

# SECTION 305 FINANCE and ADMINISTRATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES      AUGUST 21, 2019      3:00PM EASTERN      CONFERENCE CALL

<b>FACILITATOR</b>	<i>Tim Ziethen, Chair of the S305 Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)</i>
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<i>Tim Ziethen, Brent Thompson, Eric Curtit, Amanda Martin, Amanda Martin also as proxy for Arun Rao, Jeff Gordon, Shayne Gill, Steve Hewitt</i>
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<i>Brian Beeler II, Arun Rao, Tim Hoeffner, Ray Hessinger, Michael Lestingi, Mike Murray, John Bell, Larry Salci, Strat Cavros</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 confirmed the presence of a quorum

**3. Approval of Minutes from the 7-24-19 call – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:**

On a motion by Brent Thompson, WSDOT, and a second by Eric Curtit, MODOT, the minutes from the 7-24-19 call were approved as presented.

**4. Treasurer’s Update – Balance – Spend rate – Tim Ziethen:**

Tim Ziethen noted that there were no changes to the last Treasurer’s report as AASHTO is in the process of submitting the June invoice.

The Treasurer’s report through the last invoice submitted for May 2019 is as follows:

Amount Spent through the May 2019 invoices: \$435, 409.33  
 Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
 Balance remaining: \$814,590.67  
 Spend Rate per month: \$13,606.

At this rate there is enough funding for several years (around 3). However, the grant period (as extended) runs through 9-30-2020. Tim noted that FRA has given verbal approval for another no-cost extension to be requested. The process for making the extension request should begin in Spring of 2020.

**5. NGEN – Looking Ahead – Reauthorization – Exec Board Actions – timeline – Eric Curtit:**

Tim Ziethen provided an intro/background on this agenda item. He reported that Amtrak Government Affairs is using a dollar amount of \$5 million over 5 years as a placeholder awaiting language, scope and funding request from the NGEN. Amtrak’s Board will be approving the Amtrak Reauthorization requests in September, but there would still be some ability to revise the NGEN language following that.

Eric Curtit reported that the NGEN Executive Board had a brief discussion on Reauthorization based on the FASC recommendation that the Board approve proposed language, scope and funding for reauthorizing the NGEN in the next federal surface transportation bill. The intent is to provide it to Amtrak and AASHTO and any others who may have an interest in including the language in their principles/requests for the FAST Act successor legislation.

Steve Hewitt and Eric Curtit will be preparing proposed language for Board consideration but have informed the Board that placeholder language may be needed (and – in the case of Amtrak is in place) based on the timelines of Amtrak and/or AASHTO.

**6.**

**Discussion: NGEN Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices WG – Eric Curtit:**

Status – Developing a Reference Document

The NGEN Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Working Group has developed 4 DRAFT sections: Planning, Implementation, Revenue Service, and Sustainability. The 4 sections are under review by the working group members. All comments are due to Eric Curtit and Steve Hewitt by 9-5-19. After that they will all be compiled and sent to working group members in advance of the next call – 9-19-19.

On 9-19-19 next steps in compiling all comments and synthesizing the 4 sections into a document without duplication and with one voice will be determined.

Discussion: Procuring professional assistance to compile and complete “report”

It is likely that the recommendation will be to procure professional services to complete the report/reference document.

Potential Next Steps

Assuming the next step is developing a SOW and budget for contracting out the completion of the reference document, the working group will need guidance from the FASC and from AASHTO on the mechanics and availability of funds.

Tim Ziethen asked what the anticipated funding need would be for a professional services contract to complete the report/reference document.

Eric Curtit responded that it would likely be in the ballpark of well under \$20,000.

Tim asked if there was any action required by the FASC at this time.

Eric stated – no action now – the intent today was to T it up to let the FASC and AASHTO know what is likely to be coming – as a heads up. Eric added that he will defer to Tim and to Strat (AASHTO) on the appropriate process for developing an RFP and going forward.

**7.**

**Other Issues/Questions – All:**

Steve Hewitt asked Tim Ziethen to provide him with the final version of the last Quarterly Grant report submitted to FRA on June 30, 2019, so that he can distribute it to the FASC and Executive Board members.

Tim will follow-up with Steve to provide him with the submitted version.

**Adjourn:**

With no further business forthcoming, Chairman Ziethen adjourned today’s meeting at 3:13pm Eastern.

**The next call is scheduled for September 18, 2019**

**The call-in number is:**

**888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#**

**Decisions - Action Items**

**Treasurer’s Report – 8-21-19:**

Amount Spent through the May 2019 invoices: \$435,409.53  
Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
Balance remaining: \$814,590.67  
Spend Rate per month: \$13, 606.54

### **NGEC Looking Ahead**

#### **Ensuring that the NGEC is reauthorized in the FAST Act successor:**

Amtrak is developing proposed language to include in its Re-authorization request but needs to know how much (funding) and how long (performance period).

On 8-21-19, Tim Ziethen provided an update on this agenda item. Amtrak Government Affairs is using a dollar amount of \$5 million over 5 years as a placeholder awaiting language, scope and funding request from the NGEC. Amtrak's Board will be approving the Amtrak Reauthorization requests in September, but there would still be some ability to revise the NGEC language following that.

Eric Curtit reported that the NGEC Executive Board had a brief discussion on Reauthorization based on the FASC recommendation that the Board approve proposed language, scope and funding for reauthorizing the NGEC in the next federal surface transportation bill. The intent is to provide it to Amtrak and AASHTO and any others who may have an interest in including the language in their principles/requests for the FAST Act successor legislation.

Steve Hewitt and Eric Curtit will be preparing proposed language for Board consideration but have informed the Board that placeholder language may be needed (and – in the case of Amtrak is in place) based on the timelines of Amtrak and/or AASHTO.

#### **Determining whether another no-cost grant extension is possible and what the steps are**

Tim Ziethen reported that FRA has confirmed that the NGEC Grant is eligible for additional no-cost grant agreement extension for a period commensurate with the remaining funds.

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

As of 8-21-19, Steve Hewitt reported that he has distributed 265 hard copies of the NGEC 2 pager educational document and 354 electronic copies. The hard copies have largely been distributed by representatives of transportation associations for distribution on the Hill. Some have also been used by industry members when speaking or attending various industry conferences.

This document is another way of getting the message out and is useful to many organizations to have to include with their information packets as they make their rounds on the Hill.

For copies– contact Steve with the number requested and where to send them.

#### **Overview: Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA:**

Quarter ending June 30, 2019 - report submitted on time to FRA July 31, 2019.

Tim Ziethen will provide Steve Hewitt with the final version of the quarterly report for distribution to FASC and Executive Board members.

#### **Next Report due to FRA – October 31, 2019**

#### **NGEC Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices WG – Eric Curtit:**

Status – Developing a Reference Document

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**888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#**  
**Next Call 8-21-19**

#### 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**  
**8-21-19**  
**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 7-24-19                                   | Tim Ziethen  |
| 4. Treasurer's Update - Balance-Spend Rate                                | Tim Ziethen  |
| 5. NGEC – Looking Ahead – Reauthorization – Exec Board actions - timeline | Eric Curtit  |
| 6. Discussion: NGEC Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Working Group     | Eric Curtit  |

- a. Status: Developing a Reference document
- b. Discussion: Procuring professional assistance to compile and complete the "report"
- c. Potential Next Steps

7. Other Issues/questions

All

**Next Call September 18, 2019**

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