

SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board Conference Call Meeting

MINUTES

APRIL 1, 2013

11:30AM EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Bill Bronte, Chair, S305 NGEC Executive Board</i>
ATTENDEES	Executive Board Members: <i>Bill Bronte, Mario Bergeron, Gordon Hutchinson, Paul Nissenbaum, Al Ware, Eric Curtit, (Eric also served as proxy for Ron Pate) Amanda Martin for Tammy Nicholson, Ray Hessinger, Allan Paul for Paul Worley, Johnson Bridwater, Ron Adams, Support: Leo Penne, Shayne Gill, David Ewing, Steve Hewitt, Kevin Kesler, Chad Edison, Jeffrey Gordon, Nico Lindenau, Dave Warner, Darrell Smith, Lou Sanders</i>
ABSENTEES	Board Members: <i>Ron Pate, Tammy Nicholson, Paul Worley (all represented by proxy or designated alternate) Kevin Lawson, John Oimoen Support: Tim Hoeffner, Jason Biggs, Andy House, Larry Salci, Whitney Phend, John Tunna, Dale Engelhardt, Ashok Sundararajan, Ryan Swick,</i>

WELCOME/ROLL CALL/MINUTES

1.

Opening – Bill Bronte-chair:

Chairman Bill Bronte opened the conference call and asked Steve Hewitt to call the roll.

2.

Roll Call – Steve Hewitt, Manager, S305 NGEC Support Services:

Steve Hewitt took a roll of Executive Board members, and a quorum was confirmed with 12 of 14 voting members present.

3.

Action Item Review –Steve Hewitt:

Decisions/Status of Open Action Items as of 4-1-13

The locomotive procurement status will remain as an agenda item to keep the Board updated as to its progress. **IDOT** will be responsible for providing these bi-weekly updates. (ongoing) **Agenda item #8**

Jeff Gordon will continue to provide the AASHTO. Amtrak and FRA public affairs officers with email notifications of NGEC activities. (ongoing)

Jeff Gordon, FRA, will provide contact information to Steve Hewitt for an FTA representative(s) to listen in to NGEC Executive Board calls. **Status: Jeff Gordon reported that there are two potential FTA representatives. They are currently deciding which one will be named to listen in on the NGEC calls. Jeff expects to have the contact information of the designated FTA representative by the end of this week.**

Modification of the Grant Agreement SOW reflecting the Board approvals of December 11, 2012 and January 8, 2013: The Amtrak grants office had initially submitted the formal request to FRA (on February 4, 2013). On March 11th a revised SOW including adjustments made at the Annual Meeting was submitted to FRA. On March 19th, Paul Nissenbaum reported that the FRA letter "is coming out of the grants office today (March 19, 2013), and within a day or two it should be sent back to Amtrak." An update of the status will be reported by the next Executive Board call. **Status: Amtrak has received (March 22, 2013 letter from FRA) approval for the revised Scope of Work and Budget. Earlier today, Darrell Smith provided Steve Hewitt with a copy of the letter, which he will share with Board members following today's call.**

This action item task is now complete.

Eric Curtit, chair of the SFTF, will continue to stress to the contractor the need to produce product and make progress on the section 6/deployment effort. Eric will also develop a potential extension with actions and deliverables clearly identified. This document will be provided to Bill Bronte for review before going forward to the contractor. **Status: Agenda item #7 is an SFTF update report.**

The Backgrounder is now in its third printing. Requests for additional copies should be submitted to Steve Hewitt along with the number requested and an address to send them to. **Status: The third printing has been completed, with editorial edits, and they are now available for distribution. Steve Hewitt has provided an electronic version to all Board members. A number of requests have come in already, and Steve Hewitt has added a tag line to all emails reminding all NGEN participants of the availability of the Backgrounder.**

Leo Penne and AASHTO design staff are in the process of developing a tri-fold document (as agreed on the ATF call of March 15, 2013). States have been asked to provide specific information to Leo Penne for inclusion in the new document – no one has responded as of March 29, 2013.

A one pager is also being developed. Eric Curtit has provided Leo Penne with some suggestions for the one-pager.

The ATF will review and consider the two new items and, at that point, send them to the Board for its consideration.

Discussion/review of the current task forces and subcommittees will again be an agenda item for the next call (April 2, 2013). **Status update: On the last call it was agreed that the JPTF will not be reconvened as a formal task force. IDOT will report to the Board to provide updates.**

Agenda item # 9 will take up the issue of other task forces or subcommittees.

All members are asked to be on the alert for opportunities to educate congress or other key audiences on what the NGEN is, what it has accomplished and what it hopes to accomplish in the future. If there are suggestions of new strategies or opportunities members should submit them to Steve Hewitt and Bill Bronte. **Status: No suggestions or ideas have been submitted as of this date.**

Agenda item #10 addresses this topic.

All members of the Board (and support staff) are asked to thoroughly review the facilitator's report on the NGEN workshop held on February 20, 2013. Comments, thoughts, suggestions should be submitted to Steve Hewitt and Bill Bronte. **Status: No comments or suggestions have been submitted on this subject.**

The 6 person task force established during the workshop to develop proposed strategic goals will meet following the April 2, 2013 conference call. Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT will complete his review and re-organization of the tasks in advance of the task force discussion and will provide it to the members as a starting point. **Status: Ray Hessinger completed his re-organization of the tasks, and sent them to the 6 member sub group. This group has had a series of email exchanges and will be meeting in a conference call following this call. Steve Hewitt sent an appointment notice to the 6 members of the sub-group as a reminder to hold time on their calendar.**

Leo Penne will contact Paul Cooper (facilitator) to get his input as to whether a facilitated Skype or web conference would be helpful in advancing the work of the task force assigned to develop proposed strategic goals. **Status: After today's Board call Leo Penne informed Steve Hewitt that he had contacted Paul Cooper and Paul said that a facilitated conference call or webinar is well established acceptable and successful procedure. Steve provided this information to the 6 members of the sub-group.**

The Vision statement will be a topic for consideration on the April 2, 2013 Executive Board call. A revised draft statement with the proposed tweaks incorporated into it will be developed in advance of the Board call to assist in coming to closure on this item. **Status: At Chairman Bronte's direction, Steve Hewitt sent out 4 possible vision statements incorporating the proposed tweaks. 7 state members and Amtrak have weighed in**

with their opinions on which statement is preferred. 8 have stated they prefer #1 and one state has stated its preference as #4.

Steve Hewitt provided the Chairman with the list of who has weighed in electronically and for which statement.

Agenda item #5 is for the purpose of formally approving one of the statements recommended.

**4.
Approval of the minutes from March 19, 2013 – Bill Bronte:**

On a motion by Allan Paul, NCDOT, and a second by Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, the minutes of the March 19, 2013 conference call meeting of the Executive Board were approved without exception.

**5.
Executive Board Consideration of the NGEC Vision Statement – Bill Bronte:**

Bill Bronte opened the discussion by noting that prior to this call, (about a week ago) Executive Board members were provided with 4 proposed vision statements - each a slight variation of the original statement, and each with the inclusion of the proposed tweaks. Members were asked to consider them and to be prepared to come to consensus on a vision for the NGEC on today's call. As a result of the email transmitting the 4 statements, 9 NGEC members responded electronically with 8 preferring #1 and 1 preferring #2. Bill added his preference to the list in favor of statement #1.

Bill asked if the Board members were ready to proceed with approving a final vision statement. Hearing no objection or further discussion, Bill called for a motion to approve statement #1 which had been the clear preference of those who responded to the email of the 4 proposed statements under consideration.

Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT, offered a motion to approve Statement #1, and Mario Bergeron, Amtrak, seconded the motion.

As a way to remind everyone what the 4 statements were, Bill Bronte asked Steve Hewitt to read them:

"1. The NGEC will provide national leadership in standardization, acquisition, financing and management of passenger rail equipment.

2. The NGEC will be a national leader in standardization, acquisition, financing and management of passenger rail equipment.

3. To become a national leader in standardization, financing, and management of passenger rail equipment.

4. To provide national leadership in standardization, financing, and management of passenger rail equipment. "

With a motion and a second on the floor for Statement #1, Bill Bronte asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, he asked if there were any objections. With no discussion or objections raised, Chairman Bronte determined that consensus had been achieved and statement #1 is approved as the official NGEC vision statement.

Bill thanked all members for their efforts in moving this forward, and noted that with the vision statement in

place, "we can now move forward" towards developing the strategic goals to fulfill that vision.

6. Consideration of Technical subcommittee fund transfer request – Mario Bergeron/Dave Warner:

Mario Bergeron reported that during the Annual meeting held February 21, 2013, the Board had "approved \$55,000 under the Technical subcommittee's professional services line item for technical writing services offered by Camren Cordell". Initially "the contract was to be with Amtrak, and eventually it would move to AASHTO" as the contracting agent.

Due to difficulty in coming to agreement with Amtrak's terms and conditions a contract for Camren's services has been difficult to finalize. Therefore the Technical subcommittee agreed to request that the Executive Board transfer the full amount previously approved for entering into an agreement for technical writing services (\$55,000) from the subcommittee's professional services line item to AASHTO's professional services line item; and to ask that the Board direct AASHTO to act as contracting agent.

Mario emphasized that there is no additional money or new project being requested, simply a transfer of funds from one NGEAC account to another.

Leo Penne, AASHTO, noted that he had conversations with Dave Warner and Darrell Smith about this and "we (AASHTO) are prepared to manage the contract."

Bill Bronte commented on how critical a role Camren has played in providing technical writing support to the NGEAC, and expressed his view that getting this resolved is a positive move for the NGEAC.

In response to Bill Bronte's call for a motion on this, Ron Adams, Wisconsin DOT, offered a motion to transfer the \$55,000 for technical writing services from the Technical subcommittee to the AASHTO professional services line. Allan Paul, NCDOT, seconded the motion.

At this point, Dave Warner, Amtrak, asked that the motion be amended to include the wording that the Board "directs AASHTO to act as contracting agent to obtain a contract with the Casamar Group for Technical Support services to be provided by Camren Cordell for the period from April 15, 2013 through March 31, 2014."

Ron Adams stated that he would accept the "friendly amendment" as described by Dave Warner, and Allan Paul, NCDOT, agreed to second the motion as amended.

Steve Hewitt was asked to read back the amended motion:

"The motion calls for the NGEAC Executive Board to approve the transfer of \$55,000 for technical writing services from the Technical subcommittee's professional services line item to the AASHTO professional services line item, and directs AASHTO to act as contracting agent to obtain a contract with the Casamar Group for Technical Support services to be provided by Camren Cordell for the period from April 15, 2013 through March 31, 2014."

With no further discussion forthcoming, Chairman Bronte asked Steve Hewitt to poll the voting members of the Board:

Bill Bronte, Caltrans – aye
Mario Bergeron, Amtrak – aye
Alan Ware, Georgia DOT – aye
Gordon Hutchinson, Amtrak – aye
Paul Nissenbaum, FRA – aye
Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT – aye
Eric Curtit as proxy for Ron Pate, Washington State DOT – aye
Amanda Martin for Tammy Nicholson, Iowa DOT – aye
Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – aye
Allan Paul for Paul Worley, NCDOT – aye
Johnson Bridgwater, Oklahoma DOT – aye
Ron Adams, Wisconsin DOT – aye

With a quorum having been established, and all voting members present or represented, having voted in the affirmative, Bill Bronte determined that consensus was achieved and the motion has carried.

7.

Status Update: Structure and Finance task force – Eric Curtit:

Eric Curtit reported that he has been working with the contractor for the Section 6/deployment project and a timeline has been laid out. The key date, at this point, is for the end of April, 2013, at which time the contractor will provide a Draft of Task 1. It has been agreed that the contractor, and Eric Curtit and other SFTF members, will meet at the point in which 50% of the Task 1 Draft is complete. This would ensure that the contractor is headed in the right direction. A date and location for this interim meeting has not yet been set.

Eric also noted that he and the contractor are looking at doing a contract extension so that there is ample time to complete the work. The original contract time had been for a six month period beginning September 16, 2013 through April 16, 2013.

Bill Bronte asked Eric Curtit and Steve Hewitt if they thought this required a Board action. Both Eric and Steve said that they did not believe it required a Board action since it is a simple extension (with no additional money or change in the project) to allow enough time to complete the work.

Steve Hewitt asked Leo Penne, AASHTO, (contract agent) if he agreed with the view that no action by the Board is required. Leo agreed, and noted that the AASHTO contracting office is beginning to carry out the extension.

8.

Status Update: Locomotive Procurement – John Oimoen, IDOT:

In the absence of a representative from Illinois DOT to provide an update on the status of the Locomotive procurement, Bill Bronte took the opportunity to remind members of the Board that the amount of information that IDOT will be able to provide will be limited. "We are entering an active procurement and need to ensure the confidentiality of the process." Bill added, "To the extent that he can, we will ask John Oimoen to provide regular updates to us". Bill asked that "we all have patience" with the process.

Bill also asked that FRA feel free to step in at any point during procurement updates to "remind us if we begin to step out of line".

Bill noted that he too will try to keep watch to be sure "we do maintain appropriate safeguards throughout the process."

Bill commented that prior to this call, Steve Hewitt had reminded him that "we have to be careful" just as we were with the bi-level procurement, as we want this one to be "just as successful".

9.

Discussion/Review of the current task forces and subcommittees – Bill Bronte:

Bill Bronte opened the discussion about reviewing current task forces and subcommittees by stating that this has been an ongoing topic. Thus far, no input has been provided by any of the members, but "we should all ask ourselves" when we are on a call "do I need to be here" and if the answer is no – raise it with the Board. This will remain an ongoing topic and "I ask you all to be mindful of – do we need the call, should we reduce the frequency of a call, or has this (task force or subcommittee) outlived its usefulness and should it be abolished?"

Eric Curtit, responded to Bill's request for input, by noting that sometimes "less is more" and stating that his intention is discuss with the Structure and Finance task force (SFTF) the idea of reducing its call frequencies from bi-weekly to monthly.

Steve Hewitt noted that, up to this point, there have been a couple of call frequency changes among the various subcommittees and task forces. "The ATF and the Finance subcommittee have reduced their calls to once every four weeks". Steve recommended that if the SFTF agrees to go to once a month, make it be "once every four weeks, so that you remain on the schedule for the same time and day of the week" (every fourth Monday etc.) Eric agreed that would make sense, and he will make that recommendation to the SFTF.

10.

Ongoing Strategic Discussion: FY2014 Appropriations – NGEC – Bill Bronte:

Bill Bronte noted that this topic is an ongoing discussion on strategies for making sure that the NGEC moves forward, and has the funding to do so.

Bill noted that there has been a lot of activity in recent weeks, citing the fact that AASHTO and APTA have developed their reauthorization principles, and both have included 305 in those principles. He also recognized the efforts of David Kutrofsky and David Ewing for working with the California delegation that was on the Hill recently meeting with members of the House T&I committee.

Bill noted that there will be a T&I Rail subcommittee hearing in California in April, 2013, and he anticipates that his Director will be one of those called on to testify. He noted that "we will make sure that 305 is in his testimony."

Bill also commented that there have been follow-up questions to Paula Hammond in regard to her testimony before the Rail Subcommittee, and that some of the questions from Representative Corrine Brown were in regard to learning more about the 305 NGEC. The States for Passenger Rail Coalition (S4PRC) is assisting Washington State DOT with some of the responses.

David Ewing confirmed what Bill Bronte had said, and added that responses are "well underway".

David also reiterated that there has been a lot of help with PRIIA and reauthorization – having AASHTO and APTA include support for 305 and procurement in their principles was important. "We are in remarkable good shape on the authorization side."

As for appropriations "it is unclear" since they have just finished up with 2013, so it's very hard to know what happens with FY 2014. "The next clue will be when the President releases his budget – April 10, 2013."

David elaborated "for appropriations, working against us is the fact that there is no money, and a quick scan (by congressional members) of the books will show that 305 still has money. They (congress) look at folks who are at zero – which makes this a challenge."

David suggested that since 2013 finished only weeks ago, and 305's budget goes into 2014, "look at 2015 with ideas for the Appropriations committee as much as for the current year."

David also noted that the president was in Florida recently and announced funding initiatives including TIGER funding increases. Again, he reminded those on the call, "look at the April 10th budget release to see where that (TIGER funds) is."

All in all with the amount of activity surrounding 305, including the positive reaction to the Backgrounder, "gives us grounds for optimism."

David also advised that whenever a T&I hearing is held be sure to get a paragraph in your agency's testimony on 305 and distribute the Backgrounder. "It is an educational process and there is an appetite for it." David also reminded those on the call that there is a great deal of staff turnover, so the education has to be ongoing. Everyone should be on the lookout for opportunities to continue that education.

Bill Bronte asked Steve Hewitt to keep this topic as a standing agenda item for future Board calls.

11.

Other:

RR101:

Bill Bronte reminded everyone that the next Railroading 101 webinar is scheduled for next Tuesday – April 9, 2013 at 2:00pm Eastern. The webinar topic is Equipment, and confirmed presenters are Bill Bronte, Mario Bergeron, Amtrak, and Kevin Kesler, FRA.

Shayne Gill, AASHTO, added that "this continues the webinar series" which began in late 2012. He noted that the call-in information has been sent out to SCORT members, and that while the target audience is the state DOTs, Steve Hewitt will be inviting the entire NGEC email list including members of the industry, so a broader audience is anticipated.

Steve Hewitt confirmed that he will be sending the webinar information to the NGEC email list immediately following this call.

The next Executive Board conference call is April 16, 2013

Decisions/Action Items

The locomotive procurement status will remain as an agenda item to keep the Board updated as to its progress. **IDOT** will be responsible for providing these bi-weekly updates. (ongoing)

Jeff Gordon will continue to provide the AASHTO, Amtrak and FRA public affairs officers with email notifications of NGEC activities. (ongoing)

By the end of the week (April 5, 2013), Jeff Gordon, FRA, will provide contact information to Steve Hewitt for an FTA representative to listen in to NGEC Executive Board calls.

The Executive Board approved statement #1 as the NGEC vision: *The NGEC will provide national leadership in standardization, acquisition, financing and management of passenger rail equipment.*

The Executive Board approved the transfer of \$55,000 for technical writing services from the Technical subcommittee's professional services line item to the AASHTO professional services line item, and directs AASHTO to act as contracting agent to obtain a contract with the Casamar Group for Technical Support services to be provided by Camren Cordell for the period from April 15, 2013 through March 31, 2014.

Eric Curtit will recommend that the SFTF change its conference call schedule from bi-weekly to once every four weeks.

The contractor for the SFTF section 6/deployment project is expected to provide a DRAFT of Task 1 by the end of April. Eric Curtit will continue to keep the Board apprised of progress being made.

AASHTO will add an extension (as being worked out between the contractor and SFTF) to the Section 6/Deployment contract to ensure that there is time to complete the work as described in the current SOW.

Strategic discussions regarding future funding for the NGEC and educational opportunities will remain a standing agenda item for Board calls. All members are asked to be on the alert for opportunities to educate congress or other key audiences on what the NGEC is, what it has accomplished and what it hopes to accomplish in the future. If there are suggestions of new strategies or opportunities members should submit them to Steve Hewitt and Bill Bronte.

RR101 will hold a webinar on Equipment on Tuesday, April 9, 2013 from 2:00-3:00pm EDT. Steve Hewitt will send out call in information to the full NGEC list following today's call.

Bill Auve, Amtrak will serve as acting CFO of Amtrak and will serve as NGEC Treasurer and Finance subcommittee beginning with the next call of the Board and the Finance subcommittee. Gordon Hutchinson or Darrell Smith will provide Steve Hewitt with Bill's contact information.

The 6 person task force established during the workshop to develop proposed strategic goals met following the April 2, 2013 conference call. The Board will be apprised as this group moves forward with its task.

Requests for additional copies of the Backgrounder should be submitted to Steve Hewitt along with the number requested and an address to send them to.

ATTACHMENTS



S305 NGENC Executive Board Conference Call
April 2, 2013
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM EDT
Call in number: 866 299 7945 passcode: 1601544#
Agenda (revised)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Open the Meeting | Bill Bronte |
| 2. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Action Items Review | Steve Hewitt |
| 4. Approval of Minutes from March 19, 2013 Executive Board call | Bill Bronte |
| 5. Executive Board consideration of the NGENC Vision Statement | Bill Bronte |
| 6. Consideration of: Technical subcommittee fund transfer request | Mario Bergeron/Dave Warner |
| 7. Status Update: Structure and Finance Task Force | Eric Curtit |
| 8. Status Update: Locomotive procurement | John Oimoen |
| 9. Discussion/review of the current task forces and subcommittees | Bill Bronte |
| 10. Ongoing Strategic Discussion: FY2014 Appropriations – NGENC | Bill Bronte |
| 11. Other | All |