

SECTION 305 NGEN

Executive Board Conference Call Meeting

MINUTES FEBRUARY 5, 2013 11:30AM EASTERN CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Bill Bronte, Chair, S305 NGEN Executive Board</i>
ATTENDEES	Executive Board Members: Bill Bronte, Mario Bergeron, Paul Nissenbaum, Darrell Smith as proxy for Gordon Hutchinson, Eric Curtit, Ray Hessinger, Johnson Bridgwater, John Sibold, Tammy Nicholson, Tammy also as proxy for Ron Adams, Support Staff: Chad Edison, Ron Pate, Leo Penne, Steve Hewitt, Nico Lindenau, Ryan Swick, Vincent Brotski, Dave Warner, Kevin Kesler, Jeff Gordon, Ashok Sundararajan, Others: Martin Schroeder, Brian Beeler
ABSENTEES	Board Members: Kevin Lawson, Ron Adams (represented on this call by Tammy Nicholson as proxy) Paul Morris, John Oimoen, Gordon Hutchinson (represented by Darrell Smith) Support Staff: David Ewing Tim Hoeffner, Whitney Phend, Andy House, Larry Salci, Jason Biggs, Anthony Fuller, Dale Engelhardt, John Tunna

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 NGEN Support Services:

Steve Hewitt took a roll of Executive Board members, and, at first, the presence of a quorum was unconfirmed, but after the completion of the Action Items report additional voting members got on the call, and a quorum was confirmed with 10 of 14 voting members present or represented by proxy.

3.

Approval of the Minutes from the January 22, 2013 Executive Board Conference Call Meeting:

Once a quorum had been established, Chairman Bill Bronte asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the January 22, 2013 Executive Board call.

On a motion by Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT, and a second by Johnson Bridgwater, Oklahoma DOT, the minutes of the January 22, 2013 conference call meeting of the Executive Board were approved without objection.

4.

Decisions/Action Items from January 22, 2013

The locomotive procurement status will remain as an agenda item to keep the Board updated as to its progress.
Status: This is a standing agenda item and is covered today under item 7.

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

Jeff Gordon, FRA, will provide contact information to Steve Hewitt to an FTA representative(s) to listen in to NGEN Executive Board calls. **Status: Jeff Gordon, FRA, reported that he will have an FTA contact for the next call of the Board.**

Appointing the Accessibility Policy Group (APG): The APG will have members from states, FRA and Amtrak. Member names should be submitted to Steve Hewitt by COB on January 31, 2013. **Status: As of 1-31-13 not all names have been submitted for the APG. Names to date: Bill Bronte, Caltrans; Eric Curtit, Missouri; Calvin Gibson, FRA. Still need to confirm the Amtrak representative and the Washington State representative.**

Update: On today's call, Washington State DOT named Ron Pate as its representative to the APG; and Amtrak named Gary Talbot as its representative. This completes the formation of the Accessibility Policy Group.

Modification of the Grant Agreement SOW reflecting the Board approvals of December 11, 2012 and January 8, 2013: Amtrak grants will submit the request to FRA by the end of this week. (January 25, 2013) **Status: This is covered under agenda item 5b.**

A decision on selecting the facilitator: Paul Cooper, Face to Face Strategies has been selected as the facilitator. A revised work plan and cost proposal (under \$5,000) has been verbally agreed to and will be submitted to AASHTO by January 23, 2013. Once received, AASHTO will act as contracting agent and execute a contract. Once the contract is executed a list of NGEN participants to be interviewed by the facilitator in advance of the workshop will be finalized and notification will be sent by Steve Hewitt. **Status: A contract between Paul Cooper, Face to Face Strategies, and AASHTO, as the NGEN contracting agent, has been executed. Mr. Cooper agreed to the reduced work plan and corresponding reduction in cost as described by Leo Penne on the last Board call (January 22, 2013). Mr. Cooper has been provided contact information for those individuals who Chairman Bronte has submitted to be interviewed. Mr. Cooper will set up the interviews. All members selected have been notified by Steve Hewitt, and are aware that they will be contacted. Mr. Cooper will also prepare the agenda for the workshop.**

A decision on the proposed NGEN vision statement: As agreed on January 22, 2013, this will be a part of the Workshop discussion on February 20, 2013.

The "backgrounder" document and additional items: AASHTO designers are working on the "backgrounder" with a first cut to be sent to Leo Penne on January 23, 2013. Additional pieces will follow and all will be available in advance of the NGEN Annual Meeting. Leo Penne will send a note to NGEN members describing the types of graphics that would be useful for the various educational pieces under development. **Status: The Backgrounder is finalized and copies are being printed for the SCORT, S4PRC and NGEN meetings to be held during the week of February 17, 2013. 20 hard copies each will be sent out to all Board Members and Steve Hewitt and David Ewing. The final document accompanied the agenda for today's call.**

Update: Leo Penne, AASHTO reiterated that there will be a supply of the Backgrounders at the AASHTO SCORT meeting, the S4PRC meeting, and the NGEN Annual Meeting during the week of February 17, 2013. He noted "it came out better than I expected, and is closer to what people had originally talked about." He added that additional items are in the works, and asked for members to submit any ideas they may have on a shorter version "with less text and more pictures" and a one page "fast facts" document. Leo agreed to send Steve Hewitt a "query" for input on these items, so that Steve can send it to all Board members.

Darrell Smith, Amtrak, asked if a PDF version could be emailed to him, because the one he received in advance of today's call was not readable. Leo and Steve Hewitt will make sure that a PDF version is sent electronically to all Board members and support staff following this call.

If any Board member requires additional copies of the Backgrounder, or knows of anyone who would like some copies, they are asked to let Leo know and he will get them out to you.

Leo also commented that the design costs were assumed by AASHTO at no charge to the NGEN, and the in-house printing costs were the "lowest cost alternative".

Bill Bronte expressed his thanks and appreciation to Leo Penne and AASHTO staff for their hard work in developing, designing, and distributing the Backgrounder and the other items yet to come.

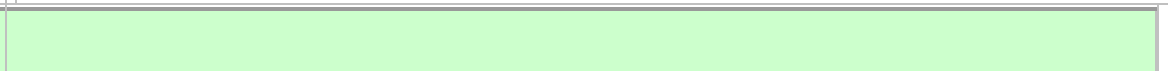
The NGEN Audit report and recommendations and findings: A draft will be provided to the Finance subcommittee to review in advance of its February 13, 2013 call, and on that call, a recommendation will be determined and sent to the Executive Board for its consideration during the annual meeting. **Status: This item will be discussed under agenda item 5 a.**

Annual Meeting Attendance: All members who expect to attend the Annual meeting and/or the Workshop are asked to notify Steve Hewitt asap for an appropriate head count and to ensure the presence of a quorum. **Status: The attendee list has been sent along with this agenda – there are currently 76 registered attendees; and a quorum of voting members has been established by those who have registered. A question was posed about press participation at the annual meeting. Steve Hewitt noted, “I have not heard of any – but if anyone else has let me know so that Board members can be notified.”**

Annual Meeting Agenda: A “Final Draft” will be sent out to all Board members by January 23, 2013. Names of some of the speakers are yet to be identified, but will be provided to Steve Hewitt as soon as possible. Potential changes to the agenda could still come forward as a result of the next Board call. **Status: Since the last call, a number of changes have been requested and a number of speakers have been confirmed. Agenda version 6 accompanied the agenda for today’s call. If there are any changes, they should be given to Steve Hewitt by COB February 10, 2013 since all handouts are to be submitted to AASHTO for printing on February 11, 2013.**

NGEC Presentation Template: Steve Hewitt will provide the NGEC presentation template to all presenters. **Task Complete – Steve Hewitt provided all subcommittee and task force chairs with the template on January 23, 2013. Speakers are asked to provide Steve Hewitt with their presentations for downloading to one thumb drive by COB February 15th at the latest.**

New Agenda items for February 5th Board call: Discussion/review of the current task forces and subcommittees; a discussion of how to make changes to configurations and what is the Board’s role. **Status: A review of task forces and subcommittees is a topic for discussion under agenda item 9.**



5.
Status Updates: Finance subcommittee - Gordon Hutchinson/Darrell Smith:

a. Status: NGEC Audit **Darrell Smith**
Darrell Smith, Amtrak, reported that the auditor had one follow-up conversation on one item with FRA – and, he believes they have “wrapped it up”. He anticipates a draft soon.

Asked if it was still on track to be ready for the Finance subcommittee’s review on February 13, 2013 in order for the subcommittee to provide a recommendation to the Board in advance of the Annual Meeting; Darrell responded that it was still on schedule as planned.

b. Status: Amtrak request for FRA to modify the SOW – Darrell Smith:
Darrell Smith reported that the formal request to FRA was “delivered to Katie Bryant, FRA, yesterday” (February 4, 2013), and it contained both the continuing activities budget and the additional \$10,000 for the facilitator.

6.
Status Update: Structure and Finance Task Force – Eric Curtit:

Eric Curtit reported that David Ewing and Steve Hewitt submitted a proposed action plan for phase 1 of the SOW for developing an implementation plan for the future of the NGEC. Eric will provide feedback to David and Steve in the near future.

The SFTF Section 6 and deployment project is beginning to move ahead. He noted that the contractor has assigned a new lead for its team, and Eric went to Washington, DC last week to meet with him. Eric anticipates that there will be some sort of an update at the Board meeting. He added, “we’ve been very specific about what we’ve asked for and what we needed.”

Eric elaborated on the fact that he “expects to have product for the workshop meeting” on February 20, 2013.

Leo Penne, AASHTO, asked what the product would be, as the facilitator is developing the workshop and should be informed as to what this would entail.

Eric responded that it would relate well to the workshop discussion and that it would revolve around task 1.

Steve Hewitt recommended that Eric, who will be one of the members to be interviewed by the facilitator, have this as part of his discussion so that Mr. Cooper will know how to work it in. Steve reminded everyone that Mr. Cooper is preparing the agenda for the workshop.

Eric agreed, and said that is exactly what he intended to do.

Bill Bronte recommended that he, Eric, Leo Penne, and FRA have a conversation prior to the workshop to see "how it fits in".

Leo noted that it may be a good idea to chop off an hour at the beginning for this presentation, and have the facilitated workshop follow.

Eric said that he basically agrees, but thinks it may be in reverse order.

Steve Hewitt asked Eric and all others on the call if there was a need for any additional equipment, other than flip charts, for the workshop. Specifically, would there be a need for a screen and projector for the SFTF presentation.

Eric responded that he would have handouts, no projector or screen necessary. Others on the call agreed that they did not see a need for anything other than flip charts for the workshop.

7.

Status Update: Locomotive Procurement – Paul Nissenbaum:

Paul Nissenbaum, FRA, reported that he was "pleased to have something to say" on this. He noted that a lot of hard work has been going on and that "IDOT has now been identified as the lead on the locomotive procurement", adding, "all relative states were notified." He added that it will be difficult for IDOT to address resources and that they "cannot do it alone". They will need the help of Caltrans, Washington State and the mid-west states as well as FRA and Amtrak to move this forward. It will take "further collaboration" to get this done.

Paul also noted that IDOT is in the process of hiring a project manager in-house who will be dedicated to this effort full time.

FRA plans to set up a "kick-off" meeting in the near future for states who are involved in the procurement.

He also noted that a schedule from IDOT will be forthcoming and it will be shared with the other participants.

Bill Bronte, Caltrans, stated, "we'll help in any way we can, hopefully we have done some trail blazing with the bi-level car procurement" that will prove helpful.

Bill also noted that "we may want to add this as part of our planned celebration at the Annual Meeting."

8.

Discussion: FY 2014 Appropriations – NGEC Strategy – Bill Bronte:

As a follow up to the January 22nd Executive Board call, Chairman Bronte raised the issue of developing an appropriate strategy for requesting additional funding for the NGEC beyond March 31, 2014. Bill noted that the NGEC was initially authorized \$5 million in PRIIA, and has received \$4 million in appropriations thus far. He noted that the committee, or its successor, will need some funds going forward beyond March, 2014.

Bill raised the issues of "timing" and "how do we do it".

Shayne Gill, AASHTO, informed the Board that they (AASHTO) are developing their PRIIA Reauthorization policy,

and on the "top of our list for it is the NGEC". A strategy for the states is to request an appropriation from Senator Durbin for the NGEC and for additional capital investment for equipment. Shayne added that this topic will be a part of the conversation AASHTO's rail division will be having with the new Executive Director of AASHTO (Bud Wright), and it will be a topic at SCORT and within the States for Passenger Rail (S4PRC) as well.

Leo Penne noted that, in the near term it would be reasonable to send the Backgrounder to leaders and to congressional staff to educate them on what the NGEC is, what it has accomplished, and what it expects to accomplish going forward.

It was agreed that this would make good sense and it would also be a good idea to organize a briefing for Hill staff on the progress of the NGEC thus far using the Backgrounder as a "take away". Education is the key.

Shayne Gill reiterated that the Backgrounder is going to be available at the SCORT, S4PRC and NGEC meetings the week of February 17, 2013, and he emphasized that the "NGEC has done a lot of work" and the "success story needs to be told on the Hill."

It was noted that it would be appropriate for FRA to assist in organizing a Hill briefing on the NGEC for the purpose of educating Hill staff, and that a concise, factual presentation should be put together.

It was also noted that states or industry members who plan to participate on Railroad Day on the Hill could also distribute Background documents.

Shayne Gill commented on the importance of a unified message coming out of SCORT. He will assemble some specific principles for funding requests for FFY 2014 to continue the activities of the NGEC or its successor.

Shayne agreed to share the AASHTO proposed principles with the NGEC Board members and hope for their support.

9.

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

Bill Bronte introduced the agenda item for doing a review of the existing task forces and subcommittees. He noted that this item was recommended on the last call by Paul Nissenbaum, FRA. Bill agrees that an assessment of the current task forces etc. needs to be undertaken as "we (the NGEC) have grown in the number of task forces, subcommittees and working groups we have."

Bill posed the question "What is the appropriate venue for us to begin these discussions?"

General agreement was that the Annual meeting was not the appropriate venue for this discussion, and it was ultimately agreed that it should be an agenda item for the next Executive Board call on March 5th. "It should be a top of the agenda item for that call", Bill Bronte suggested.

Steve Hewitt gave a brief overview of the current task forces and subcommittees and referenced the NGEC by-laws as a source for the establishment of the two primary subcommittees. Steve also named the current subcommittees and task forces, (Finance subcommittee; Technical subcommittee; Administrative Task Force; Structure and Finance Task Force; Joint Procurement Task Force and the newly established Accessibility Policy Group), and pointed out that there are many other working groups which are not direct reports to the Executive Board, but to the Technical subcommittee. These working groups serve a vital role in the development of specifications and in the ongoing management of those specifications.

In his comments Steve suggested that it may be a matter of looking at the frequency of calls for the various primary subcommittees and task forces as opposed to dissolving them. Currently the Finance subcommittee and the Administrative Task Force meet every 4 weeks; the Technical subcommittee and the Structure and Finance Task Force meet every two weeks; and the Joint Procurement Task Force has not met in 6 months or so.

Bill Bronte noted that the newly formed APG needs to look at its length and charter. Steve Hewitt noted that the

DCR creating the APG should be referred to in considering a charter.

Steve also noted that the JPTF needs to be looked at, either way, because a lot has changed since the beginning (and conclusion) of the effort to develop the Bi-level RFP. Members of the JPTF may change for the Locomotive Procurement; the lead state may wish to have a revised process; and the or Conflict of Interest forms will likely need to be re-drafted and signed again to ensure total confidentiality.

Bill Bronte recommended that the Board members take a look at the various groups in the time between now and the March 5th call; and get a sense of "what they are and why; and what are they doing that can be done by consolidation".

Paul Nissenbaum commented that Bill had provided "a well summarized process to be laid out...and it makes sense." He added that they should all be "compared in the lens of where we are headed. It speaks to a vision via setting priorities for things we do and do not do. It speaks to how much needs to be done". Paul further noted we need "a tight structure reflecting good government and good business to explain what we do and justify it."

Paul also noted that the working groups within the Technical subcommittee should be looked at in the sense that "it would be helpful to understand what these are and to state what they are and what they do."

The discussion concluded with the agreement that this topic will be "on the top of the agenda" for March 5, 2013.

10.

With no other business forthcoming before the Board on this day, the February 5, 2013 Executive Board conference call was adjourned at approximately 12:33pm Eastern.

The next Executive Board conference call is March 5, 2013

Decisions/Action Items

The locomotive procurement status will remain as an agenda item to keep the Board updated as to its progress. (ongoing)
Jeff Gordon will continue to provide the AASHTO, Amtrak and FRA public affairs officers with email notifications of NGEC activities. (ongoing)
By the next executive Board call, Jeff Gordon, FRA, will provide contact information to Steve Hewitt for an FTA representative(s) to listen in to NGEC Executive Board calls.
All members of the Accessibility Policy Group have now been named. They are: Bill Bronte, Caltrans, Ron Pate, Washington State DOT, Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT, Calvin Gibson, FRA, and Gary Talbot, Amtrak.
Modification of the Grant Agreement SOW reflecting the Board approvals of December 11, 2012 and January 8, 2013: The Amtrak grants office has submitted the formal request to FRA (on February 4, 2013) and will report back once FRA has responded.
The NGEC Audit is about wrapped up and a report should be in the hands of the Finance subcommittee in time for it to take action on February 13 th and to provide a recommendation to the Board prior to the Annual meeting.
The Backgrounder is completed and has gone to print. 20 copies for each Board member and David Ewing and Steve Hewitt will be sent out today or tomorrow (February 5 or 6). A PDF version of the Backgrounder will be sent through Steve Hewitt to all Board members following today's call. Input on a shorter version with more pictures and less words and on a one page fast facts document, should be submitted to Leo Penne, AASHTO. Additional copies of the Backgrounder can be requested – contact Leo Penne.
The Annual Meeting agenda will be finalized by February 11 th and submitted to AASHTO for printing. Any changes to the agenda should be sent to Steve Hewitt by COB on February 10, 2013.
Annual Meeting presentations should be sent to Steve Hewitt by COB on February 15, 2013 for downloading to one thumb drive prior to the Annual meeting.
The facilitated workshop may or may not include a presentation from the contractor on the Section 6 effort. Eric Curtit to discuss with the facilitator during the pre-meeting interview.
Discussion/review of the current task forces and subcommittees will be an agenda item for the March 5, 2013 Executive Board conference call.
AASHTO is preparing proposed principles for the reauthorization of PRIIA and will include approximately three bullets in regard to the NGEC. The draft NGEC principles will be distributed to Board members for review as to consistency and accuracy.
FRA will assist in organizing a Hill staff briefing on the NGEC – what it is and what it has accomplished, and hoes to accomplish going forward.
The February 19 th Executive Board conference call is canceled in deference to the NGEC Annual meeting on February 21, 2013. The next conference call will take place on March 5, 2013

ATTACHMENTS



S305 NGEC Executive Board Conference Call
February 5, 2013
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM Eastern
Call in number: 866 299 7945 passcode: 1601544#
Agenda

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| 1. Open the Meeting | Bill Bronte |
| 2. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Approval of Minutes from January 22, 2012 conference call | Bill Bronte |
| 4. Action Items Review | Steve Hewitt |
| 5. Status Updates: Finance subcommittee: | Gordon Hutchinson/Darrell Smith |
| a. Status: NGEC Audit | Darrell Smith |
| b. Status: Amtrak request for FRA to modify the SOW in the grant agreement to include the continuing activities budget as approved by the Board on 12-11-12 and up to \$10,000 for a facilitator | Darrell Smith |
| 6. Status Update: Structure and Finance Task Force | Eric Curtit |
| 7. Locomotive procurement status update | Paul Nissenbaum |
| 8. Discussion: FY2014 Appropriations – NGEC Strategy | Bill Bronte |
| 9. Discussion/review of the current task forces and subcommittees | Bill Bronte |
| 10. Other | All |

Next Call: March 5, 2013