

SECTION 305 FINANCE SUB COMM

MINUTES

JULY 7, 2010

3:00 PM EST

CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>DJ Stadtler, Treasurer S305 NGENC Committee Executive Board, and Chair of the S305 Finance Subcommittee</i>
ATTENDEES	<i>DJ Stadtler, Bill Bronte, Brent Thompson, Jim Donlin, Steve Hewitt, Ken Uznanski, Leo Penne</i>
ABSENTEES	<i>Paul Nissenbaum, Chad Edison, Scott Witt, Amy Arnis, Tanya Wojtulewicz, Shayne Gill, David Ewing</i>

DECISIONS MADE

On a motion made by Bill Bronte and seconded by Brent Thompson, the minutes of the last Finance Subcommittee conference call meeting (June 9) were approved without exception.

Chair, DJ Stadtler provided an overview of his two primary agenda items for this call: 1. Status of interaction with Rod Massman, Chair of the Administrative Task Force 2. Overview of the current Amtrak 2011 appropriations request.

- 1. DJ and Rod have not yet connected – both have made several attempts, but to no avail. DJ is hopeful that they will connect soon. DJ will plan to attend the next conference call of the Administrative Task Force scheduled for July 16 at 11:00am Eastern. Steve Hewitt will send a reminder notice and ensure that DJ has the agenda for that call as well. Primary issues that need to be discussed and addressed by the two groups include; general linkage/ interaction on areas of overlap and, most pressing, the need to develop an approval process for making S305 Committee expenditures.
- 2. DJ briefed the members on the current status of Amtrak’s 2011 appropriations request – the House Transportation mark up includes \$1.8billion for Amtrak for operating and capital – which is good news as it is actually \$150 million over the president’s number. The general impression is that the House is pleased with Amtrak’s Fleet Plan and there seems to be a strong interest in the work of the S305 Committee. The Senate markups are scheduled to take place July 20 and 22. There seems to be support for the Fleet plan and the S305 Committee in the Senate as well and an understanding of the critical need for capital. Support is also apparent for exploring private financing and RRIF loans in moving forward.

Ken Uznanski reported on the status of the S305 Funding Grant agreement pending between Amtrak and FRA. The agreement has not yet been finalized. The key issue that still needs to be reconciled is that of “intellectual property”. Ken believes that the issue will be resolved over the next 5 or 6 days and the grant will be awarded. The FRA has extended the deadline for awarding the grant to July 15. Ken advised that “it is in the system” and ready to go once approved. Ken will be reaching out to each subcommittee Chair and the Administrative Task Force to discuss eligible expenses and get those expenses into the system right away. He asked, also, that AASHTO submit all documentation for any expenses not yet submitted. Leo Penne will oversee that effort on AASHTO’s behalf and make sure the documentation is submitted.

Bill provided an update to the members on the results of the recent Amtrak Board meeting in California. FRA Administrator Joe Szabo was in attendance and expressed strong support for the efforts of the S305 Committee to develop Bi-Level specs using the C-21 specs as a starting point/straw man. Bill continues to be concerned with financing issues and emphasized the need to explore funding and financing options; including partnering with Amtrak in ordering equipment via ARRA round 2.

Bill Bronte raised the issue of working together to put forward ARRA Round 2 applications for equipment. Specifically B—Level equipment using the PRIIA specifications being finalized by the Technical subcommittee and subsequently the Executive Board. Bill encourages those members, states and Amtrak who would be in the market for bi-level equipment to work together in applying for ARRA grants. Ken Uznanski raised the issue of timelines not matching –ARRA Grant applications are due August 6 and the Executive Board will not be approving the Bi-Level specs until August 30. Bill felt that we may be able to write into the applications something to the effect that the grants for equipment would be contingent upon meeting the specs developed by the S305 Committee. It was agreed that we would need to determine if FRA would be supportive. Bill agreed to provide Steve Hewitt with a write up that expresses the view that states and Amtrak should work together in support of efforts to apply for equipment in ARRA Round 2 and, as a result, equipment (bi-level) orders could become a reality.

Bill raised the issue of CE vs. EA service level NEPA. “Can we use CE for secular kinds of growth?” Bill will bring this forward as a question to FRA.

It was also suggested that the Subcommittee or the Board meet at some point in the near future with Nossaman or a similar firm to talk about the potential for P3 opportunities. Steve Hewitt will suggest that this item be added to the July 21 Executive Board webinar meeting agenda. (The Board is scheduled to meet July 21 to approve the "requirements" document)

It was decided that the next call, scheduled for July 21 at 3:00pm Eastern, would remain on the schedule for now, but may need to be re-scheduled due to the anticipated Executive Board webinar scheduled for that same day.

Action Items Update (New and Current)

Carry over Item: Shayne Gill, AASHTO, will talk to Jack Basso and Jung Lee about the possibility of adding some of the issues regarding financing options (the options paper) as a topic for future discussions of AASHTO's Finance Center or the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance. Shayne will talk to Jack and Jung Lee to see if there are upcoming webinar or meeting opportunities where these issues can be on the agenda. Shayne will report back on his discussions and, after that, will put together a sub-group to explore options and develop an options paper.

Carry over Item: David Ewing will work with AASHTO to help identify states with equipment needs that may be willing to look into partnering and/or collaborative efforts where feasible. David will be meeting with George Weber, IDOT, and this will be part of that discussion.

Carry over Item: Bill Bronte will look into finding contacts to talk to/touch base with in regards to the P3 discussion and will consider adding Nossaman to the agenda of the Executive Board webinar meeting of July 21

Carry Over Item: DJ will reach out to Rod Massman, Chair of the S305 Administrative Task Force to work with him in developing an approval process for acquiring professional services moving forward and, in general, developing an approval process for all Committee expenditure. DJ will plan to attend the next Admn Task Force call – July 16 11:00am Eastern – Steve Hewitt to provide him with the agenda and a reminder notice.

Leo Penne will provide all AASHTO expense documentation to date to Ken Uznanski to get them in the system in anticipation of the Grant Agreement being approved.

Bill Bronte will provide Steve Hewitt with a short description piece regarding support/collaboration among states and Amtrak in pursuing ARRA grants for bi-level equipment purchase.

Bill to ask FRA whether or not "we can use CE for secular kinds of growth?"

Steve Hewitt to send out reminder notice for next finance subcommittee call – scheduled for July 21 at 3:00pm Eastern

ATTACHEMENTS

PRIIA Section 305 Finance Sub Committee Conf. Call Meeting July 7, 2010

Agenda Items

- 1.) Approval of minutes of the June 9 conference call meeting of the Finance subcommittee
- 2.) Update on interaction efforts between Finance Subcommittee and Administrative Task Force
- 3.) Overview of Amtrak 2011 Appropriations request status in Congress to date
- 4.) Other items and follow ups

NEXT MEETING / CONFERENCE CALL: July 21 - 3:00-4:00 pm EST

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