

# SECTION 305 NGEN

## Executive Board Conference Call Meeting

MINUTES

MAY 14, 2013

11:30AM EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

<b>FACILITATOR</b>	<i>Bill Bronte, Chair, S305 NGEN Executive Board</i>
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<b>Executive Board Members:</b> <i>Bill Bronte, Dan Black, Eric Curtit, Ray Hessinger, Todd Poppish as proxy for John Oimoen, Jason Biggs as proxy for Ron Pate, Ron Adams, Tammy Nicholson, Dale Engelhardt as proxy for Mario Bergeron, Support:</i> <i>Steve Hewitt, Jeff Gordon, Nico Lindenau, Leo Penne, Dave Warner, Darrell Smith, Vincent Brotski, David Ewing, Patrick Centolanzi</i>
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<b>Board Members:</b> <i>Paul Nissenbaum, Mario Bergeron, Kevin Lawson, Johnson Bridgewater, Alan Ware, Ron Pate, John Oimoen Support:</i> <i>Tim Hoeffner, Allan Paul, Larry Salci, Whitney Phend, Ryan Swick, Martin Schroeder, Brian Beeler II, Kevin Kesler, John Tunna, Ashok Sundararajan, Chad Edison</i>

### WELCOME/ROLL CALL/ACTION ITEMS REVIEW

1.

**Opening – Bill Bronte-chair:**

Chairman Bill Bronte was backed up in a major traffic jam, and contacted Steve Hewitt to ask that he open the call, take the roll, and proceed with the agenda until Bill was able to join the call.

Steve Hewitt opened the meeting, and informed those on the call that he and Bill Bronte had been notified that, due to schedule conflicts, FRA would not be formally represented on today’s call. Paul Nissenbaum asked FRA consultant Nico Lindenau to be on the call as a listener, only. As a result, there will not be a quorum for this call, and no votes will be taken.

2.

**Roll Call – Steve Hewitt, Manager, S305 NGEN Support Services:**

Steve Hewitt took a roll of Executive Board members and support staff to establish a record of attendance, recognizing that there would not be a quorum.

After completion of the roll, Bill Bronte joined the call and formally opened the meeting. In doing so, the chairman welcomed Dan Black, the new Acting Amtrak CFO and the new Treasurer of the NGEN.

3.

**Action Item Review –Steve Hewitt:**

#### Status of Open Action Items from the last call – April 30, 2013

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. **Status: On the April 30, 2013 Executive Board call, it was reported that within the next 3-5 days (first week in May) talking points will be distributed in regards to the schedule. An industry announcement would take place in around a week or a week and a half from April 30, 2013. To this point these action items have not been completed. A new update will be given by Todd Poppish, IDOT under agenda item #7.**

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

The 6 person task force established during the workshop to develop proposed strategic goals met following the April 2 and April 16, 2013 Executive Board calls. The subgroup will meet in Washington, DC May 7th and 8th. The meetings will be facilitated by Paul Cooper (the facilitator for the February 20, 2013 workshop) The Board will be apprised as this group moves forward with its task. **Status: The sub group or task force did meet in DC on May 7th and 8th. Chairman Bronte will provide an update under agenda item # 6**

Strategic discussions regarding future funding for the NGECE 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 NGECE 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. Members should think about ways to capitalize on the strong support received by a number of regional and national organizations. **Status: This will be discussed further under agenda item # 9.**

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. **Status: AASHTO has had four printings of the Backgrounder, and, of note, over 400 were distributed last week at the AASHTO Spring meeting.**

**It was pointed out that the version of the Backgrounder document posted on the website is not the most recent version. (dated February, 2013) Steve Hewitt was unaware of that, noted that he would check into this and make sure it is updated. Steve added that the only difference between the February version and the current version is the addition of the vision statement to the most recent edition.**

State members are asked to provide Leo Penne with state specific information, quotes, graphics, and pictures to assist AASHTO in the production of the next educational piece. **Status: Member response has been minimal. Leo will provide an update on the status of additional educational documents under agenda item #10**

Eric Curtit and FRA consultants Nico Lindenau and Ashok Sundararajan are reviewing the first product received (50% of task 1) from the Section 6/Fleet deployment contractor. Eric will report to the Board on the results of that review on the next call (May 14, 2013) and continue to keep the Board apprised of all SFTF progress as a standing agenda item. **Status: Eric will provide an update under agenda item # 5.**

The next RR101 webinar will take place sometime around the end of May, 2013. Shayne Gill, AASHTO, will keep Board members apprised as the date and topic is firmed up. **Status: The next RR101 webinar will be held on May 30 at 1:00pm EDT. The topic will be Revenue Modeling. Shayne Gill will keep members apprised as additional details are firmed up.**

Following its conference call on May 9, 2013, the Technical subcommittee is expected to submit to the Board the AWG developed guidelines in regards to potential ADAAG applicability to passenger rail. On the Board's next call, May 14, 2013, it is expected to organize the APG and task it with a policy review of the guidelines. **Status: The Technical subcommittee met on May 9th and determined that the comment period should be extended until May 16th for input from TSC members. The subcommittee will then discuss a revised version of the draft document on its call of May 23rd, and following that, the draft, as revised, will be sent to the Board and the APG. This should occur by the next Executive Board call – June 4th, 2013.**

**4. Approval of the minutes from April 30, 2013 – Bill Bronte:**

With the lack of a quorum, it was agreed to wait until the next Executive Board call (May 28, 2013) to approve the April

30<sup>th</sup> minutes. Until then they will remain posted on the website as draft minutes.

**5. Status Update: Structure and Finance task force – Eric Curtit:**

Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT, reported that he had received, from the contractor, 50% of task 1 (there are a total of 3 tasks) by the due date of April 30, 2013. Eric and a core group of the SFTF are reviewing the report, and have provided comments to the contractor. Eric also noted that the contractor is close to completing 100% of task 1. Once it has been received, he and the core group will review it and then provide it to the full SFTF for its review.

On the last SFTF call, the members approved Eric's recommendation that the calls be "moved to monthly rather than bi-weekly."

**6. Executive Board subgroup/task force (developing strategic goals) – progress report – Bill Bronte:**

Bill Bronte reported that the task force met in Washington DC on May 7 and 8, 2013. Those present at the meetings included; Bill Bronte, Eric Curtit, Ray Hessinger, Paul Nissenbaum, Darrell Smith, Dave Warner, Nico Lindenau and Steve Hewitt. Bill noted that Steve was specifically asked to participate on the task force because of his full range of knowledge of every aspect of the NGEC, as well as his ability to keep "nudging" members to keep things moving along.

The meetings were facilitated by Paul Cooper, who was the facilitator for the Executive Board workshop held in Washington, DC in February, 2013.

Bill described the meetings last week as "very worthwhile" and said that "we looked at the full range of issues and talked about possibilities for an entity and how to continue 305". The discussion about continuing 305 revolved around the possibility of a rail title being included in the Map 21 Reauthorization, or possibly, as a part of the reauthorization of PRIIA.

Task force members were given homework assignments, which are underway, and include putting together strategic functions, and, ultimately coming back to the full Board for its input. Bill reminded those on today's call, that the 305 success has been to be open and collaborative, and this effort will be no different.

Bill closed his report by emphasizing that the meetings were "very productive for us all", and that the task force hopes to have something to bring to the Board by the face to face meeting to be held on September, 26 2013, in Columbus, Ohio.

Other task force participants echoed Bill's comments agreeing it was a productive meeting with, as Eric Curtit put it, "lots of good stuff" coming out of the discussions.

**7. Status Update: Locomotive Procurement – John Oimoen, IDOT:**

Todd Poppish, IDOT, reported that the locomotive RFP has been drafted and is under review, internally, at IDOT legal and finance. He added that it is on target for a possible mid-July, 2013 release. It is anticipated that the draft will go to participating states for their review sometime in May, 2013.

Todd also reported that Jim Lindsay has drafted "talking points" for distribution to the states and the industry. They are currently under review by FRA, and a discussion is planned for this Thursday (May 16, 2013). Todd anticipates that the talking points will be distributed by early next week.

**8. Ongoing Strategic Discussion: FY2014 Appropriations – NGEC future funding – Bill Bronte:**

Bill Bronte reported that this is a running action item for all Board calls, and noted that the task force had lengthy discussions about strategies for continuing 305 in the near term and long term. Members of the task force were given action items to determine where things stand with the current appropriation, and to clarify when the NGEC had last received an appropriation. These actions are meant to help develop a strategy for requesting the final \$1million that had been authorized, but never appropriated to the NGEC. Bill emphasized that this would serve as "a bridge to keep us going until we get authorized or go away."

Darrell Smith, Amtrak, reported that he has been working on the first part of the action item which was to update the financial report so that the Committee will know where it stands with regard to keeping the NGEC going if no additional money is appropriated.

Steve Hewitt asked if Darrell thought a Treasurer's report could be ready for the next Board call – May 28, 2013 – to

provide the Board with an update on its current financial status. Darrell agreed that he could have an update ready, and Bill Bronte agreed that it should be an agenda item for May 28, 2013.

**9.  
Update: Developing additional educational documents – Leo Penne:**

Leo Penne, AASHTO, reported on both agenda item 9 and 10 together.

The Backgrounder is in its fourth printing. Over 400 Backgrounders were distributed at the AASHTO Spring Meeting. The Backgrounder has been very well received.

Leo also noted that after the discussion earlier today about the Backgrounder being outdated on the website, he had gone to the AASHTO staff managing the website, (moments ago) and asked him to post the latest version. Leo also reiterated, what Steve Hewitt had said earlier, that the only difference in the two versions is that the earlier one does not have the vision statement on it.

**10.  
Report on AASHTO's HSR and Intercity Passenger Rail Leadership Group Meeting held on May 5, 2013 during the AASHTO Spring Meeting – Leo Penne:**

There was a luncheon at the Spring Meeting attended by Administrator Szabo and Paul Nissenbaum, as well as the AASHTO president, SCORT Chair and NYSDOT Commissioner. At the lunch all had good things to say about the NGEN and what it has accomplished thus far.

Leo also noted that the High Speed Rail Intercity Passenger Rail Leadership Group met during the Spring Meeting and, again, "there were positive conversations about 305."

Bill Bronte added that Anne Schneider, IDOT, recently spoke about the fact that Sumitomo corporation of America (the manufacturer of the PRIIA bi-level cars along with Nippon Sharyo) has expanded the Rochelle, Illinois plant and added additional jobs.

**11.  
Other:**

Bill Bronte commented on the fact that yesterday (May 13, 2013) Steve Hewitt sent out an article and links to a video and pictures related to Amtrak's new electric locomotive's unveiling at the Siemens Sacramento plant. There was a celebratory event marking this occasion. It was attended by Amtrak president and CEO, Joe Boardman, as well as Karen Hedlund representing FRA.

Bill Bronte asked David Ewing, consultant, to provide a "look ahead" of upcoming hearings in Congress related to rail.

David noted that the House T&I will hold a hearing on May 21<sup>st</sup> on "cost drivers and Intercity Passenger Rail". Those testifying are expected to include Joe Boardman and David Kutrosky.

On May 28 and 29, 2013, there will be back to back hearings in California. First the House T&I will hold a hearing on High Speed Rail, and then it will conduct an informal listening session on statewide activities and capital corridors.

In June, 2013, it is expected that the House Appropriations subcommittee on Transportation, HUD and Related Agencies (THUD) will mark up its appropriations proposal for FY 2014.

**12.  
Adjourn:**

With no further business to come before the Board today, Chairman Bronte adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:00Noon EDT.

**The next Executive Board conference call is May 28, 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. It is anticipated that talking points will be distributed by early next week, and a draft of the RFP should go to the participating states sometime in May, 2013.

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

The 6 person task force established during the workshop to develop proposed strategic goals met following the April 2 and April 16, 2013 Executive Board calls. The subgroup met in Washington, DC May 7th and 8<sup>th</sup>. The meetings were facilitated by Paul Cooper (the facilitator for the February 20, 2013 workshop). The task force is discussing/reviewing concepts developed during the meetings. Once a concept paper is prepared and approved by the task force it will be vetted among key stakeholders and brought to the Board.

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. Members should continue to think about ways to capitalize on the strong support received by a number of regional and national organizations.

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Darrell Smith is preparing an update of the status of current finances of the NGEC, and a Treasurer's update report will be provided on the next Executive Board call – May 28, 2013.

Leo Penne, AASHTO, anticipates having drafts of a four-fold educational piece and a one page "fast facts" document ready for review in "about two weeks."

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**ATTACHMENTS**



**S305 NGEC Executive Board Conference Call  
May 14, 2013  
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM EDT  
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. Action Items Review   | Steve Hewitt          |
| 4. Approval of Minutes from April 30, 2013   | Bill Bronte           |
| 5. Status Update: Structure and Finance Task Force   | Eric Curtit           |
| 6. Executive Board subgroup (developing strategic goals) – progress report:  | Bill Bronte           |
| 7. Status Update: Locomotive procurement   | IDOT Rep              |
| 8. Ongoing Strategic Discussion: FY2014 Appropriations – NGEC  | Bill Bronte           |
| 9. Status Update: developing additional educational documents  | Leo Penne             |
| 10. Report on: AASHTO's HSR and Intercity Passenger Rail Leadership Group Meeting held during the AASHTO Spring Meeting on May 5, 2013 | Leo Penne/Shayne Gill |
| 11. Other  | All                   |