

SECTION 305 FINANCE and ADMINISTRATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 15,
2017

3:00PM EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Tim Ziethen, Chair of the S305 Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)</i>
ATTENDEES	<i>Tim Ziethen, Jason Biggs for Brent Thompson, Eric Curtit, Eric Curtit also as proxy for Tim Hoeffner and Ray Hessinger, Brian Beeler II, Amanda Martin, Jeff Gordon for Michael Lestingi, Steve Hewitt</i>
ABSENTEES	<i>Michael Lestingi, Ray Hessinger, Brent Thompson, Tim Hoeffner, Shayne Gill, Larry Salci, Nathan Vomocil, Sal DeAngelo,</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.

Status Update - Action Items - Steve Hewitt:

Legislative Outreach Task Force – developing a strategy and implementation plan to obtain future federal funds for the NGECC: Each state member and Amtrak is to work with its Government Affairs office and ask that the two-pager (currently being finalized) be included in its package during Hill visits to keep the NGECC on Congress' radar even though we are not yet ready to ask for more money.

On 6-28-17, Eric Curtit reported that he is focusing on the NGECC two-pager document which he believes is an effective tool for educating the Hill. Eric believes that the current version needs to be updated to add in something that emphasizes the importance of maintaining/updating/revising the specifications as one of the more critical responsibilities of the NGECC.

On 8-23-17, Jeff Gordon, FRA agreed to provide suggested language for the two-pager to address the importance of maintaining/updating the specs.

Status: On 10-21-17, Eric Curtit provided MODOT's DRAFT graphics for a revised two-pager. It will be reviewed and discussed under agenda item 8 on today's call.

Syncing the new Grant Agreement with ongoing NGECC contracts: Because the current Amtrak and AASHTO contract is in place until 9-30-17, and the current sub-contractor contracts are also in place until 9-30-17, no action is necessary right now. Amtrak and AASHTO have a process in place to extend the Amtrak/AASHTO contract in sync with the grant and effective 10-1-17 through 9-30-19. The subcontractors/sub consultants currently in place will be extended at the same time - effective 10-1-17 through 9-30-19 as anticipated in the new grant agreement SOW and budget.

Status as of 9-27-17: A contract extension between Amtrak and AASHTO has been executed and will run through 9-30-19. One sub-contractor contract extension (program manager) has also been executed by AASHTO for the same period – through 9-30-19.

Open action: AASHTO is in the process of extending/modifying the contract with Casamar for the Technical specification consultant (spec writer).

Agenda item 5

Moving 514 to SAIPRC:

Actions:

Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger will prepare By-Law revisions.

Status: Ray Hessinger and Steve Hewitt have provided proposed revisions to the By-Laws that would be needed to reflect the move of 514 to SAIPRC under agenda item 6. While doing their review, they also provided additional edits and corrections (minor) for consistency and to improve the flow of the document. Some of those changes were discussed during last year's review, but were tabled until there were other more substantive changes to be made. Steve Hewitt sent out the proposed revisions to all FASC members and a revised version followed with additional edits and comments provided by Jeff Gordon, FRA. Under agenda item 6, a review of the proposed changes will take place.

FASC will begin a review of the grant agreement SOW and propose amendments for moving 514 and for potential revisions beyond just the move of 514 to SAIPRC.

Darrell Smith was to provide a full report on the status of the NGEC budget and its spend rate, on the next FASC call. With Darrell no longer at Amtrak, this task has fallen to the new Treasurer and FASC Chair – Tim Ziethen.

Status: An update from Amtrak on the budget and spend rate to date will be addressed under agenda item 7.

Darrell Smith was to report the anticipated steps for the move of 514, as a part of his progress report to the Board on 10-10-17. On that call, Eric Curtit and Darrell will ask that Mario Bergeron begin a review of the grant agreement SOW from the perspective of the Technical subcommittee and its future needs. With a new Chair of the FASC and a new Chair of the Technical subcommittee – Charlie King due to the retirement of Mario Bergeron from Amtrak – this step has not yet occurred.

Status: An update on this action will be discussed under agenda item 6

Steve Hewitt will provide a copy of the NGEC By-Laws section pertaining to 514 to David Kutrosky, Chair of SAIPRC.

Status: A copy of the By-Laws was sent to David Kutrosky (SAIPRC) on 9-28-17. – **Task Complete**

Agenda items 6 and 7

4.

Approval of Minutes from the 9-27-17 FASC conference call – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

On a motion by Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT, and a second by Brian Beeler II, NNEPRA for Maine DOT, the minutes from the 9-27-17 FASC conference call was approved without exception or objection.

5.

Status Update from AASHTO on consultant contract extension (Casamar) - Steve Hewitt for Shayne Gill:

Shayne Gill was unavailable for today's call – but provided Steve Hewitt with an update on the status of this contract modification. AASHTO has received all the information needed to complete the modification, but is confirming the final contract amount. To complete his modification, AASHTO needs Tammy Krause – the Revision Control Coordinator to confirm and sign off on the proposed contract amount. Steve Hewitt sent Tammy a request that she confirm the proposed dollars, and Shayne Gill has asked that Eric Curtit sign off as well (Eric concurred today – 11-15-17). The grant agreement budget allows for \$200,000 over the life of the grant for this sub-contract – less what has been spent to date (around \$49,000). The requested amount is \$60,000 – but we need confirmation from Tammy that this is the correct amount and fills the need based on the SOW.

Tim Ziethen reported that he has discussed this issue, and the proposed amount, with Tammy Krause, and is comfortable with \$60,000 as the full contract amount. He did note that, as the NGEC completes its review of the SOW and Budget for the remaining grant period, it is possible adjustments may need to be made to reflect any changes made to the SOW going forward, and the appropriate steps will be taken then.

Steve Hewitt agreed to convey to Strat Cavros, AASHTO, that the amount for the Casamar contract modification is \$60,000 and has been signed off on by Tim Ziethen, Tammy Krause, and Eric Curtit.

6.

Discussion: 514 – request to move to SAIPRC - Tim Ziethen/Eric Curtit:

By-Laws Review - Steve Hewitt:

- Review of Recommendations

Steve Hewitt walked through the By-Laws revisions as proposed, and identified the additional comments and revisions suggested in DRAFT Revisions Version 3 by Jeff Gordon, FRA. After the review and discussion, FASC members concurred with the recommended changes.

- Next Steps

Steve Hewitt explained that the next steps would be for the FASC members to vote on approval of the revisions as presented, and to submit them to the Executive Board at least 30 days in advance of the Board acting to adopt the changes. If submitted this week, the Board could act on December 19th during its regularly scheduled call, and comply with the 30 days' notice requirement.

A motion was offered by Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT, and seconded by Jason Biggs, WSDOT, to approve the revisions to the By-Laws as presented in DRAFT Version 3.

With no further discussion forthcoming, Tim Ziethen asked Steve Hewitt to conduct a roll call vote:

Tim Ziethen, Amtrak – aye
Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT – aye
Eric Curtit as proxy for Tim Hoeffner, Michigan DOT – aye
Eric Curtit as proxy for Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – aye
Jason Biggs for Brent Thompson, WSDOT – aye
Brian Beeler II, NNEPRA for Maine DOT – aye
Amanda Martin, Iowa DOT – aye
Jeff Gordon, for Michael Lestingi, FRA – aye

With a quorum having been established and all voting members present or represented voting in the affirmative, Chairman Ziethen determined that consensus has been achieved and the motion is approved.

Steve Hewitt was directed to send the document, with the approved changes, to the Executive Board members with the notice that the Chair anticipates calling for a vote to adopt the revisions on the December 19, 2017 Executive Board conference call.

Status: Review of the Grant Agreement SOW and Budget as suggested by Amtrak Grants -Tim Ziethen/Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt explained that when the request to move 514 to SAIPRC was received, the Executive Board agreed that it was the right thing to do, and directed the FASC to begin addressing the steps necessary to make this happen. One step was to revise the By-Laws, and, that is well along the way, and, with today's vote the final step is Executive Board approval as described above.

An additional step is to review the SOW and Budget in the grant agreement and to revise accordingly to reflect the move of 514 to SAIPRC. Amtrak's Grants Office, recommended that instead of reviewing only the sections of the SOW and budget associated with 514, the NGECC should do a complete review of the SOW and budget, to make any revisions that may better reflect the activities of the Committee over the next two years. The idea is to do it all at once rather than piece by piece.

Tim Ziethen agreed to go through the sow and budget and to discuss the anticipated needs of the Technical subcommittee as it revises its plans to review and update all NGECC specifications to bring them to a baseline. As Jeff Gordon reported, Tammy Krause is in the process of developing a revised plan with timeline and milestones to reflect this activity.

It was agreed that Tim Ziethen would provide FASC members with proposed SOW and budget revisions for review on the next FASC call – 12-13-17. The intent would be to consider the revisions on 12-13-17 and, if approved, submit them to the Executive Board for review and possible consideration of approval on its call on 12-19-17.

7.

Status: NGEC Budget and Spend Rate to date – Tim Ziethen:

Tim Ziethen reported that the Amtrak Grants Office (Danielle Hawkins) has informed him that the total grant amount is \$1,250,000. And the amount spent thus far (it is believed that this is through the first three quarters of the first year of the grant) is \$125,250.68.

Tim noted that the anticipated spend rate for the last quarter of this year is expected to be about \$70,000. To date, the NGEC is operating well under budget; and the review of the SOW and budget that is underway will more clearly identify the anticipated activities and costs associated with them over the final two years of the current grant agreement.

8.

Review of proposed changes to two-page educational document – Eric Curtit/Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt provided members with background and context on the evolution of the NGEC educational document. Eric Curtit provided an overview of the DRAF that was sent to FASC members in late October, and described the intent behind the changes which is to strengthen the emphasis on the importance of maintaining and updating the specifications to keep them current and useful.

A brief discussion took place around how to clearly identify the future work of the Committee to better make the case for continued funding beyond the current grant agreement.

It was agreed that FASC members would review the DRAFT document and provide comments and suggested changes in advance of the next FASC call – 12-13-17. Steve Hewitt was asked to also provide the current draft to the Executive Board in advance of the next call 11-22-17, so that it is aware of the thinking, and to solicit Board member input as well. Eric Curtit will walk the Board through the document and describe what the goal is for its use going forward.

The plan is to have the educational piece updated, finalized and printed in advance of the NGEC Annual Meeting in DC on 2-23-18.

9.

Other Issues/questions – All:

Adjourn – With no other business brought forth on today's call, Tim Ziethen adjourned the meeting at 4:00PM Eastern.

Next Finance and Administrative subcommittee conference call December 13, 2017

The call-in number is:

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#

Decisions - Action Items

Legislative Outreach Task Force – developing a strategy and implementation plan to obtain future federal funds for the NGEC: Each state member and Amtrak is to work with its Government Affairs office and ask that the two-pager (currently being finalized) be included in its package during Hill visits to keep the NGEC on Congress' radar even though we are not yet ready to ask for more money.

A "regular update/report card/dash board" will be developed through the NGEC Legislative Task Force with the intent that it be provided to Congress through the states and Amtrak Government Affairs Offices as a means of continuing the outreach and education on the activities of the NGEC.

On 6-28-17, Eric Curtit reported that he is focusing on the NGEC two-pager document which he believes is an

effective tool for educating the Hill. Eric believes that the current version needs to be updated to add in something that emphasizes the importance of maintaining/updating/revising the specifications as one of the more critical responsibilities of the NGEC.

Status: On 11-15-17, it was agreed that FASC members would review the DRAFT document and provide comments and suggested changes in advance of the next FASC call – 12-13-17. Steve Hewitt was asked to also provide the current draft to the Executive Board in advance of the next call 11-22-17, so that it is aware of the thinking, and to solicit Board member input as well. Eric Curtit will walk the Board through the document and describe what the goal is for its use going forward.

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A contract extension between Amtrak and AASHTO has been executed and will run through 9-30-19. At least one sub-contractor has now had his contract extended by AASHTO for the same period – through 9-30-19.

Status: As of 11-15-17, AASHTO is in the process of completing a contract modification with Casamar (technical spec writer). AASHTO has reported that it has everything it needs, but confirmation on the full contract amount through 9-30-19. On 11-15-17, call Tim Ziethen confirmed that he and Tammy Krause have talked and agree that \$60,000 is the amount that should be in the contract. Eric Curtit, as NGEC Chair, agreed and signed off on the amount as well.

Steve Hewitt agreed to convey to Strat Cavros, AASHTO, that the amount for the Casamar contract modification is \$60,000 and has been signed off on by Tim Ziethen, Tammy Krause, and Eric Curtit.

Moving 514 to SAIPRC:

Action:

Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger will prepare By-Law revisions:

Status: On 11-15-17, the FASC members approved proposed revisions (version 3) to the NGEC By-Laws and Operating Procedures. The approved revisions will be submitted to the Executive Board by 11-16-17 by Steve Hewitt to fulfill the requirement of submitting By-Laws changes to Executive Board members 30 days in advance of the meeting in which they will be considered. The intent is to consider adoption of the revisions on 12-19-17 on the regularly scheduled executive Board conference call.

Action: Review of the Grant Agreement SOW and Budget as suggested by Amtrak Grants:

The Amtrak's Grants Office, recommended that instead of reviewing only the sections of the SOW and budget associated with 514, the NGEC should do a complete review of the SOW and budget, to make any revisions that may better reflect the activities of the Committee over the next two years. The idea is to do it all at once rather than piece by piece.

Status: On 11-15-17, FASC Chair Tim Ziethen agreed to go through the sow and budget and to discuss with Tammy Krause and Charlie King, the anticipated needs of the Technical subcommittee as it revises its plans to review and update all NGEC specifications to bring them to a baseline. Tammy Krause is currently in the process of developing a revised plan with timeline and milestones to reflect this activity. Tim will follow up with Tammy.

It was agreed that Tim Ziethen would provide FASC members with proposed SOW and budget revisions for review on the next FASC call – 12-13-17. The intent would be to consider the revisions on 12-13-17 and, if approved, submit them to the Executive Board for review and possible consideration of approval on its call on 12-19-17.

**New FASC call in number: Beginning with the next call – 10-18-17 the FASC call-in number will be:
888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#**

ATTACHMENTS



SECTION 305 NGEC Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)

**Conference call
November 15, 2017
3:00PM Eastern**

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#

MEETING AGENDA

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| 1. Welcome/Open | Tim Ziethen |
| 2. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Action Items Review | Steve Hewitt |
| 4. Approval of the Minutes from 8-23-17 | Tim Ziethen |
| 5. Status Update from AASHTO on consultant contract extension (Casamar) | Steve Hewitt |
| 6. Discussion: 514 – request to move to SAIPRC | Tim Ziethen/Steve Hewitt |
| By-Laws Review | Steve Hewitt |
| - Review of Recommendations | |
| - Next Steps | |
| Status: Review of the Grant SOW and Budget as suggested by Amtrak Grants | Tim Ziethen/Steve Hewitt |
| - Next steps/timeline for completion | |
| 7. Status: NGEC Budget and Spend rate to date | Tim Ziethen |
| 8. Review of proposed changes to Two-page educational document | Eric Curtit/Steve Hewitt |
| 9. Other Issues/questions | All |

Next Call December 13, 2017

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