
Board Briefing Materials

April 27, 2026

Location:

*International Marine Terminal | Training Room 112
454 Commercial 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**

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

April 27, 2026

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority

Agenda

3:00pm Public Session

- Welcome & Safety Briefing
- Public Comment
- Approval of Minutes from March 23, 2026 Board Meeting
- Preliminary FY2027 Budget Review
- Downeaster Performance Fiscal Year to Date
- Budget Variance Report
- Other Business & Updates
 - Public Open Houses
 - April 29, April 30
- 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: June 1, 2026



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

March 23, 2026

Directors in Attendance:

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

NNEPRA Staff in Attendance:

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

Interested Parties:

Mr. Dana Knapp, Concord Coach; Mr. Donnie Maley, DWM; and Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak; Mr. Luke Irvine, Amtrak and Mr. Reggie Groff, Groff Video

OPENING REMARKS

The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.

A safety briefing and an Operation Lifesaver rail fact were presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve January 26, 2026 Minutes

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Alison Harris

Approved: All

FISCAL YEAR 2026 PERFORMANCE REVIEW – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Quinn provided an overview of Fiscal Year 2026 through February, noting that canceled and modified trains negatively impacted ridership and revenue.

A delay analysis showed 11 train cancellations in February, with on-time performance affected by mechanical and weather-related issues. While delays and cancellations can lower Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) scores, February's CSI was reported at 87.2%.

Ms. Taylor Auclair reported that declines in ridership and revenue were strongly linked to cancellations and mechanical issues. NNEPRA continues to monitor paid media and grassroots marketing. February campaigns produced positive results with one million impressions and an increase in web traffic as well as direct referrals. NNEPRA continues to prioritize a "people first" messaging strategy with continuous community outreach.

Ms. Quinn presented the FY26 budget variance report for July through January 2026. Overall cost recovery is currently 58%, compared to a budgeted rate of 54%.

Director Edson asked about sustainable fuel options for the new Airo trains. Mr. Brian Beeler replied that while the trains are 99% more emissions-efficient, they use the same fuel.

Motion to accept financial report

Motion: Ms. Alison Harris
Second: Mr. Nate Howard
Approved: All

Ms. Quinn noted that a preliminary Fiscal Year 2027 budget is expected in April. Final Amtrak costs will not be available until October, but preliminary projections will be provided.

FY2026 WORK PLAN UPDATE – Patricia Quinn

- **Improve Downeaster Service Efficiency:** Ms. Quinn reported ongoing capacity constraints, with trains operating with three coaches, reducing capacity by approximately 216 seats per day. Since July 1, more than 400 trains have sold out, resulting in an estimated \$600,000 in lost revenue. NNEPRA has requested additional coaches from Amtrak, which has been successful on a limited basis. However, she noted that the process of requesting additional equipment as a state partner has become difficult due to centralized decision-making at Amtrak.

NNEPRA has also requested the ability to oversell some trains by approximately 15 seats to avoid stranded revenue associated with pass riders; Amtrak is considering this request.

Ms. Quinn also provided an update on the return of Horizon coaches, noting that 16 units have been identified as restorable and have undergone improvements. She reported that NNEPRA has requested 10 coaches be utilized to operate daily Downeaster service, rather than nine currently allocated, along with operational flexibility to put the additional capacity on trains with higher demand. She also noted the need for a transition plan to return to restore the contracted equipment level of twelve coaches per day.

Director Harris inquired about other services currently utilizing Horizon coaches and whether additional units could be made available. Ms. Quinn responded that Horizon equipment has been used in the Pacific Northwest and that Amfleet equipment was reassigned when those units were removed from service.

Mr. Kevin Chittenden, Amtrak, reported that no updates are available at this time.

Chairman Cohen suggested sending a memorandum to Amtrak to support NNEPRA's request for the additional coach, flexibility to match seats with demand and a detailed transition plan to restore contracted equipment levels.

Motion to send a letter from the Board to Amtrak detailing NNEPRA's requests.

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

- **Improve Passenger Services and Communication:** Ms. Quinn reported on various station enhancements aimed at improving passenger experience, promoting connectivity beyond the Downeaster route, and enhancing last-mile connections at station locations. She noted that the Portland Transportation Center (PTC) has undergone an atrium refresh and updates to wayfinding signage. Platform repairs are expected at the Exeter and Durham stations. In Freeport, a ticketing kiosk is scheduled to be installed at a local business, "*What the Actual Fudge*", and additional discussions are underway regarding broader station improvements.

Freeport officials have been invited to present their municipal development plans to the Board, including a proposed microtransit service that would be a benefit and support station access.

Amtrak has addressed ongoing Wi-Fi issues through technology upgrades.

- **Sponsored Capital Projects:**

Ms. Quinn provided an update on capital projects, including the following:

- **Wells Area Improvement Project:** Ongoing, including platform and pedestrian bridge construction, station upgrades, and improved access. Track speed upgrades remain under consideration.
- **2025 Tie Replacement Program:** The project is substantially complete, with approximately 121,000 ties installed. Tie pick-up and bridge timber installation remains underway.
- **FY2025 Capital Maintenance Program:** Complete.
- **FY2026 Capital Maintenance Program:** Anticipated to begin in 2026.
- **Portland Platform Repair:** Complete.
- **Positive Train Control (PTC):** Installation is underway; completion expected in September 2026.

- **Service Improvements and Expansion:**

Ms. Quinn provided an update on planning projects, including the following:

- **6th Round Trip Brunswick – Wells:** Ms. Quinn provided an update on implementation of a sixth Downeaster round trip, reporting that NNEPRA is coordinating with local employers, METRO, and the Biddeford-Saco-Old Orchard Beach (BSOOB) Transit Committee to support service expansion. She noted that the spring schedule will remain unchanged, with implementation potentially scheduled in fall 2026. Ms. Quinn added that the success of expanded service is dependent on the Portland Station Relocation (PSR) project.
- **West Falmouth Station:** No updates.
- **Service Development Plan:** Ms. Quinn provided an overview of the Service Development Program (SDP), including planning for seventh and eighth round trips. Public open houses are scheduled for April in Freeport and Saco, to present information and gather feedback. Board members are welcome to attend.

In response to a question regarding service expansion, Ms. Quinn confirmed that a sixth-round trip could be implemented without completion of the PSR project; however, the addition of seventh and eighth round trips would not be feasible without relocation of the station.

- **Portland Station Relocation:** Ms. Quinn reported that NNEPRA continues to coordinate with City staff regarding the PSR project. A mediator has been selected, and discussions are underway to determine the structure and timing of the mediation process.

Chairman Cohen noted that the project has involved extensive discussions and information exchange but has not yet resulted in a resolution. He stated that the Portland City Council previously determined that mediation was necessary and emphasized the importance of including decision-makers in the process. He noted that participation by City Council members is critical to the process.

It was noted that City staff have indicated that participation by City Councilors may not be necessary, despite prior Council action supporting mediation. Several Board members expressed that participation by elected officials is important to ensure that decision-making authority is represented.

Chairman Cohen emphasized the importance of maintaining an open and constructive dialogue among all parties, noting that while facts are established, a willingness to engage collaboratively is necessary to reach a resolution.

Board members also discussed the possibility of inviting City representatives to present to the NNEPRA Board. It was noted that while not required, such an opportunity could support mutual understanding.

Ms. Quinn reported that NNEPRA legal counsel has been asked to assist in coordinating next step and setting expectations for participation in the mediation process.

No formal action was taken.

OTHER BUSINESS – Patricia Quinn

Ms. Quinn will be in Washington DC April 21-23 to participate in States for Passenger Rail Coalition (SPRC) meetings on Capitol Hill.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn

Motion: Ms. Maggie Edson

Second: Ms. Nate Howard

Approved: All





Meeting Adjourned at 4:19PM



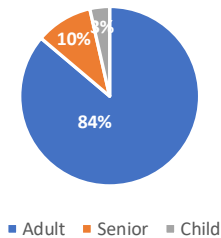
Downeaster Performance Metrics - FY26 To Date									
Period	FY	Ridership				Revenue			
		Actual	Budget	Variance	vs. FY24	Actual	Budget	Variance	\$/Rider
Mar 26	FY26	49,025	44,676	4,349	105%	\$ 1,221,972	\$ 1,049,875	\$ 172,097	\$ 24.93
Feb 26	FY26	34,195	40,363	-6,168	81%	\$ 843,978	\$ 948,535	\$ (104,557)	\$ 24.68
Jan 26	FY26	38,023	39,588	-1,565	92%	\$ 919,662	\$ 930,329	\$ (10,667)	\$ 24.19
Dec 25	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		423,419	421,943	1,476	94%	10,256,836	9,893,973	362,863	\$ 24.22
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%				

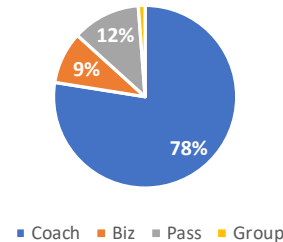
Downeaster Performance Fiscal Year 2026

 **4,782**
 **5,033**
 **773**
 **1,440**

FY26 Riders by Passenger Type



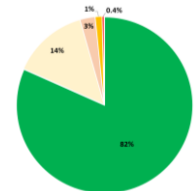
FY26 Riders by Ticket Type



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	
Mar 26	FY26	310	4,337,239	78%	93%	15%	\$ 11.74	92
Feb 26	FY26	269	2,915,273	60%	78%	16%	\$ 11.21	87
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		2,671	36,461,412	75%	86%	16%	\$ 11.12	90

Delay Intensity

March



- 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
Mar	1,039	92.0	90	89	85	84	95	94	93	92
Feb	745	87.2	86	86	94	81	82	80	78	92
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	10,335	90.0	89	89	93	88	89	85	81	92

NNEPRA Fiscal Year 2026
Operating Budget Variance Report

July 2025 - March 2026

Cash-Based Financial Reporting

	March-26			Fiscal Year to Date March 26			
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance	%
Operating Revenue							
Amtrak Ticket Revenue	\$ 1,193,984	\$ 1,049,875	\$ 144,109	\$ 10,228,847	\$ 9,893,972	\$ 334,875	3%
Food Service Revenue	\$ 96,058	\$ 86,697	\$ 9,361	\$ 727,786	\$ 790,744	\$ (62,958)	-8%
Parking Lot Revenue	\$ 85,688	\$ 55,000	\$ 30,688	\$ 552,567	\$ 512,500	\$ 40,067	8%
Interest & Other Revenue	\$ 41,158	\$ 53,600	\$ (12,442)	\$ 480,993	\$ 460,400	\$ 20,593	4%
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 1,416,888	\$ 1,245,172	\$ 171,716	\$ 11,990,193	\$ 11,657,616	\$ 332,577	3%
Expenses							
Administration							
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 89,312	\$ 101,297	\$ (11,985)	\$ 821,797	\$ 893,030	\$ (71,233)	-8%
Office Expenses	\$ 10,301	\$ 17,190	\$ (6,889)	\$ 109,199	\$ 117,015	\$ (7,816)	-7%
Professional Services	\$ 8,663	\$ 10,000	\$ (1,337)	\$ 142,738	\$ 146,850	\$ (4,112)	-3%
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 60,361	\$ 60,980	\$ (619)	-1%
Board Operations	\$ 941	\$ 1,274	\$ (333)	\$ 16,425	\$ 26,332	\$ (9,907)	-38%
Total Admin Expenses	\$ 109,217	\$ 129,761	\$ (20,544)	\$ 1,150,520	\$ 1,244,207	\$ (93,687)	-8%
Train Operations							
Amtrak Train Operations	\$ 620,220	\$ 687,201	\$ (66,981)	\$ 6,129,968	\$ 6,035,114	\$ 94,854	2%
Amtrak Equipment Maintenance	\$ 801,386	\$ 803,307	\$ (1,921)	\$ 6,923,230	\$ 7,090,668	\$ (167,438)	-2%
Amtrak Support Services	\$ 100,515	\$ 101,773	\$ (1,258)	\$ 881,622	\$ 915,542	\$ (33,920)	-4%
Train Fuel Cost	\$ 273,842	\$ 220,653	\$ 53,189	\$ 1,665,965	\$ 1,911,612	\$ (245,647)	-13%
Other Train Operations	\$ 143,555	\$ 200,077	\$ (56,522)	\$ 1,242,888	\$ 1,743,370	\$ (500,482)	-29%
Facilities	\$ 81,301	\$ 88,085	\$ (6,784)	\$ 549,888	\$ 536,878	\$ 13,010	2%
FY26 Capital Maintenance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,489	\$ 18,489	\$ -	0%
Total Train Operations	\$ 2,020,819	\$ 2,101,096	\$ (80,277)	\$ 17,412,050	\$ 18,251,673	\$ (839,623)	-5%
Station Operations							
Portland Station	\$ 47,506	\$ 46,556	\$ 950	\$ 442,479	\$ 410,104	\$ 32,375	8%
Platform Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 333,908	\$ 336,009	\$ (2,101)	-1%
Station Platform Leases	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,815	\$ 38,822	\$ (23,007)	-59%
Station Improvements	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 247,847	\$ 105,500	\$ 142,347	135%
Total Station Operations	\$ 67,506	\$ 66,556	\$ 950	\$ 1,040,049	\$ 890,435	\$ 149,614	17%
Total Food Service	\$ 125,150	\$ 119,030	\$ 6,120	\$ 998,218	\$ 1,007,702	\$ (9,484)	-1%
Total Marketing	\$ 32,145	\$ 33,125	\$ (980)	\$ 351,884	\$ 353,494	\$ (1,610)	0%
Total Expenses	\$ 2,354,837	\$ 2,449,568	\$ (94,731)	\$ 20,952,721	\$ 21,747,511	\$ (794,790)	-4%
Add'l Funding Required	\$ 937,949	\$ 1,204,396	\$ (266,447)	\$ 8,962,528	\$ 10,089,895	\$ (1,127,367)	-11%
Downeaster Ridership	49,025	44,676	4,349	\$ 423,419	\$ 421,943	1,476	
Overall cost recovery	60%	51%		57%	54%		
Café Recovery	77%	73%		73%	78%		