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# Board Briefing Materials

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April 24, 2023

**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

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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

*April 24, 2023*

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

### Draft Agenda

#### 1:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Introductions
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from March 27, 2023 Board Meeting
- Downeaster Performance Update
  - Operating Statistics
  - Impacts of Service Disruptions & Equipment Redeployment
  - Marketing Initiatives
- Finance Update
  - Approval of March Variance Report
  - FY23 / FY24 Budget Discussion
- Project Updates
  - Wells Area Improvement Project
  - CSX Capital Maintenance
- Workplan update
  - Customer Experience Project
  - Service Improvement Initiatives
  - Planning, Studies & Grants
- Other Business
  - Amtrak Government Affairs Briefing
  - Legislative Initiatives

**Next Meeting: TBD**



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

**March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

### **Directors in Attendance:**

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

### **NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:**

Ms. Patricia Quinn; Mr. James Russell; Mr. William Gayle; Ms. Olivia Richmond; Ms. Natalie Bogart; Ms. Belle Askinasi; Mr. Brian Beeler II

### **Interested Parties:**

Mr. Tony Donovan, Maine Rail Transit Coalition; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Bruce Sleeper, Trainriders NE; Mr. Steve Corcoran, Amtrak

## **OPENING REMARKS**

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**Opened meeting at 1:04pm**

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

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Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment.

Tony Donovan invited the Board to an advocacy luncheon in Augusta and noted there were 13 rail bills in the legislature impacting passenger rail activity in the state.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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### **Motion to approve February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Minutes**

Motion: Ms. Carrol

Seconded: Mr. Steve Lyons

Approved: All

## **OVERVIEW OF DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn**

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Patricia Quinn provided an update on the performance of the Downeaster noting four trains were cancelled in February and that the planned bus bridge provided by MBTA and Amtrak worked well. Fiscal year to date, ridership is roughly 32,000 over budget with an average ticket price of \$20.49 per rider. Average fare per passenger saw a slight decline due to promotions and child fare policy change by Amtrak expanding eligibility to all children.

Chairman Cohen asked if the passengers transported transferred to busses were reflected in the February and March figures for ridership. Patricia noted that all passengers are included in the ridership totals.

Director Fleming asked if April is the last anticipated outage or if there were others coming later in the year. Patricia responded that April 22-Mary 7 is the only scheduled service interruption scheduled at this time.



## **MARKETING UPDATE – Natalie Bogart**

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Natalie Bogart provided an overview of marketing initiatives and the 1 million passenger event in Durham. Natalie noted that a marketing RFP has been advertised and that proposals for a full service marketing firm are due on April 21. Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the New Hampshire Liquor Commission issue related to the sale of alcohol when the Downeaster is in New Hampshire, expressing gratitude that it had been resolved.

## **VARIANCE REPORT – Olivia Richmond**

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Olivia Richmond provided a review of FY23 Budget Variance Report.

### **Motion to approve February Variance Report**

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

## **PROJECT UPDATES – James Russell**

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James Russell provided an update on Wells Area Improvement Project noting that the delivery of track turnouts continue. Shaw Brothers will return to finish the earthwork in the coming weeks. Patricia noted that NNEPRA had submitted a request for the FRA for \$8 million in additional funding for the project.

## **WORK PLAN UPDATE – Patricia Quinn**

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Patricia Quinn provided an update on the FY23 Work Plan highlighting the various initiatives accomplished by NNEPRA for Safety, Customer Experience, Service Enhancements, and Grants and Planning. A discussion was held regarding the FY23 Federal State Partnership Grant Program application that NNEPRA plans to submit, in coordination with CSX, for tie replacement along the Downeaster Corridor. William Gayle provided an overview of MBTA's Drawbridge project, noting that they had asked NNEPRA to submit a letter of support.

### **Motion to approve the submission of a letter of support to MBTA for their Station North Drawbridge Replacement Project.**

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

Patricia Quinn noted a discussion held with PACTS on grade crossing safety and funding availability.

## **OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn**

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Patricia noted that FRA has denied Amtrak's request for a temporary stop at the Falmouth Country Club for the Drive Fore Kids golf tournament in June 2023, noting that they had approved a special stop the past two years.

Steve Corcoran noted that has accepted a new role with Amtrak and will be leaving his position as Assistant Superintendent for Maine Service in May.

Patricia provided an overview of legislative initiatives and outreach to date, specifically related to LD 1170. Discussion among Board members related to LD1170 focused on the fact that the bill would duplicate NNEPRA's existing work as well as planning efforts that advance federal funding eligibility. Director Murray noted that NNEPRA staff only has finite resources and that staff time that should be directed to efforts that advance federal funding. Chairman Cohen noted that the items identified in the bill are items that NNEPRA staff does on a daily/routine basis to better the service.

Chairman Cohen opened the discussion to public comment.

Bruce Sleeper noted that he agreed with everything mentioned.

**Motion to Oppose LD1170**

Motion: Ms. Carol Murray

Seconded: Ms. Maggie Fleming

Accepted: All

Patricia concluded the discussion by noting NNEPRA will continue to monitor the bills and provide staff recommendations to the Board if needed.





**Meeting Adjourned at 2:16pm.**



Downeaster FY2023 Performance to Date



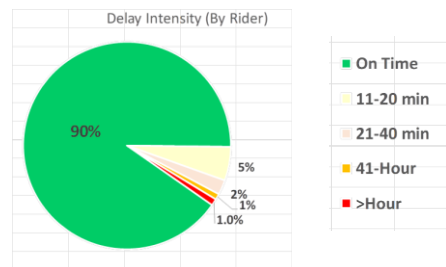
Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. 2019	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Mar 23	FY23	38,277	37,430	847	80%	\$ 778,241	\$ 720,520	\$ 57,721	\$20.33
Feb 23	FY23	33,383	32,368	1,015	80%	\$ 640,465	\$ 623,084	\$ 17,381	\$19.19
Jan 23	FY23	35,435	30,370	5,065	80%	\$ 701,690	\$ 584,630	\$ 117,060	\$19.80
Dec 22	FY23	39,649	37,008	2,641	80%	\$ 830,010	\$ 712,404	\$ 117,606	\$20.93
Nov 22	FY23	43,632	38,058	5,574	92%	\$ 882,688	\$ 732,624	\$ 150,064	\$20.23
Oct 22	FY23	47,821	40,290	7,531	95%	\$ 1,009,651	\$ 775,590	\$ 234,061	\$21.11
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
<b>FY23 To Date</b>		<b>387,666</b>	<b>354,864</b>	<b>32,802</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 7,938,067</b>	<b>\$ 6,831,141</b>	<b>1,106,927</b>	<b>\$20.48</b>
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
<b>FY22 Final</b>		<b>403,775</b>	<b>323,157</b>	<b>80,618</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>\$ 8,106,919</b>	<b>\$ 5,932,202</b>	<b>\$ 2,174,717</b>	<b>\$20.08</b>

Fiscal Year 2023 To Date			
	2,663		3,269
	733		1,507

FY23 Performance Goals:

Avg Fare	\$19.25	OTP:	85%
Ridership vs 2019:	85%	COTP:	18%
Café Check Avg:	\$7.95	Customer Satisfaction:	90%
Café Capture Ratio:	18%		

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	
Mar 23	FY23	302	2,985,606	83%	90%	19%	\$ 9.49	88
Feb 23	FY23	240	2,701,879	70%	77%	17%	\$ 9.38	89
Jan 23	FY23	307	3,047,410	70%	84%	18%	\$ 9.11	90
Dec 22	FY23	308	3,548,669	69%	80%	19%	\$ 9.26	90
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
<b>FY23 To Date</b>		<b>2,141</b>	<b>27,382,053</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>\$ 8.88</b>	<b>90</b>
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
<b>FY22 Final</b>		<b>3,621</b>	<b>35,080,346</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>\$ 7.98</b>	<b>90</b>



FY 2023 Downeaster Customer Satisfaction											
	Sample Size	Overall Score	Train Comfort	Train Cleanliness	Train Crew	OTP	Train Status Info	Café	WiFi	Station Staff	Station Overall
Mar	315	90.0	9.0	8.9	9.3	8.9	8.7	8.2	8.1	9.2	8.8
Feb	706	88.9	9.1	9.0	9.3	8.4	8.3	9.4	9.0	9.5	8.5
Jan	422	90.1	9.1	9.1	9.2	8.6	8.5	8.2	8.0	9.2	8.8
Dec	513	90.4	8.9	9.0	9.2	8.1	8.0	8.0	7.4	9.0	8.7
Nov	447	87.8	9.0	9.0	9.1	8.8	8.5	8.2	7.4	9.1	8.8
Oct	538	88.8	7.8	9.1	9.1	8.2	9.0	7.4	9.1	9.1	8.2
Sep	230	90.2	9.1	9.1	9.2	8.9	8.9	8.1	8	9.2	8.8
Aug	1281	89.6	9.1	9.0	9.3	8.2	8.4	8.2	7.5	9.2	8.7
Jul	1346	91.1	9.1	9.2	9.4	8.9	8.7	8.2	7.4	9.3	8.8



**NNEPRA Operating Budget**  
**Fiscal Year 2023 to Date**  
**July 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023**

	March-23			Fiscal Year to Date Jul 22-Mar 23			
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
<b>Operating Revenue</b>							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 778,241	\$ 720,520	\$ 57,721	\$ 7,938,067	\$ 6,831,141	\$ 1,106,926	16%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 74,475	\$ 47,058	\$ 27,417	\$ 610,932	\$ 508,557	\$ 102,375	20%
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 54,342	\$ 24,000	\$ 30,342	\$ 408,125	\$ 273,750	\$ 134,375	49%
Interest & Other Revenue	\$ 51,721	\$ 28,400	\$ 23,321	\$ 384,782	\$ 321,450	\$ 63,332	20%
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 958,779</b>	<b>\$ 819,978</b>	<b>\$ 138,801</b>	<b>\$ 9,341,906</b>	<b>\$ 7,934,898</b>	<b>\$ 1,407,008</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Administration</b>							
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 75,877	\$ 79,000	\$ (3,123)	\$ 669,815	\$ 711,000	\$ (41,185)	-6%
Office Expenses	\$ 5,642	\$ 12,501	\$ (6,859)	\$ 87,624	\$ 102,155	\$ (14,531)	-14%
Professional Services	\$ 8,026	\$ 7,280	\$ 746	\$ 117,794	\$ 120,960	\$ (3,166)	-3%
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 48,665	\$ 53,868	\$ (5,203)	-10%
Board Operations	\$ 519	\$ 1,250	\$ (731)	\$ 8,820	\$ 17,874	\$ (9,054)	-51%
<b>Total Admin Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 90,063</b>	<b>\$ 100,031</b>	<b>\$ (9,967)</b>	<b>\$ 932,718</b>	<b>\$ 1,005,857</b>	<b>\$ (73,139)</b>	<b>-7%</b>
<b>Train Operations</b>							
Amtrak Train Operations	\$ 620,729	\$ 610,300	\$ 10,429	\$ 5,392,503	\$ 5,389,650	\$ 2,853	0%
Amtrak Equipment Maintenance	\$ 1,127,253	\$ 780,850	\$ 346,403	\$ 6,379,828	\$ 6,570,342	\$ (190,514)	-3%
Amtrak Support Services	\$ 116,695	\$ 158,944	\$ (42,249)	\$ 1,390,074	\$ 1,480,895	\$ (90,821)	-6%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 158,191	\$ 252,252	\$ (94,061)	\$ 2,312,893	\$ 2,615,313	\$ (302,420)	-12%
Other Train Operations	\$ 118,063	\$ 176,758	\$ (58,695)	\$ 1,233,960	\$ 1,457,146	\$ (223,185)	-15%
ARPA Relief Credit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (1,016,034)	\$ (1,016,034)	\$ -	0%
Facilities	\$ 46,046	\$ 40,535	\$ 5,511	\$ 512,240	\$ 495,575	\$ 16,665	3%
FY23 Capital Maintenance	\$ 1,281	\$ -	\$ 1,281	\$ 130,618	\$ 130,618	\$ -	0%
<b>Total Train Operations</b>	<b>\$ 2,188,258</b>	<b>\$ 2,019,638</b>	<b>\$ 168,619</b>	<b>\$ 16,336,082</b>	<b>\$ 17,123,505</b>	<b>\$ (787,422)</b>	<b>-5%</b>
<b>Station Operations</b>							
Portland Station	\$ 38,878	\$ 37,965	\$ 913	\$ 350,665	\$ 339,285	\$ 11,380	3%
Platform Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 158,849	\$ 168,750	\$ (9,901)	-6%
Station Platform Leases	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 34,962	\$ 37,749	\$ (2,787)	-7%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 250	\$ (250)	\$ 26,444	\$ 49,250	\$ (22,806)	-46%
<b>Total Station Operations</b>	<b>\$ 38,878</b>	<b>\$ 38,215</b>	<b>\$ 663</b>	<b>\$ 570,921</b>	<b>\$ 595,034</b>	<b>\$ (24,114)</b>	<b>-4%</b>
<b>Total Food Service</b>	<b>\$ 106,861</b>	<b>\$ 76,316</b>	<b>\$ 30,545</b>	<b>\$ 851,791</b>	<b>\$ 760,914</b>	<b>\$ 90,877</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Total Marketing</b>	<b>\$ 26,035</b>	<b>\$ 40,000</b>	<b>\$ (13,965)</b>	<b>\$ 272,690</b>	<b>\$ 400,000</b>	<b>\$ (127,310)</b>	<b>-32%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,450,094</b>	<b>\$ 2,274,200</b>	<b>\$ 175,894</b>	<b>\$ 18,964,201</b>	<b>\$ 19,885,309</b>	<b>\$ (921,108)</b>	<b>-5%</b>
<b>Add'l Funding Required</b>	<b>\$ 1,491,316</b>	<b>\$ 1,454,222</b>	<b>\$ 37,093</b>	<b>\$ 9,622,295</b>	<b>\$ 11,950,411</b>	<b>\$ (2,328,117)</b>	<b>-19%</b>
Downeaster Ridership	38,277	37,430	847				
Overall cost recovery	39%	36%		49%	40%		
Café Recovery	70%	62%		72%	67%		

