

SECTION 305 FINANCE and ADMINISTRATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES MARCH 4, 2020 3:00PM EASTERN CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Tim Ziethen, Chair of the S305 Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)</i>
ATTENDEES	<i>Tim Ziethen, Jeff Gordon, Troy Hughes, Amanda Martin, Brian Beeler II, Mike Murray, Strat Cavros, Steve Hewitt</i>
ABSENTEES	<i>Michael Lestingi, Jeff Gordon, Ray Hessinger, Brent Thompson, John Oimoen, Arun Rao, Shayne Gill, Larry Salci</i>

DECISIONS MADE

1. Welcome and Open Meeting – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Subcommittee Chair, Tim Ziethen, Amtrak, opened the conference call meeting and asked Steve Hewitt to call the roll.

2. Roll Call – Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt called the roll and could not confirm the presence of a quorum – lacking the presence of 1 state DOT representative.

It was agreed that the meeting would be held, but no decisions would be made, and no votes would be taken.

3. Approval of Minutes from the 2-5-20 conference calls – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Due to the lack of a quorum, the approval of the minutes from 2-5-20 was tabled until the next call, assuming a quorum is present.

4. Treasurer’s Update – Tim Ziethen:

a. Balance-Spend Rate:

Tim Ziethen reported: (Includes Invoices through).

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.

Amount Spent: \$542,423.82

Balance remaining: \$ 707,576.18

Spend Rate per month: approximately \$13,000

Projected total remaining at the end of the 36-month extension: \$39,000

Average Monthly expenditure estimated for the extension period is: \$15,000.00

Status: Grant Agreement extension request – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Tim Ziethen reported that FRA has received the Grant Adjustment Request Form (GARF) which Amtrak’s Treasurer signed and submitted to FRA Grants. The FRA has stated that it will likely take a few months to work through the process and that there are a few others in the que ahead of the NGEN’s. Tim noted “as we get closer (to the end of the current agreement) we will need to reach out and ask for an expedited review.”

5. Summary overview - the 10th NGEN Annual Meeting – Steve Hewitt/Tim Ziethen:

Steve Hewitt reported that the 10th Annual Meeting of the NGEN was a great success with around 80 in attendance – (77 signed in) up by around 10 or so over 2019.

The presentations were very well received. Feedback was extremely positive from states, Amtrak and industry members that I have heard from.

A new Executive Board was elected to two-year terms:

Executive Board Members:

Ron Pate, WSDOT
Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans
Jason Orthner, NCDOT
Mike Jenkins, Oregon DOT
Brian Beeler II, NNEPRA for Maine DOT
Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT
Troy Hughes, MODOT
Amanda Martin, IOWA DOT
Arun Rao, Wisconsin DOT
John Oimoen, IDOT
Michigan DOT

(Note: Michigan DOT has agreed to continuing to serve on the Board and will name its representative as soon as they have named the replacement for their Rail Division Director Tim Hoeffner who retired in January 2020.)

Tim Ziethen, Amtrak
Charlie King, Amtrak
Michael Lestingi, FRA

The new Board elected its officers:

Chairman – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT
Vice Chair – Charlie King, Amtrak
Secretary – John Oimoen, IDOT
Treasurer – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak

All presentations have been provided to AASHTO for posting to the website. The DRAFT meeting minutes were also sent to AASHTO for posting.

New Chairman Ray Hessinger provided a look ahead and highlighted several areas in which he intends to focus:

- He acknowledged that it is critical to continue to maintain and update the NGEC specifications and that this is a primary responsibility.
- Ray also emphasized the need to get the educational (two-pager) out far and wide to stakeholders and decision makers and to continue to keep it updated. Educating members on the Hill is also crucial to ensure that the NGEC is reauthorized.
- Ray called for the Technical subcommittee to review the Access Board Proposed Rulemaking regarding accessibility guidelines for Rail vehicles:

Whereas the Access Board has issued an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding an update to the accessibility guidelines for rail vehicles subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act and comments are due May 14th, Ray Hessinger charged the Technical Subcommittee with the task of comparing the proposed rules against NGEC specifications and document any discrepancies.

- He also called for the Executive Board review of all NGEC documents to ensure there are no holes in the NGEC portfolio of specifications and other documents.

Chairman Hessinger noted that the Acquisition and Ownership report will be the first completely new document prepared by the NGEC in several years. This year, he will ask the Executive Board to consider whether there are any holes in our portfolio of specifications and other documents and, if so, to begin the development of any such specification, guidance document, or report.

- Ensuring the execution of the NGEC 36-month no-cost grant agreement extension – (10-1-2020 thru 9-30-2023):

The current grant with the FRA expires at the end of September 2020 and a no-cost time extension request has been submitted to the FRA for approval. Timely approval of this no-cost grant agreement

extension is critical to a seamless continuation of NGEN operations for an additional 3 years. Chairman Hessinger tasked the FASC with continuing its efforts to shepherd this through the bureaucracy.

- Also, during the Annual Meeting, Chairman Hessinger made appointments to fill vacancies in various subcommittees and other NGEN panels/working groups:

As Chair – Ray Hessinger is an ex-officio member of the NGEN subcommittees. He is also Chair of the NGEN Review Panels and of the NGEN Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices and Lessons Learned working group. Steve Hewitt has added him to those groups accordingly.

John Oimoen, IDOT – Secretary of the NGEN Executive Board is appointed as second Vice-Chair of the Finance and Administrative subcommittee (FASC)

Troy Hughes, MoDOT is appointed to the NGEN Technical subcommittee and the NGEN FASC.

Jennifer Bastian, IDOT (pending confirmation of availability) is appointed to the NGEN Locomotive Review Panel

Phil Meraz, Iowa DOT is appointed to the NGEN Trainset Review panel

Phil Meraz, Iowa DOT is appointed to the NGEN Single Level Car Review Panel

Brian Beeler II, For Maine DOT is appointed to the NGEN DMU Review Panel

Momo Tamaoki, Caltrans is appointed to the NGEN DMU Review Panel

Tim Ziethen reported that he showed the two-pager to a company from the UK that is working with Amtrak on its asset management system. The company was very impressed with the NGEN's structure and process. In the UK, and, in Europe, in general, the structure is very much top-down and they were impressed with the NGEN's structure and the fact that the rail manufacturing and supply industry works together with the States, Amtrak and FRA in the development of specifications.

Steve Hewitt mentioned that a year or so ago, a UK commission or committee Steer was working with was using the NGEN as a model.

6. Other Issues/Questions – All:

Adjourn:

With no further business forthcoming, Chairman Ziethen adjourned today's meeting at 3:21pm Eastern.

The next call is scheduled for April 1, 2019

The call-in number is:

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#

Decisions - Action Items

Treasurer's Report – 2-5-20:

- a. Balance-Spend Rate:

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Conveying the message: Disseminating the two-page NGEC Educational Document and the NGEC "vision" statement:

The revisions/updates to the two-page educational document have been made and 400 copies were printed by MODOT and sent to Steve Hewitt.

Steve Hewitt distributed over 100 copies to attendees at the Annual meeting and 50 more copies were provided to TRB in January. The document is available to upon request in hard copy or PDF. Contact Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com.

Between the 2019 handout distribution and the new version released in January 2020, over 1000 copies (electronic and hard) have been distributed over the past 12 months.

Overview: Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA:

The next report will be due to FRA on April 30, 2020.

Status Update: NGEC Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices Working Group:

Developing a Reference Document

All 4 draft sections have been submitted to the technical writer.

Once the compiled DRAFT has been completed, it will be distributed to all working group members for review and comment. Following approval of the working group, the document will be submitted to the Executive Board for its review and consideration.

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#
Next Call 4-1-20

ATTACHMENTS



Our Vision: The NGEC will provide national leadership in standardization, acquisition, and management of passenger rail equipment.

SECTION 305 NGEC Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)

Conference call

3-4-2020

3:00PM Eastern

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#

AGENDA

1. Welcome/Open Tim Ziethen
2. Roll Call Steve Hewitt
3. Approval of the Minutes from 2-5-20 Tim Ziethen
4. Treasurer's Update Tim Ziethen
 - a. Balance-Spend Rate
 - b. Status: Grant Agreement extension Request – submitted to FRA
5. Summary overview NGECC 10th Annual Meeting Tim/Steve
6. Other Issues/questions All

Next Call April 1, 2020

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DRAFT