
Board Briefing Materials

February 23, 2026

Location:
Virtual via Zoom

3:00pm Public Session



For More Information

 207-780-1000 x 105

 info@nnepra.com



**NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY**

NNEPRA FY2026 Priorities

Core Objectives:

- Support and maintain a culture of safety.
- Maximize Downeaster ridership, revenue and cost recovery
- Enhance public benefits associated with the Downeaster.
- Maintain compliance with all regulations
- Secure funding mechanisms to sustain Downeaster operations and continued capital investments in the Downeaster Corridor.

Meet or exceed projected Downeaster Performance Benchmarks

FY26 Performance Targets					
Ridership	562,039	Train On Time Performance	80%	Café Cost Recovery	79%
Revenue	\$ 13,186,221	Customer On Time Performance	85%	Café Capture Ratio	18%
Average Fare	\$ 23.46	Overall Customer Satisfaction	90%	Café Check Average	\$10.95
Overall Cost Recovery	51%				

Improve Downeaster Service Efficiency

- Increase revenue on peak trains
- Maximize equipment utilization
- Pursue opportunities to restore fourth coach to Downeaster trainsets
- Increase Ridership on off-peak trains
- Improve cost recovery in Café

Improve Passenger Services & Communication

- Enhance Station experience for passengers
- Promote and improve connectivity to Amtrak network
- Improve/promote last mile connectivity at Downeaster stations

Sponsor Capital Projects to improve safety, service quality and efficiency

- Wells Area Improvement Project
- 2025 Tie Replacement Program
- Monitor Positive Train Control install
- 2025-2026 Capital Maintenance Program
- Portland Platform Repair

Plan for Service Improvement/Expansions

- Portland Station Relocation
- West Falmouth Station
- 6th Round Trip Brunswick-Wells
- Monitor Rockland Branch potential
- Service Development Plan
 - Additional Frequencies
 - Reduced Travel Time
 - Improved Reliability
 - Prepare for AIRO Fleet

NNEPRA BOARD of DIRECTORS

February 23, 2026

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Agenda

3:00pm Public Session

- Welcome & Safety Briefing
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from January 26, 2026 Board Meeting
- MaineDOT Board Designee
- Downeaster Performance Fiscal Year to Date
 - Marketing Activities
- Budget Variance Report
- Capital/Maintenance Project Updates
 - Wells Area Improvement Project
- Downeaster Service Improvements/Expansion Planning
 - Spring and Fall Schedule changes
 - Portland Station Relocation
 - 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: March 23, 2026



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

January 26, 2026 – Meeting

Directors in Attendance:

Chairman Jim Cohen; Vice Chairman Cassavant; Commissioner Michael Duguay; Mr. Nate Moulton; Ms. Alison Harris; Ms. Maggie Edson

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

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

Interested Parties:

Mr. Irwin Gratz, Maine Public Radio; Ms. Patty Barber, Rail Passenger Association; Mr. Peter Cole, Maine Rail Group; Mr. David Choi, LiRo-Hill; Mr. F. Bruce Sleeper, TrainRiders Northeast; Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach; Mr. Donnie Maley, DWM; Mr. Luke Irvine, Amtrak; Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; and Ms. Carolann Ouellette, DECD

OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was called to order at 3:02pm.

Roll call was taken with all directors present except for Director Murray. A safety briefing and an Operation Lifesaver rail fact were presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment. No public comments were provided. Public comment was then closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve November 17, 2025 Minutes, amended to reflect Director Edson as present

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REPORT – Belle Askinasi

Ms. Belle Askinasi provided an overview of the purpose of the Legislative Council Reports noting an annual due date of February 1st.

Motion to accept Legislative Council Reports

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

FISCAL YEAR 2026 PERFORMANCE REVIEW – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Patricia Quinn provided an overview of the first six months of Fiscal Year 2026, reporting that ridership has remained strong and that ticket revenue is running ahead of budget. She noted that December ticket revenue figures were estimates.

Ms. Quinn also reviewed a delay analysis and overview of train operations, noting an increase in early arrivals. Customer satisfaction scores remained highest for onboard crew, station staff, and train cleanliness, while Wi-Fi performance continues to struggle. Ms. Quinn reported that Amtrak has modified its Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) reporting.

Mr. Brian Beeler reported that Café sales were less than projected in October and November due to the number of canceled trains. He noted that performance rebounded in December and continued to improve in January. Ms. Quinn added that Mr. Beeler and Ms. Taylor Auclair are developing new Café marketing strategies to encourage sales.

Ms. Quinn presented the FY26 budget variance report July-December 2025. Total operating revenue reached approximately \$7 million, exceeding projections by \$247,000, while expenses were approximately \$320,000 under budget. Year-to-date, NNEPRA is ahead of budget by approximately \$567,000.

Ms. Quinn reported that Station Operations exceeded the budget by approximately \$148,000 due to unforeseen station and platform repairs at the Portland station. Chairman Cohen clarified that the budget only includes Portland Station expenses because it is the only station for which NNEPRA is responsible for operating expenses.

Motion to accept financial report

Motion: Mr. Alan Cassavant

Second: Mr. Nate Moulton

Approved: All

Ms. Auclair reported that the January fare promotion launched on December 15, 2025. To date, approximately 2,500 riders have utilized the promotion, representing an increase over the sale in 2025.

Ms. Auclair also provided an update on upcoming community partnerships and events intended to support visibility and ridership growth.

CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATES – Jim Russell

- **Wells Area Improvement Project:** The project continues to progress with the platform roof to be set within a month.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS/ EXPANSION PLANNING – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Quinn updated the Board on next steps for implementing a sixth Downeaster round trip between Brunswick and Wells, reporting that NNEPRA staff are working with Amtrak on schedule adjustments to support expanded service.

PROJECT UPDATES – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Patricia Quinn provided an update on the Portland Station Relocation project and preparations to apply for Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) discretionary grant funding for a station at Site 3. She stated that the City of Portland prefers a different location, Site 2 and noted concerns regarding elements of the City staff presentation to the Sustainability & Transportation Committee meeting in October of 2025.

Ms. Quinn reported that NNEPRA has followed all required processes outlined by the FRA and that relocating the station to Site 2 is not consistent with City or Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) plans and policies related to transportation expansion. She noted that mixed-use, transit-oriented development is a priority for the City and both that Sites meet those objectives.

Ms. Quinn provided an overview of additional information which has been completed by NNEPRA and its consultants and shared with City staff and officials in response to City requests for additional analysis. These included:

- A memorandum prepared by NNEPRA's legal counsel, Bernstein Shur, comparing Site 2 and Site 3. The memorandum concluded that Site 2 is not viable due to land availability and site constraints.
- Updated Site 3 renderings, prepared by engineering consultant VHB, demonstrating traffic flow from St. John Street and highlighting connectivity to Mercy Hospital and the Fore River Parkway and demonstrating that Site 3 offers strong visibility from St. John Street, Interstate 295, the Fore River Parkway, and the Veterans Memorial Bridge.
- Additional analysis of Site 2, prepared by VHB, which identified the need for a parking garage, a station track which would extend across Congress Street and require the placement of the passenger platform on County property, adjacent to the jail. The analysis highlighted concerns regarding pedestrian safety given that more than 600 MaineHealth shuttles enter and exit the parking lot daily. Using the same footprint as Site 3, VHB created massing illustrations to provide a visual representation of a potential station at Site 2. VHB also prepared a memo describing the risks associated with a passenger station adjacent to a busy railroad grade crossing.
- A cost analysis comparing station development at Site 3 and Site 2 which estimated project costs of approximately \$60 million for Site 3 and \$79 million for Site 2.
- A legal opinion from Bernstein Shur regarding NNEPRA's authority to exercise eminent domain over MaineHealth and County Jail property. The memorandum concluded that NNEPRA lacks authority to condemn County-owned land and that, without a voluntary transfer of jail property, Site 2 cannot proceed.

Ms. Quinn reported that the additional analysis had been transmitted to the City and stakeholder group and that NNEPRA has requested a meeting to seek resolution. She also noted that continued community outreach efforts are underway.

Discussion

Commissioner Duguay asked whether the City has defined its multimodal transportation goals for Site 2 and whether the same vision could be achieved at Site 3. Ms. Quinn responded that the City has not provided specific goals for Site 2, noting that METRO has agreed to work with NNEPRA to provide service to a new station.

Chairman Cohen reiterated the Board's rationale for selecting Site 3 as the location that best meets project needs. Referencing VHB's connectivity diagrams, he emphasized the importance of the site's location south of the Mountain Division and the continued need for access to the Portland Layover Facility at Thompson's Point. He also highlighted the accessibility of Site 3 for pedestrian and bicycle use.

Commissioner Duguay inquired about land constraints at Site 2 and whether reconfiguration of the parking garage and station could improve visibility. Ms. Quinn responded that such changes would increase project costs and require acquisition of additional jail property.

Commissioner Duguay asked whether discussions had occurred with MaineHealth regarding use of its parking garage for additional parking. Ms. Quinn responded that discussions have been ongoing for years, and that Maine Health has been clear that the capacity in the garage is needed to meet future workforce demand driven by regional healthcare needs and that they do not support a train station at Site 2 under any circumstances.

Ms. Quinn also noted that Amtrak does not support a station at Site 2 due to proximity to the jail and potential operational impacts.

Ms. Natalie Bogart reported that a recent presentation to the Urbanist Coalition of Maine resulted in the organization changing its position to support Site 3 and that they have provided a letter of support .

W. FALMOUTH STATION– Patricia Quinn

No updates on W. Falmouth at this time.

Service Development Plan – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Quinn informed the Board of an upcoming Technical Stakeholder Group meeting to discuss service improvements including the potential for a 7th and 8th Downeaster round-trip. A mainline station in Portland is a prerequisite for additional frequency.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

- **MBTA Letters of Support:** Ms. Quinn informed the Board that the MBTA requested letters of support for two projects to be submitted under the National Railroad Partnership Grant Program. She reported that the projects include the Draw One bridge replacement into North Station and the Haverhill double-tracking project, both of which are significant investments and critical to Downeaster service.
- **Employee Recognition:** Ms. Quinn recognized Ms. Bogart for twenty (20) years of dedicated service to NNEPRA and Downeaster service.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cohen opened the floor to public comment. Mr. Bruce Sleeper commented that the Portland Station relocation Site 3 provides the best connectivity to Portland trail network.

Public comment was then closed.

No executive session needed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

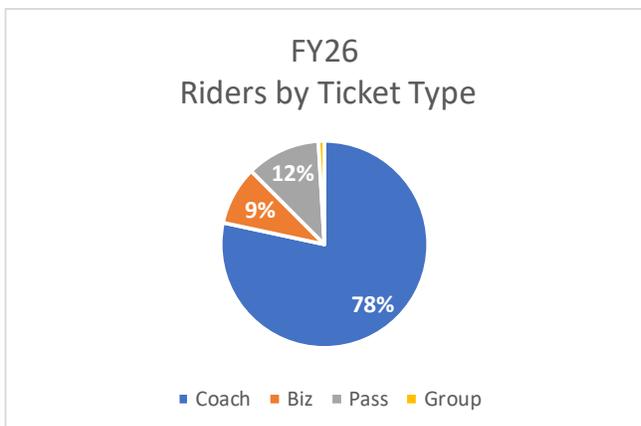
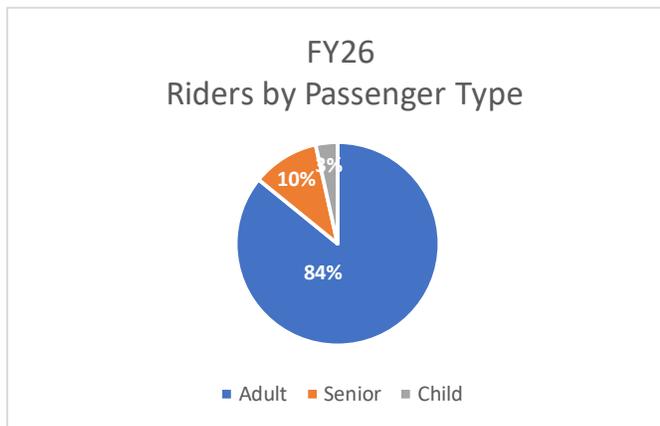
Motion to adjourn

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson
Second: Mr. Nate Moulton
Approved: All

Meeting Adjourned at 4:34PM

Downeaster Performance Metrics - FY26 To Date									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. FY24	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Jan 26	FY26	38,023	39,588	-1,565	92%	\$ 952,107	\$ 930,329	\$ 21,778	\$25.04
Dec 26	FY26	43,927	45,029	-1,102	94%	\$ 1,081,093	\$ 1,058,177	\$ 22,916	\$24.61
Nov 25	FY26	45,515	46,085	-570	95%	\$ 1,106,242	\$ 1,082,993	\$ 23,249	\$24.31
Oct 25	FY26	49,539	52,623	-3,084	90%	\$ 1,168,211	\$ 1,236,649	\$ (68,438)	\$23.58
Sep 25	FY26	48,735	50,874	-2,139	92%	\$ 1,151,876	\$ 1,195,545	\$ (43,669)	\$23.64
Aug 25	FY26	59,386	59,298	88	96%	\$ 1,419,540	\$ 1,393,509	\$ 26,031	\$23.90
Jul 25	FY26	55,074	43,407	11,667	96%	\$ 1,344,261	\$ 998,361	\$ 345,900	\$24.41
FY26 To Date		340,199	336,904	3,295	94%	8,223,330	7,895,563	327,767	\$ 24.17
Jun 25	FY25	43,033	35,597	7,436	85%	\$ 800,066	\$ 831,339	\$ (31,273)	\$18.59
May 25	FY25	35,176	32,466	2,710	76%	\$ 846,440	\$ 756,467	\$ 89,973	\$24.06
Apr 25	FY25	39,909	33,581	6,328	81%	\$ 857,673	\$ 779,436	\$ 78,237	\$21.49
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
FY25 Final		552,649	542,462	10,187	92%	12,992,599	12,639,493	\$ 353,106	\$23.51

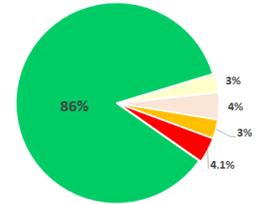
FY26 Performance Targets					
	Target		Target		Target
Ridership	562,039	Train On Time Performance	80%	Café Cost Recovery	79%
Revenue	\$ 13,186,221	Customer On Time Performance	85%	Café Capture Ratio	18%
Average Fare	\$ 23.46	Over Customer Satisfaction	90%	Café Check Average	\$ 10.95
Overall Cost Recovery	51%				



Downeaster Performance Metrics - FY26 To Date								
Period	FY	Trains Operated	Passenger Miles	On Time Performance		Downeaster Café		CSI
				End Point	Customer	Capture Ratio	Check AVG	
Jan 26	FY26	296	3,364,360	78%	86%	17%	\$ 11.21	89
Dec 25	FY26	308	3,900,405	82%	87%	18%	\$ 11.66	88
Nov 25	FY26	292	3,913,097	88%	95%	15%	\$ 10.94	94
Oct 25	FY26	282	3,916,117	70%	80%	14%	\$ 10.73	89
Sep 25	FY26	298	4,223,537	89%	94%	16%	\$ 10.96	91
Aug 25	FY26	310	5,199,036	71%	83%	17%	\$ 11.02	90
Jul 25	FY26	306	4,692,348	63%	79%	17%	\$ 10.64	88
FY26 To Date		2,092	29,208,900	77%	86%	16%	\$ 11.02	77
Jun 25	FY25	240	3,461,297	50%	61%	16%	\$ 9.83	89
May 24	FY25	258	3,004,451	64%	77%	18%	\$ 9.66	89
Apr 25	FY25	264	3,332,815	64%	74%	17%	\$ 10.07	88
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
FY25 Total		3,457	48,270,709	65%	76%	17%	\$ 10.45	89%

Delay Intensity

January



- On Time
- 11-20 min
- 21-40 min
- 41-Hour
- >Hour

FY 2026 Downeaster Customer Satisfaction 3.1										
	Sample Size	Overall Satisfaction	Train Comfort	Train Cleanliness	Train Crew	OTP	Train Status Info	Café	WiFi	Station Staff
Jan	1,023	88.8	89	88	94	86	85	84	80	91
Dec	1,150	90.0	89	89	94	90	90	86	80	93
Nov	1,076	93.0	90	90	95	94	92	86	82	95
Oct	1,079	89.0	89	88	94	88	88	83	75	92
Sep	1,363	92.0	90	89	94	92	91	84	80	93
Aug	1,518	90.0	90	89	94	89	90	86	81	92
Jul	1,342	88.4	89	89	93	86	86	85	78	92
FY26 to Date	8,551	90.2	89	89	94	89	89	85	79	93
Jun	953	86.0	84	81	94	74	76	72	68	90
May	930	88.9	87	85	93	78	81	77	73	91
Apr	855	88.4	87	85	92	77	80	77	71	91
Mar	1,060	91.1	88	84	94	86	85	81	74	94
Feb	891	86.1	81	80	92	73	76	76	73	90
FY25 Year End	11,292	90.4	88	86	93	83	82	77	74	91



NNEPRA Fiscal Year 2026
Operating Budget Variance Report
 July 2025 - December 2025

Cash-Based Financial Reporting

v5

	December-25			Fiscal Year to Date December 25			
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 1,081,093	\$ 1,058,177	\$ 22,916	\$ 7,271,222	\$ 6,965,233	\$ 305,989	4%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 100,968	\$ 87,383	\$ 13,585	\$ 509,181	\$ 548,893	\$ (39,712)	-7%
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 54,026	\$ 55,000	\$ (974)	\$ 337,749	\$ 340,000	\$ (2,251)	-1%
Interest & Other Revenue	\$ 29,107	\$ 39,600	\$ (10,493)	\$ 245,291	\$ 237,600	\$ 7,691	3%
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 1,265,194	\$ 1,240,160	\$ 25,034	\$ 8,363,443	\$ 8,091,726	\$ 271,717	3%
Expenses							
Administration							
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 97,481	\$ 105,336	\$ (7,855)	\$ 545,722	\$ 589,138	\$ (43,416)	-7%
Office Expenses	\$ 10,498	\$ 10,702	\$ (204)	\$ 70,304	\$ 82,412	\$ (12,108)	-15%
Professional Services	\$ 10,848	\$ 13,980	\$ (3,132)	\$ 113,990	\$ 130,190	\$ (16,200)	-12%
Insurance	\$ 50,387	\$ 60,980	\$ (10,593)	\$ 60,361	\$ 60,980	\$ (619)	-1%
Board Operations	\$ 12,275	\$ 17,160	\$ (4,885)	\$ 14,823	\$ 22,511	\$ (7,688)	-34%
Total Admin Expenses	\$ 181,489	\$ 208,158	\$ (26,669)	\$ 805,200	\$ 885,231	\$ (80,031)	-9%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Train Operations	\$ 691,536	\$ 687,201	\$ 4,335	\$ 4,180,027	\$ 4,014,787	\$ 165,240	4%
Amtrak Equipment Maintenance	\$ 795,084	\$ 803,307	\$ (8,223)	\$ 4,589,153	\$ 4,710,200	\$ (121,047)	-3%
Amtrak Support Services	\$ 97,593	\$ 102,002	\$ (4,409)	\$ 595,683	\$ 620,673	\$ (24,990)	-4%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 163,056	\$ 220,653	\$ (57,597)	\$ 1,033,508	\$ 1,271,006	\$ (237,498)	-19%
Other Train Operations	\$ 148,187	\$ 200,610	\$ (52,423)	\$ 877,949	\$ 1,155,267	\$ (277,318)	-24%
Facilities	\$ 73,476	\$ 73,776	\$ (300)	\$ 290,685	\$ 293,567	\$ (2,882)	-1%
FY26 Capital Maintenance	\$ 5,916	\$ 5,916	\$ -	\$ 18,489	\$ 18,489	\$ -	0%
Total Train Operations	\$ 1,974,848	\$ 2,093,465	\$ (118,617)	\$ 11,585,494	\$ 12,083,989	\$ (498,495)	-4%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	\$ 49,683	\$ 47,006	\$ 2,677	\$ 302,974	\$ 273,536	\$ 29,438	11%
Platform Insurance	\$ 333,908	\$ 336,009	\$ (2,101)	\$ 333,908	\$ 336,009	\$ (2,101)	-1%
Station Platform Leases	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39,042	\$ 38,822	\$ 220	1%
Station Improvements	\$ 1,502	\$ 1,502	\$ -	\$ 227,765	\$ 105,500	\$ 122,265	116%
Total Station Operations	\$ 385,093	\$ 384,517	\$ 576	\$ 903,689	\$ 753,867	\$ 149,822	20%
Total Food Service	\$ 109,218	\$ 119,425	\$ (10,207)	\$ 664,380	\$ 685,644	\$ (21,264)	-3%
Total Marketing	\$ 47,109	\$ 49,017	\$ (1,908)	\$ 235,262	\$ 241,210	\$ (5,948)	-2%
Total Expenses	\$ 2,697,757	\$ 2,854,582	\$ (156,825)	\$ 14,194,025	\$ 14,649,941	\$ (455,916)	-3%
Add'l Funding Required	\$ 1,432,563	\$ 1,614,422	\$ (181,859)	\$ 5,830,582	\$ 6,558,215	\$ (727,633)	-11%
Downeaster Ridership	43,927	45,029	(1,102)	302,176	297,316	4,860	
Overall cost recovery	47%	43%		59%	55%		
Café Recovery	92%	73%		77%	80%		