22	FY23	300	3,894,054	73%	85%	16%	\$ 8.88	91
Aug 22	FY23	310	4,551,810	57%	70%	18%	\$ 9.03	90
Jul 22	FY23	310	4,500,638	65%	83%	17%	\$ 8.64	91
FY23 To Date		1,834	24,235,437	68%	81%	17%	\$ 8.84	90
			<i>FY23 Goals</i>	85%	90%	18%	\$7.95	90%
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



**NNEPRA Fiscal Year 2023
Operating Budget Variance Report
July 2022 - November 2022**

	November-22			Fiscal Year to Date Jul 22-Nov 22			
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 982,330	\$ 732,624	\$ 249,706	\$ 5,351,124	\$ 4,190,503	\$ 1,160,622	28%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 52,773	\$ 55,331	\$ (2,558)	\$ 331,802	\$ 316,484	\$ 15,318	5%
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 38,702	\$ 24,000	\$ 14,702	\$ 279,275	\$ 158,700	\$ 120,575	76%
Interest & Other Revenue	\$ 42,971	\$ 28,400	\$ 14,571	\$ 216,994	\$ 140,350	\$ 76,644	55%
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 1,116,777	\$ 840,355	\$ 276,422	\$ 6,179,196	\$ 4,806,037	\$ 1,373,159	29%
Expenses							
Administration							
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 76,895	\$ 79,000	\$ (2,105)	\$ 357,428	\$ 395,000	\$ (37,572)	-10%
Office Expenses	\$ 8,779	\$ 11,135	\$ (2,356)	\$ 45,119	\$ 55,685	\$ (10,566)	-19%
Professional Services	\$ 5,422	\$ 6,980	\$ (1,558)	\$ 87,890	\$ 92,140	\$ (4,250)	-5%
Insurance	\$ 5,645	\$ 4,489	\$ 1,156	\$ 27,129	\$ 22,445	\$ 4,684	21%
Board Operations	\$ 1,285	\$ 1,802	\$ (517)	\$ 5,180	\$ 9,010	\$ (3,830)	-43%
Total Admin Expenses	\$ 98,026	\$ 103,406	\$ (5,380)	\$ 522,745	\$ 574,280	\$ (51,535)	-9%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Train Operations	\$ 602,615	\$ 610,300	\$ (7,685)	\$ 3,011,909	\$ 2,948,450	\$ 63,459	2%
Amtrak Equipment Mainten	\$ 713,940	\$ 780,850	\$ (66,910)	\$ 3,233,256	\$ 3,446,942	\$ (213,686)	-6%
Amtrak Support Services	\$ 164,769	\$ 163,302	\$ 1,467	\$ 782,183	\$ 846,284	\$ (64,101)	-8%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 268,356	\$ 289,575	\$ (21,219)	\$ 1,433,910	\$ 1,512,354	\$ (78,444)	-5%
Other Train Operations	\$ 132,582	\$ 181,874	\$ (49,292)	\$ 669,993	\$ 918,122	\$ (248,129)	-27%
ARPA Relief Credit	\$ (56,905)	\$ (56,905)	\$ -	\$ (1,016,034)	\$ (1,016,034)	\$ -	0%
Facilities	\$ 43,089	\$ 48,562	\$ (5,473)	\$ 256,887	\$ 278,412	\$ (21,525)	-8%
FY22 Capital Maintenance	\$ 295	\$ 295	\$ 0	\$ 86,866	\$ 86,866	\$ (0)	0%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,868,741	\$ 2,017,853	\$ (149,111)	\$ 8,458,970	\$ 9,021,395	\$ (562,426)	-6%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	\$ 41,103	\$ 37,465	\$ 3,638	\$ 195,512	\$ 184,925	\$ 10,587	6%
Platform Insurance	\$ 21,586	\$ 18,750	\$ 2,836	\$ 91,434	\$ 93,750	\$ (2,316)	-2%
Station Platform Leases	\$ 3,918	\$ 3,835	\$ 83	\$ 19,288	\$ 19,175	\$ 113	1%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 26,411	\$ 28,000	\$ (1,589)	-6%
Total Station Operations	\$ 25,505	\$ 22,585	\$ 2,920	\$ 137,133	\$ 140,925	\$ (3,792)	-3%
Total Food Service	\$ 76,179	\$ 81,592	\$ (5,413)	\$ 451,713	\$ 443,281	\$ 8,432	2%
Total Marketing	\$ 58,973	\$ 43,330	\$ 15,643	\$ 140,723	\$ 150,000	\$ (9,277)	-6%
Total Expenses	\$ 2,127,425	\$ 2,268,766	\$ (141,341)	\$ 9,711,284	\$ 10,329,881	\$ (618,597)	-6%
Add'l Funding Required	\$ 1,010,649	\$ 1,428,411	\$ (417,762)	\$ 3,532,088	\$ 5,523,845	\$ (1,991,757)	-36%
Downeaster Ridership	43,636	38,058	5,578				
Overall cost recovery	52%	37%		64%	47%		
Café Recovery	69%	68%		73%	71%		