

# SECTION 305 FINANCE and ADMINISTRATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES      JUNE 23, 2021      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, Brian Beeler II, John Oimoen, Amanda Martin, Arun Rao, Troy Hughes, Ray Hessinger, Jeff Gordon, Mike Murray, Strat Cavros, Oscar Bermudez, Jonathan Kwak, Steve Hewitt</i>
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<i>Jason Biggs, Larry Salci, Shayne Gill</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 5-26-21 conference call – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:**

On a motion by Amanda Martin, Iowa DOT, and a second by Arun Rao, WisDOT, the minutes from 5-26-21 were approved as presented.

**4. Treasurer’s Update – Tim Ziethen:**

Tim Ziethen provided the following Treasurer’s update:

Balance and Spend Rate

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
 Amount Spent through April 2021: \$766,612.50  
 Balance remaining: \$ 483,387.50.  
 Estimated spend at current rate for the remaining grant period (through 9-30-23): \$404,213.86.  
 Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$13,938.41  
 Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$79,173.64

**5. Conveying the message - Tim/Steve:**

2021 NGEC two-page handout - Steve:

Over 550 of these documents have been distributed electronically. Feedback continues to be positive.

Reauthorization of the NGEC - Tim/Steve:

Steve Hewitt reported that the House and Senate Committees of jurisdiction released their versions of Federal Surface Transportation Authorization legislation. The House has passed its bill through the T&I Committee – next step the Floor of the House. The Senate Commerce Committee passed its bill through the committee last week.

Neither bill included NGEC reauthorization despite requests to do so by numerous associations and the industry. (SPRC, MIPRC, AASHTO, CSG-East, Siemens)

Senate Commerce staff was reached out to on 6-11-21 by SPRC and it was acknowledged that the NGEC had not

gotten into the legislation. Staff was not sure what happened but, in the discussion, commented that the thought the funding request was for \$5 million. SPRC told him the number was \$2.5 million and was for the full life of the bill - \$500,000 a year. Hearing this, staff asked for an email to that effect (and it was provided) and suggested that a member of the Senate be asked to submit an amendment to the Committee by Noon on 6-14-21.

Steve Hewitt – on 6-12-21 – provided an FYI and call to action to all NGEC State members to reach out to their Senator(s) if possible, to ask for an amendment to be put forth to include the reauthorization of the NGEC with funding. Steve also reached out to Siemens as well.

Steve Hewitt reached out to Siemens making sure they were aware of the fact that the NGEC was left out of each bill and asking for them to reach out to see if they could get a member to request a managers' amendment when the bill is on the Floor.

Following Steve Hewitt's outreach, Steve Morrison, Siemens, called him and conferenced him in with the Siemens lobbyist Harrison Wadsworth to provide him with background on the NGEC and discuss strategy. Harrison planned to contact Ken Altman, Amtrak Government Affairs, and planned to also reach out to AASHTO leadership to be sure they are all involved in a push for a manager's amendment as the bill comes to the House Floor. Siemens felt they could not do it alone because it would seem self-serving as they have benefited so well from the use of the NGEC specifications. Steve provided the proposed legislative language sent around previously. Siemens said they would follow up with Steve Hewitt as they knew more.

Today, Tim Ziethen reported he has talked to Cody McClellan, who works for Ken Altman, and stresses the belief that the NGEC is important and needs to be reauthorized. Tim also reached out to Ken Altman (through Cody). Cody confirmed that the NGEC was in their reauthorization proposal language as one of their line items.

Tim will convey the message again to Ken Altman and make sure he is aware of the Siemens outreach and efforts to get a managers' amendment on the Floor of the House.

Tim also emphasized the need for states to reach out to any member they may know and do whatever they can to get this situation resolved.

**6.  
NGEC 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – Steve:**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual NGEC Meeting will be in-person and will take place on 2-25-22 at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC – likely from 8:00AM to noon. More details to come...

**Adjourn:**

With no other business forthcoming, Chairman Ziethen adjourned the call at 3:21pm Eastern.

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

**by phone: 1-415-655-0001**

**Access code: 126-073-1531**

**Next call – 7-21-21**

**Decisions - Action Items**

**Treasurer's Report – 6-23 -21:**

Balance and Spend Rate

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**Conveying the message (Federal Surface Transportation Authorization):**

Executing action Plan – status/activities as of 6-23-21:

**2021 NGEC two-page handout:**

Approximately 550 of these documents have been distributed electronically. Feedback has been positive.

**Interactions with others – SPRC, Amtrak, AASHTO, Industry, Congress:**

See discussion above under agenda item 5.

Reauthorization efforts continue...

**Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA for quarter ending 3-31-21:**

The 3-31-21 report was completed and was submitted to FRA on time.

The next quarterly report (for the period ending 6-30-21) will be due on 7-30-21.

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**Next Call -7-21-21**

**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)**

**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**

**6-23-21**

1. Welcome/Open

Tim Ziethen

2. Roll Call

Steve Hewitt

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 3. Approval of the Minutes from 5-26-21 | Tim Ziethen |
| 4. Treasurer's Update                   | Tim Ziethen |
| a. Balance-Spend Rate                   |             |
| 5. Conveying the Message                | Tim/Steve   |
| Educational Document                    |             |
| Reauthorization of the NGEC             |             |
| 6. NGEC 12 <sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting | Steve       |
| 7. Other Issues/questions               | All         |

**Next Call 7-21-21**