

Board Briefing Materials

April 28, 2025

Location:

University of Southern Maine, Abromson Community Center

Room 216

88 Bedford Street, Portland ME 04101

3:00pm Public Session



For More Information

 207-780-1000 x 105

 info@nnepra.com



**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY**

FY2025 NNEPRA Strategic Workplan:

1. Meet and exceed high standards for transportation safety.

- Elevate safety awareness by expanding information, communication and training efforts.
- Increase participation in Operation Lifesaver.
- Optimize safety signage and equipment at stations and facilities as needed

2. Maximize public awareness of the Downeaster service,

- Attract new riders and retain existing riders through multi-faceted marketing program.
- Optimize fare potential while maintaining cost controls and efficiencies.
- Monitor and analyze travel trends to align train schedules with consumer travel patterns.

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.

- Oversee successful transition to Horizon Fleet
- Support Station Ambassador Program & Recruitment efforts
- Assist stations in implementing wayfinding signage at stations
- Implement and expand e-voucher program
- Pursue Maine-made offerings in Café and improve Café CSI
- Collaborate with Amtrak and host railroads to maintain and improve reliability.
- Support efforts to provide and promote last mile connections and transit connectivity.
- Assure NNEPRA owned and Downeaster-related facilities remain in a state of good repair.

4. Support the reduction of vehicle miles travelled and State climate change initiatives by improving service accessibility and quality:

- Complete extension of double track and initiate platform and station project in Wells.
- Design and pursue and secure funding for a mainline Portland Station
- Develop Falmouth station concept into project phase
- Pursue opportunities to initiate passenger rail service on the Rockland Branch
- Update Downeaster Service Development Plan
- Prepare for new Amtrak trainsets

5. Monitor and support programs to sustain passenger rail growth and funding:

6. Pursue state and federal funding opportunities:

- Monitor and pursue grant opportunities
- Ensure NNEPRA is positioned to receive eligible federal funding
- Collaborate with MaineDOT to secure resources needed to leverage federal funding
- 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 28, 2025

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Draft Agenda

3:00pm Public Session

- Welcome and Safety Briefing
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from March 24, 2025 Board Meeting
- Fiscal Year 2025 Downeaster Operations
 - Downeaster Performance FY25 to date
 - Horizon Fleet
 - FY25 Ridership and Revenue Generating Strategies
- Finance Report
 - Budget Variance Report February 2025
 - FY26 Budget Development
- Project Updates
 - Wells Area Improvement Project
 - Tie Replacement Project
 - Capital Maintenance Projects
 - Portland Station Relocation
 - West Falmouth Station
 - Downeaster Service Development Plan
- Other Business & Updates
- Public Comment
- Motion to Enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(E) for the purpose of discussing the acquisition of real property.

Next Meeting: TBD



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

March 24, 2025

Directors in Attendance:

Chairman Jim Cohen; Ms. Alison Harris; Ms. Maggie Edson; Mr. Nate Howard; Ms. Carolann Ouellette

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Patricia Quinn; Ms. Natalie Bogart; Mr. Brian Beeler; Ms. Belle Askinasi; Ms. Catherine Kruglak; Ms. Taylor Auclair; Ms. Emily Bedard; Mr. Jim Russell; Mr. Donnie Maley

Interested Parties:

Mr. Luke Irvine, Amtrak; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach Lines; Mr. Irwin Gratz, Maine Public; Mr. Stanley Koski

OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm, and a safety briefing was provided. Due to the virtual meeting format, roll call of the Board was conducted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment.

No public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve February 24, 2025 Minutes

Motion: Ms. Alison Harris

Seconded: Ms. Maggie Edson

Abstain: Ms. Carolann Ouellette

Approved: All

DOWNEASTER PERFORMANCE – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Patricia Quinn provided an update on Downeaster ridership and revenue, with performance data through February 2025 and financial data through January 2025.

Patricia also reviewed On-Time Performance (OTP), noting a slight decrease in the Downeaster Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) scores. Patricia noted that train delays were caused mainly by infrastructure issues. However, OTP for March has been improving with more trains arriving on time and fewer delays impacting passengers.

MARKETING UPDATE – Taylor Auclair

Ms. Taylor Auclair outlined the marketing plan for upcoming service disruptions, starting on April 1. NNEPRA will be rolling out an awareness campaign, “Building a Better Ride”, to highlight track work in a positive way. Information on all Downeaster channels will be monitored and updated regularly to provide accurate and transparent content regarding projects. Taylor noted that Amtrak.com has been updated to reflect schedule changes and all passengers travelling by coach will receive a 20% discount at the time of purchase during the track work.

Chairman Cohen asked if when portions of the track work is complete, will it be reflected in marking materials and on media platforms. Taylor responded that she is working on a suite of graphics for NNEPRA.com and that would be a welcome addition.

FINANCE UPDATE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia presented the January Variance Report.

Motion to accept December Budget Variance Report

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Carolann Ouellette

Approved: All

HORIZON UPDATE – Patricia Quinn

Patricia reported that there were no updates on the Horizon transition. Currently, The Downeaster operates with three (3) Amfleet coaches and one (1) Horizon coach.

PROJECT UPDATES – Patricia Quinn

Patricia provided an update on the CSX/NNEPRA Federal-State Tie Replacement:

- **Tie Replacement Project Overview:**
 - CSX plans to install approximately 130,000 ties between the Massachusetts State Line and Brunswick Station.
 - The project will begin on April 1, 2025.
 - Tie Replacement Crews will be working on an 8 day on, 6 day off rotations through mid-July.
- **Service Modifications:**
 - Train 682/692 will be modified to run 40 minutes earlier every day through the end of the tie project.
 - Train 685 will be canceled on days when tie replacement is taking place.
 - A temporary peak hour train will be added around 6 PM to address demand.
 - Train 681/691 and Train 686/696 will operate around the project limits with bus bridge connections on Project work days ensuring minimal disruption to travel for work, appointments, and events.
 - Train 683/693 and Train 684/694 will not operate on Project work days.

Mr. Jim Russell provided updates on the Wells Area Improvement Project:

- **Platform and Site Work:** Great Falls Construction mobilized to Wells Station on March 3rd. The Right of Entry and Temporary Crossing agreement was finalized on March 21st allowing all tree cutting to be complete within the permitting period. A temporary crossing will be built for Great Falls to get equipment safely across tracks.
- **Resident Engineer:** WSP was awarded the resident engineer contract for the Wells project. Alec Peralta will be the primary engineer and has extensive experience building stations and working along the railroad.
- **Communication and Kick-off Meeting:** Communication between all stakeholders remains strong with regular updates and collaboration. A formal kick-off meeting is scheduled for later in the week with the Great Falls Construction, WSP, the Town of Wells, Maine Turnpike Authority and NNEPRA staff.

Patricia provided an update on other projects:

- **Portland Station Relocation:**
 - Stakeholder outreach efforts are ongoing.
 - A meeting with the City of Portland, GPCOG, Portland Chamber, MaineHealth, and VHB was held earlier in the month. The group will reconvene to address questions related to NNEPRA's siting analysis.
- **West Falmouth Station:**
 - No updates, however, stakeholder coordination remains positive.
- **Rockland Branch:**
 - There are no new developments related to passenger service on the Rockland Branch.
 - Mr. Nate Moulton commented that freight service is expected to commence in April 2025. The new Host Railroad is working with the STB on necessary paperwork.
- **Service Development Plan (SDP)**
 - NNEPRA has begun working with DB to convene a stakeholder group to discuss the next steps.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

NNEPRA Staff Update on Recent Developments:

- **Operation Lifesaver Presentation:**

Patricia informed the Board that NNEPRA coordinated its second Operation Lifesaver presentation in Durham at the University of New Hampshire. Representatives from New Hampshire station communities and surrounding non-station communities and CSX participated. The session was facilitated by Norma Griffiths of FRA
- **2025 Legislative Session:**

Patricia provided an update on LD487 noting that a public hearing had been held earlier in the month. NNEPRA and MaineDOT testified in opposition to the bill noting that the Corridor ID Program has specific criteria and is not meant to determine feasibility, but to implement or improve existing passenger rail service. Patricia noted that the CID program is a discretionary grant and is very competitive. There is a work session scheduled for March 25th to provide more information.
- **Amtrak CEO Transition:**

Patricia informed the Board that Stephen Gardner, Amtrak CEO, resigned. Patricia commented that he was a long-term friend of the Downeaster service and would be missed. Roger Harris, Amtrak's president, will be in charge for the time being. There is no word on a transition or replacement plan at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment.

No public comment.

Motion to Enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 MRS § 405(6)(E) for the purpose of discussing the acquisition of real property.

Motion: Ms. Alison Harris
Second: Ms. Maggie Edson
Approved: All

Executive Session began at 3:52 pm

Motion to End Executive Session

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Carolann Ouellette

Approved: All

Executive Session ended at 4:11 pm

Motion to adjourn

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Carolann Ouellette

Approved: All

Meeting Adjourned at 4:12 pm.



Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. FY24	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Mar 25	FY25	44,131	44,876	-745	95%	\$ 1,148,249	\$ 1,050,087	\$ 98,162	\$ 26.02
Feb 25	FY25	38,894	40,784	-1,890	93%	924,774	\$ 954,337	\$ (29,563)	\$ 23.78
Jan 25	FY25	39,431	41,238	-1,807	96%	\$ 908,997	\$ 950,536	\$ (41,539)	\$ 23.05
Dec 24	FY25	47,027	46,905	122	100%	1,159,068	\$ 1,099,922	\$ 59,146	\$ 24.65
Nov 24	FY25	46,828	48,005	-1,177	98%	\$ 1,154,368	\$ 1,125,717	\$ 28,651	\$ 24.65
Oct 24	FY25	52,059	52,075	-16	95%	\$ 1,234,285	\$ 1,218,560	\$ 15,725	\$ 23.71
Sep 24	FY25	51,640	45,045	6,595	97%	\$ 1,216,884	\$ 1,045,246	\$ 171,638	\$ 23.56
Aug 24	FY25	56,667	62,856	-6,189	92%	\$ 1,372,957	\$ 1,458,268	\$ (85,311)	\$ 24.23
Jul 24	FY25	57,854	59,034	-1,180	100%	\$ 1,368,838	\$ 1,369,578	\$ (740)	\$ 23.66
FY25 To Date		434,531	440,818	-6,287	96%	10,488,420	10,272,251	\$ 216,169	\$ 24.14
Jun 24	FY24	50,853	48,530	2,323	113%	\$ 1,191,491	\$ 965,829	\$ 225,662	\$ 23.43
May 24	FY24	46,412	45,167	1,245	118%	\$ 1,074,148	\$ 880,764	\$ 193,384	\$ 23.14
Apr 24	FY24	48,976	51,405	-2,429	109%	\$ 1,156,686	\$ 989,546	\$ 167,140	\$ 23.62
Mar 24	FY24	46,537	40,191	6,346	122%	\$ 1,105,299	\$ 783,722	\$ 321,577	\$ 23.75
Feb 24	FY24	42,045	36,742	5,303	126%	\$ 1,009,621	\$ 707,287	\$ 302,334	\$ 24.01
FY24 Total		598,428	556,618	41,810	127%	13,051,548	10,882,278	2,169,270	\$ 21.81

Fiscal Year 2025 To Date



4,176



5,227

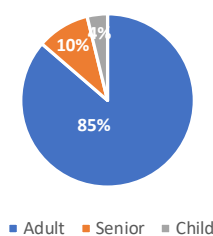


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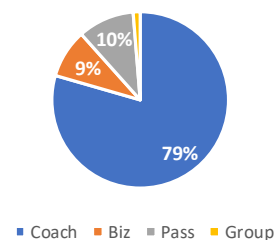


1,470

FY25
Riders by Passenger Type



FY25
Riders by Ticket Type



FY25 Performance Targets

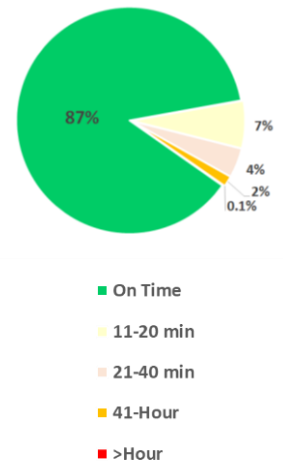
Ridership	542,462	Train On Time Performance	75%	Café Cost Recovery	78%
Revenue	\$ 12,639,493	Customer On Time Performance	85%	Café Capture Ratio	17%
Average Fare	\$ 23.30	Overall Customer Satisfaction	90%	Café Check Average	\$10.95
Overall Cost Recovery	47%				

Modified 10/28/24



Downeaster Performance Metrics - Last 12 Months								
Period	FY	Trains	Passenger	On Time Performance		Downeaster Café		CSI
		Operated	Miles	End Point	Customer	Capture Ratio	Check AVG	
Mar 25	FY25	310	3,973,101	87%	79%	18%	\$ 11.02	91
Feb 25	FY25	274	3,392,887	59%	74%	18%	\$ 11.02	86
Jan 25	FY25	308	3,532,050	77%	86%	17%	\$ 10.72	90
Dec 24	FY25	308	4,233,423	72%	84%	17%	\$ 11.27	90
Nov 24	FY25	296	4,047,137	63%	78%	16%	\$ 10.76	87
Oct 24	FY25	303	4,454,370	43%	58%	16%	\$ 9.84	83
Sep 24	FY25	295	4,384,718	70%	82%	17%	\$ 10.28	93
Aug 24	FY25	293	5,010,367	64%	75%	18%	\$ 10.47	90
Jul 24	FY25	308	5,444,093	65%	78%	18%	\$ 10.47	90
FY25 To Date		2,695	38,472,146	67%	77%	17%	\$ 10.65	89

March 2025
Delay Intensity by Rider



Jun 24	FY24	298	4,529,993	55%	70%	19%	\$ 10.28	88
May 24	FY24	310	4,037,621	73%	86%	17%	\$ 9.92	90
Apr 24	FY24	294	4,307,349	74%	84%	18%	\$ 10.61	90
Mar 24	FY24	306	4,058,625	82%	86%	19%	\$ 10.88	88
Feb 24	FY24	290	3,655,150	83%	89%	18%	\$ 10.79	90
FY24 Total		3,622	52,332,352	71%	81%	18%	\$ 10.43	90

FY 2025 Downeaster Customer Satisfaction											
	Sample Size	Overall Score	Train Comfort	Train Cleanliness	Train Crew	OTP	Train Status Info	Café	WiFi	Station Staff	Station Overall
Mar	606	91.1	88	84	94	86	85	81	74	94	83
Feb	891	86.1	81	80	92	73	76	76	73	90	77
Jan	1,056	90.1	89	86	93	87	84	76	79	92	83
Dec	1,139	89.5	89	87	96	85	84	76	76	92	84
Nov	654	87.5	87	87	92	75	82	77	77	91	81
Oct	1,186	83.2	81	76	88	57	71	66	66	87	85
Sep	1,126	92.8	87	89	93	87	88	77	72	94	83
Aug	786	89.7	86	86	91	75	79	80	81	87	86
Jul	1,335	92.2	91	90	94	81	85	79	81	92	86
FY25 to Date	8,173	89.1	86	85	93	78	81	76	76	91	83
Jun	746	89.8	86	82	90	70	75	73	68	90	83
May	604	92.2	89	88	96	88	85	76	76	91	84
Apr	546	90.3	88	85	95	86	82	78	77	95	83
FY24 Year End	11,292	90.4	88	86	93	83	82	77	74	91	85



NNEPRA Fiscal Year 2025
Operating Budget Variance Report
 July 2024 - February 2025

	February-25			Fiscal Year to Date February 25			
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 924,774	\$ 954,337	\$ (29,563)	\$ 9,340,171	\$ 9,222,164	\$ 118,007	1%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 72,727	\$ 72,774	\$ (47)	\$ 692,014	\$ 724,036	\$ (32,022)	-4%
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 63,781	\$ 43,650	\$ 20,131	\$ 430,448	\$ 401,952	\$ 28,496	7%
Interest & Other Revenue	\$ 73,682	\$ 46,600	\$ 27,082	\$ 482,111	\$ 388,423	\$ 93,688	24%
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 1,134,964	\$ 1,117,361	\$ 17,603	\$ 10,944,744	\$ 10,736,575	\$ 208,169	2%
Expenses							
Administration							
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 85,302	\$ 96,750	\$ (11,448)	\$ 723,150	\$ 785,468	\$ (62,318)	-8%
Office Expenses	\$ 18,977	\$ 12,802	\$ 6,175	\$ 105,963	\$ 128,416	\$ (22,453)	-17%
Professional Services	\$ 16,226	\$ 22,000	\$ (5,774)	\$ 103,509	\$ 161,715	\$ (58,206)	-36%
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 74,507	\$ 60,605	\$ 13,902	23%
Board Operations	\$ 849	\$ 1,041	\$ (192)	\$ 14,048	\$ 17,652	\$ (3,604)	-20%
Total Admin Expenses	\$ 121,354	\$ 132,593	\$ (11,239)	\$ 1,021,177	\$ 1,153,856	\$ (132,679)	-11%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Train Operations	\$ 532,329	\$ 618,833	\$ (86,504)	\$ 4,620,397	\$ 5,060,807	\$ (440,410)	-9%
Amtrak Equipment Maintenance	\$ 704,450	\$ 782,240	\$ (77,790)	\$ 5,690,752	\$ 6,203,612	\$ (512,860)	-8%
Amtrak Support Services	\$ 149,267	\$ 180,121	\$ (30,854)	\$ 1,451,597	\$ 1,497,849	\$ (46,252)	-3%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 187,935	\$ 187,187	\$ 748	\$ 1,476,489	\$ 1,672,041	\$ (195,552)	-12%
Other Train Operations	\$ 130,820	\$ 179,334	\$ (48,514)	\$ 1,429,598	\$ 1,371,806	\$ 57,792	4%
Facilities	\$ 67,333	\$ 72,820	\$ (5,487)	\$ 479,390	\$ 554,255	\$ (74,865)	-14%
FY24 Capital Maintenance	\$ 3,226	\$ 3,226	\$ -	\$ 402,027	\$ 402,027	\$ -	0%
FY25 Capital Maintenance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,775,360	\$ 2,023,761	\$ (248,401)	\$ 15,550,250	\$ 16,762,397	\$ (1,212,147)	-7%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	\$ 44,810	\$ 43,710	\$ 1,100	\$ 351,364	\$ 344,196	\$ 7,168	2%
Platform Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 316,372	\$ 215,157	\$ 101,215	47%
Station Platform Leases	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,063	\$ 42,314	\$ (4,251)	-10%
Station Improvements	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ (500)	\$ 95,766	\$ 102,500	\$ (6,734)	-7%
Total Station Operations	\$ 44,810	\$ 44,210	\$ 600	\$ 801,565	\$ 704,167	\$ 97,398	14%
Total Food Service	\$ 110,349	\$ 100,159	\$ 10,190	\$ 913,764	\$ 908,458	\$ 5,306	1%
Total Marketing	\$ 17,442	\$ 46,913	\$ (29,471)	\$ 268,044	\$ 351,172	\$ (83,128)	-24%
Total Expenses	\$ 2,069,315	\$ 2,347,636	\$ (278,321)	\$ 18,554,800	\$ 19,880,050	\$ (1,325,250)	-7%
Add'l Funding Required	\$ 934,351	\$ 1,230,275	\$ (295,924)	\$ 7,610,056	\$ 9,143,475	\$ (1,533,419)	-17%
Downeaster Ridership	38,894	40,784	(1,890)				
Overall cost recovery	55%	48%		59%	54%		
Café Recovery	66%	73%		76%	80%		