

SECTION 305 FINANCE and ADMINISTRATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 14,
2022

3:00PM EASTERN

WEBEX MEETING

FACILITATOR	<i>Tim Ziethen, Chair of the S305 Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)</i>
ATTENDEES	<i>Tim Ziethen, Jeff Gordon, Ray Hessinger, Ray Hessinger also as proxy for Brian Beeler II, and Troy Hughes, Jason Biggs Jason Biggs also as proxy for Amanda Martin and for John Oimoen, Strat Cavros, Mike Murray, Steve Hewitt</i>
ABSENTEES	<i>Troy Hughes, Amanda Martin, Brian Beeler II, John Oimoen, Larry Salci, Shayne Gill, Rebecca Anger</i>

DECISIONS MADE

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

FASC Chair Tim Ziethen opened the meeting and asked Steve Hewitt to call the roll.

2. Roll Call – Steve Hewitt:

After calling the roll, Steve Hewitt confirmed the presence of a quorum.

3.

Approval of Minutes from the 8-17-22 conference calls – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak

On a motion by Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, and a second by Jason Biggs, WSDOT, the minutes from the 8-17-22 FASC call were approved as submitted.

4.

Treasurer's Update – Tim Ziethen:

Balance and Spend Rate:

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

Expenses Incurred through June 2022: \$1,017,901.39

Balance remaining: \$ 232,098.61

Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,752.19

Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$10,815.70

Strat Cavros, AASHT reported that the July expenses were be around \$3,000.

Tim will update the Balance, spend report, and provide it to Steve Hewitt. The lower spend in July will help with the overall balance contingency anticipated at the end of the grant period.

5.

NGEC Website Refresh Agreement – Status – Steve/Tim:

Steve Hewitt reported that the website refresh kick off meeting with iEngineering took place on 8-23-22. Participants included Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger as well as the AASHTO team of Shayne Gill, Strat Cavros, Rebecca Anger and David Dubov and representatives of iEngineering.

iEngineering was given the points of contact including Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger for the NGECE and others from AASHTO including Shayne Gill and David Dubov. iEngineering has proceeded with the project. All documents that we post will continue to be posted and those that are on the site currently will remain available. The intent is that the overall organization of the site be improved and navigation made more user friendly. We are excited about this refresh and believe it will help raise visibility for the NGECE if it is attractive to more users.

The website will have its own domain name and will no longer be a part of the AASHTO web domain. This will make it easier to find the NGECE site.

A progress report meeting has been scheduled by iEngineering for Friday 9-16-22 at 10:00am via Microsoft Teams. Steve Hewitt has accepted the invite and will participate. Strat Cavros asked if David Dubov had been invited (AASHTO web master). Steve said he would check. (The answer, found after this meeting was that David had been invited). Steve noted that since Ray Hessinger was not available it would be important for Tim Ziethen to make the call if available. (Tim was not on the invite) Tim said he would try and asked Steve to forward the information.

6.

Increasing Public Awareness – follow-ups – Steve Hewitt:

- a. Updating the two-pager – Steve Hewitt:

Members were asked on the last call to review and provide input on changes to the two-pager for 2023. To date no comments have been provided.

With no input from FASC members, Steve asked to table this item and give he and John Oimoen an opportunity to review the 2022 version and make recommendations at the next call – 10-12-22. Steve also asked that members of FASC also review and provide input to John and Steve.

- b. By-Laws Annual Review and proposed updates - Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt reviewed what occurred on the previous call held on 8-17-22 (below) and noted that no comments were provided as requested by FASC members.

Tim asked if a vote to consider the proposed changes should be taken today for forwarding the recommendations to the Executive Board. Steve Hewitt recommended that a vote not be taken because of the light attendance on the call, even though a quorum was present.

Tim agreed and this item was held over until the 10-12-22 call at which time the recommended changes will be considered. Members are, again, asked to review the By-Laws and the recommended changes and provide input in advance of the 10-12-22 call. Comments should be sent to Steve Hewitt and John Oimoen.

On the last call, Steve Hewitt and John Oimoen provided recommended changes to the NGEC By-Laws. Members were asked to review the proposed changes and provide input.

Steve Hewitt, reviewed the proposed changes first discussed on the 8-17-22 FASC call (see below):

e. The Executive Board may issue news releases communicating activities or accomplishments of the Committee.

f. The Executive Board may authorize Committee member participation at related meetings, conferences, trade shows, or other similar events to communicate the activities of the Committee or to maintain visibility among stakeholders.

The language is meant to address the advice provided by Amtrak Legal when asked if the NGEC could conduct certain additional activities. The advice was that the activities described would be permissible, if included in the By-Laws.

7.

Exploring Funding Opportunities for the NGEC – Tim Ziethen:

- a. Status – CRISI Grant application – Tim Ziethen:

(Note: At this point in the call, Ray Hessinger had left the call due to another meeting at NYS DOT and FRA reps left the call shortly after the discussion began due to not wanting a conflict of interest to be perceived when the NGEC discusses funding or grant applications that they (FRA) will ultimately be reviewing.)

Tim Ziethen reported that the NGEC CRISI grant application is officially on the list of grant applications to be considered by the Amtrak grant review committee. If approved out of this committee, it would be sent to the Amtrak Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for consideration as a part of the Amtrak grants applications to be submitted to FRA.

At the time of its submittal, letters of support would be requested and included with the package.

Tim has been working with Amtrak Associate counsel Michael Alexis to ascertain when the proposed application can be sent to the NGEC Board for its review and input.

Tim has also been working on a funding model that can be used to look for the grant match which he believes is 20% with FRA providing 80%. He is working with Michael Alexis to determine if that match can be provided by Amtrak or a third party. He is looking at this also from the perspective of what is allowable under the NGEC By-Laws.

Strat Cavros, AASHTO, commented that in other grant programs on the highway side, the match has been attained through calculating "in-kind" services. In the case of the NGEC, most of its work is done through voluntary state, industry, and Amtrak involvement in the ongoing subcommittee, working group and Board calls and the Annual Meeting.

Tim agreed that this makes sense and is an avenue to pursue. He will bring this to Amtrak Legal as well. Steve Hewitt concurred, as did Jason Biggs, WSDOT, that "in-kind" services have been used for match in other grants and an NGEC application should be a good candidate for such consideration.

Tim Ziethen added that another possibility would be to re-visit the question of establishing dues.

Steve Hewitt pressed Tim on the issue of being able to provide the application to the Executive Board of the NGEC. He noted that Ray Hessinger has mentioned that he would like that to happen as he believes the Board members may have valuable input to provide, but right now have no idea what is in the application.

Tim will press Amtrak Legal on an answer and try to have it available prior to the next meeting of the Executive Board (10-4-22).

Steve added that the Board does not want to hold up the process if the application gets to the Amtrak ELT, and asked would Executive Board input still be accepted at that point or even after. Tim commented that he believes input can be accepted right up until the package is submitted to FRA.

b. Other possibilities

Tim Ziethen noted that he continues to work with Amtrak to determine if there are any other funding source options and will keep the FASC members informed. To date, nothing has been found, but he will continue this effort.

8. Other issues/questions – All:

Adjourn:

With no other business forthcoming, Tim Ziethen adjourned the call at around 3:40pm Eastern.

By Computer: <https://stephenhewitthewittconsulting.my.webex.com/meet/shewitt109>

by phone: 1-415-655-0001

Access code: 126-073-1531

Next call – 10-12-22

Decisions - Action Items

Treasurer's Report – 9-14-22:

Balance and Spend Rate:

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

Expenses Incurred through June 2022: \$1,017,901.39

Balance remaining: \$ 232,098.61

Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,752.19

Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$10,815.70

Strat Cavros, AASHT reported that the July expenses were be around \$3,000.

Tim will update the Balance, spend report, and provide it to Steve Hewitt. The lower spend in July will help with the overall balance contingency anticipated at the end of the grant period.

Exploring/confirming funding options beyond 9-30-2023

As of 9-14-22:

Tim Ziethen has submitted a CRISI grant application for NGECE funding to the internal Amtrak committee for its review and feedback. He will provide Steve Hewitt with a copy when he has received the ok to do so. He will press the issue with the intent being to have it made available by the 10-4-22 Executive Board call.

Timm will also discuss with Amtrak legal the possibility of using "in-kind" services for the 20% required match.

Tim is also exploring with Amtrak Grants other potential funding options and will keep members of FASC informed.

NGEC two-pager:

Distribution of Educational Document 2022:

On 8-17-22, Steve Hewitt reported that 581 copies of the NGECE 2022 two-pager educational document have been distributed. On 9-14-22, there have been no changes in this number.

Updating the two-pager:

Steve Hewitt previously reported that he has confirmed with Troy Hughes that MODOT will, once again, handle the formatting and printing of the two-pager as changes are made to it to update for the 2023 edition. Steve and John Oimoen have begun a review of the document and will provide their initial thoughts during the 10-12-2022 FASC call. Members are asked to also review the document over the next few weeks and let Steve and John know of any recommendations for the update.

Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA:

The FFY 2022 3rd quarter report was submitted on time – at the end of July 2022.

The next report (4th quarter) is due to FRA by COB 10-30-22.

NGEC Website refresh:

On 9-14-22, Steve Hewitt reported that the website refresh kick off meeting with iEngineering took place on 8-23-22. Participants included Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger as well as the AASHTO team of Shayne Gill, Strat Cavros, Rebecca Anger and David Dubov and representatives of iEngineering.

iEngineering was given the points of contact including Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger for the NGECE and others from AASHTO including Shayne Gill and David Dubov. iEngineering has proceeded with the project. All documents that we post will continue to be posted and those that are on the site currently will remain available. The intent is that the overall organization of the site be improved and navigation made more user friendly. We are excited about this refresh and believe it will help raise visibility for the NGECE if it is attractive to more users.

The website will have its own domain name and will no longer be a part of the AASHTO web domain. This will make it

easier to find the NGENC site.

A progress report meeting has been scheduled by iEngineering for Friday 9-16-22 at 10:00am via Microsoft Teams. Steve Hewitt has accepted the invite and will participate. Strat Cavros asked if David Dubov had been invited (AASHTO web master). Steve said he would check. (The answer, found after this meeting was that David had been invited). Steve noted that since Ray Hessinger was not available it would be important for Tim Ziethen to make the call if available. (Tim was not on the invite) Tim said he would try and asked Steve to forward the information.

Annual NGENC By-Laws Review:

On 8-17-22, John Oimoen, IDOT, reported on the discussions between himself, and Steve Hewitt, and noted they had come up with some language to include additional permissible activities.

Steve Hewitt provided an overview of the proposed language (see below):

E. The Executive Board may issue news releases communicating activities or accomplishments of the Committee.

F. The Executive Board may authorize Committee member participation at related meetings, conferences, trade shows, or other similar events to communicate the activities of the Committee or to maintain visibility among stakeholders.

Actions:

FASC members were asked to think about the proposed language and the ensuing discussion by the September FASC call.

No comments were received. The FASC will take this up on the next call (10-12-22), and likely vote on the proposed recommendations or any others presented.

Wisconsin DOT representation on FASC:

Ray Hessinger will contact Lisa Stern, WisDOT about the department's interest in continued involvement with its member (Arun Rao) having taken a position with Amtrak.

Wisconsin has named a representative to the Executive Board, but has not yet discussed assigning anyone to the FASC or the Review Panels which Arun had been a member of.

By Computer: <https://stephenhewitthewittconsulting.my.webex.com/meet/shewitt109>

by phone: 1-415-655-0001

Access code: 126-073-1531

Next Call 10-12-22

ATTACHMENTS



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

SECTION 305 NGEN Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)

Web Ex video/audio information:

By Computer: <https://stephenhewitthewittconsulting.my.webex.com/meet/shewitt109>

by phone: 1-415-655-0001

Access code: 126-073-1531

**AGENDA
9-14-22**

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Welcome/Open | Tim Ziethen |
| 2. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Approval – Minutes from 8-17-22 | Tim Ziethen |
| 4. Treasurer’s Update- Balance and Spend Rate | Tim Ziethen |
| 5. Website Refresh Update | Steve/Tim |
| 6. Increasing Public Awareness – follow-ups – FASC Discussion | Tim |
| Updating the two-pager for 2023: | Steve |
| Members were asked to review and provide input for changes to the two-pager | |
| By-Laws Annual Review and proposed updates | Steve/John |
| Members were asked to review the proposed changes/updates and provide input | |
| 7. Exploring Funding Opportunities for the NGEN – updates: | Tim |
| a. Status – CRISI Grant application | |
| b. Other possibilities | |
| 8. Other Issues/questions | All |

Next Call 10-12-22