



Our Vision: The NGEC will provide national leadership in standardization, acquisition, and management of passenger rail equipment.

SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

OCTOBER 5, 2021

11:30 EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Ray Hessinger Chair, S305 NGEC Executive Board</i>
ATTENDEES	Board Members: Ray Hessinger, Joe Paul for George Hull, John Oimoen, Tim Ziethen, Mike Murray for Jeff Gordon, Arun Rao, Troy Hughes, Troy Hughes as proxy for Amanda Martin, Jason Biggs for Ron Pate, Jon Dees for Jason Orthner, Mike Jenkins Support Staff and Colleagues: Tammy Krause, Larry Salci, Steve Hewitt, Shayne Gill, Rebecca Anger, Dave "Emeritus" Warner
ABSENTEES	Board Members: Jeff Gordon, George Hull, Ron Pate, Amanda Martin, Jason Orthner, Brian Beeler II, Kyle Gradinger, Support: Michael Kraft, Strat Cavros, Patrick Centolanzi, Momo Tamaoki

DECISIONS MADE

1.

Welcome – Ray Hessinger Chair, S305 NGEC Executive Board:

Chairman Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, opened the meeting and asked Steve Hewitt to call the roll.

2. Roll Call –Steve Hewitt, NGEC Program Manager:

Steve Hewitt called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

3.

Action items Review – Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt briefly reviewed the status of open action items not covered under the agenda this week and noted they will be included on the next call agenda, and the status of each is included in today's minutes (10-5-21).

2021 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:

The 2021 version of the NGEC two-page backgrounder/educational document is available electronically or in hard copy by request - contact Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com. Thus far over 575 electronic copies have been distributed.

If you would like to receive hard copies, contact Steve with the quantity and where to mail them.

The 2022 version is being developed through the FASC with the goal of having them ready for the in person Annual Meeting in Washington, DC February 25, 2022.

The FASC is now collecting input from its members (due October 6th) on how to update/revise improve it. The FASC will discuss the recommendations on its next call on 10-13-21.

Industry Participation:

Industry involvement continues to be consistent at about 203 participants.

Technical subcommittee review of the Access Board Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding accessibility guidelines for Rail vehicles:

The intent of this effort is for states to submit their comments to the Access Board Docket on the Accessibility

Requirement Guidelines Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Amtrak has submitted its comments already and will share them with the Executive Board. Once the comments have come back from the Access Board and there is a Final Rule, the Technical subcommittee (through its technical working groups) will compare them with the NGEC specifications to ensure compliance and make any necessary changes by utilizing the NGEC DCR process.

On 8-20-20, Melissa Shurland reported to the Technical subcommittee, that the comment period ended on 7-14-20 (after having been extended to that date) and the Access Board is now processing those comments received. Melissa stated, "we are in a holding pattern to see what the comments were and what the Access Board's disposition of them will be." Melissa will keep the NGEC technical subcommittee informed as the process is completed.

As of 10-5-21 – there has been no news on the status of the Access Board's efforts.

Next Update: As appropriate

VIA Rail Equipment Procurement:

On 2-23-21 – during the NGEC Annual Meeting, VIA Rail provided a comprehensive update on its vehicle procurement.

The PowerPoint presentation was distributed and posted to the website.

Next Update: As appropriate

CtDOT Rail Car Procurement:

As of 10-5-21, Marci Petterson, CtDOT has informed Steve Hewitt that the "cone of silence" period continues.

Next Update: As appropriate

NGEC in-person Annual Meeting – Washington DC – Hyatt Regency on the Hill – 2-25-22.

AASHTO has announced that it will hold its Council on Rail Transportation (CORT) meeting in Washington, DC in-person the week of 2-21-22 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill.

As it has done in the past, the NGEC will meet at that location on the morning of February 25, 2022. More information to come.

On 10-5-21, Shayne Gill, AASHTO, confirmed that as of this date, the AASHTO meetings (including the NGEC) will take place in-person as scheduled. These things are always fluid due to COVID issues, but AASHTO recently held in-person meetings in Milwaukee and plan to hold the February meetings in-person as well. If there are any changes Shayne will let the NGEC know.

Next Update: Late Fall 2021

4. Approval of the Minutes from the 9-21-21 Meetings -Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:

On a motion by Troy Hughes, Missouri DOT, and a second by Arun Rao, Wisconsin DOT, the minutes from the 9-21-21 meetings were approved as submitted.

5. Treasurer's Report – Balance/Spend Rate – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Tim Ziethen provided the current Balance and Spend rate as of 10-5-21:

Balance/ Spend Rate:

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.

Amount Spent through July 2021: \$812,477.83

Balance remaining: \$ 437,522.17

Estimated spend at current rate for the remaining grant period (through 9-30-23): \$364,246.20

Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,008.24

Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$73,307.97

6.

Follow-up Discussions with FRA and Amtrak re: future funding options beyond 9-30-23 – Tim Ziethen/Mike Murray

Mike Murray, FRA, reported that the FRA is looking at options and briefing leadership in the Office of Railroad Policy and Development. This will take a couple of months and Mike suggested that the Board not carry this as an agenda item for the bi-weekly meetings as it will take some time. When he has more information, he will let the Board know.

Tim Ziethen commented that that was good to hear and that the need is not imminent as there are 26 months remaining in the current grant agreement and funding to get the NGEC through until then based on the current spend rate. Still, because of the time it takes to get agreements in place, there is some level of urgency.

Tim also reported that he has reached out to Ken Altman, Amtrak Government Affairs to follow-up with him on previous discussions that an option could be Amtrak funding the NGEC through its grant. It was the general thinking that this would be a possibility as the NGEC was included as a potential type of recipient in the overall Amtrak grant request. Tim will report back once he hears from Ken Altman.

Ray Hessinger suggested that the FASC follow these issues and keep this on their monthly agenda, and report back to the NGEC Executive Board as more information is forthcoming.

7.

Update: Multi-State Rail Car Procurement – Steve Hewitt for Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans:

In the absence of a Caltrans representative, Steve Hewitt provided the update as reported to the Technical subcommittee on 9-30-21:

Design review for the standard coach is complete. The Cab Carshell final design has been approved for production. Remaining Cab Car FDRs are in the final submittal and review stage and the cab car Clearance information has been submitted to Amtrak. The IDOT Café Car FDR is in the closeout stage with action items being addressed.

The Cab Car Collision and Corner Post Appendix F testing is in process in Germany and the compression test report is in work. FAIs for cab car Engineer's seat and windshield occurred on September 22.

Ninety-four cars total are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT has conditionally accepted eight coach cars. The Caltrans cars are being prepared for Conditional Acceptance and revenue service while open items are being addressed.

8.

Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:

On 10-5-21, Ray Hessinger reported that initial design review continues between Metro-North and Siemens. Recently Metro-North had a site visit of the Siemens facilities in Sacramento, Ca. to see the facility and to resolve design review comments – especially those in which Siemens wanted to move forward with the existing Charger design rather than the changes Metro-North had made to the specification. A number of those issues were closed with Metro-North accepting the Siemens request.

9.

Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements – Joe Paul for George Hull, Amtrak:

Joe Paul reported on the ALC 42 – there are two units in Wilmington. PTC testing begins tomorrow as well as some additional testing. They are looking at revenue service by Amtrak's first Quarter of FY 2022 (which begins in October 2021).

10.

Update: Document Control Management – Tammy Krause:

Tammy Krause provided the following update for inclusion in the meeting minutes (10-5-21):

Document Control continues to work with the TSC on updating the DMU specification. Two weeks ago, the possibility of adding the Aluminum Carbody to the specification was discussed at the EB and the decision was made to stay with steel carbody, however we may add aluminum in the future. This was brought up to the TSC and we continued to review the remaining DCRs that were submitted by Stadler. We got through about half of the remaining ones and hope to finish at the next TSC. After that I will put together an updated DCR list with the final decisions and that will be submitted to the TSC and hopefully we will vote on it at the following TSC meeting and then submit it to the EB.

Steve Hewitt added that it was agreed on 9-30-21 on the Technical subcommittee call that once the review of all DCRs has been completed by the subcommittee, Tammy Krause will update the summary of changes and it will be distributed before the following subcommittee call. It will not be voted on during the meeting where the final DCRs are reviewed and adjudicated.

The timeline now looks as though the review by the subcommittee will be completed on the 10-14-21 call and, if it is, the summary of changes will be updated, distributed, and considered by the subcommittee on the following call – potentially 10-28-21.

Status/Timeline: Completion of Trainset Re-write:

Steve Hewitt asked Tammy Krause if the Trainset specification rewrite is ready to go to the Technical subcommittee for review and consideration after the DMU update has been considered for approval.

Tammy said it is ready to go – she had sent to the working groups some paragraphs for review and believes she has gotten responses from all but will double check.

Based on this information, the Trainset specification rewrite should come before the subcommittee for review and potential consideration on 11-11-21.

11. Follow-up: discussion of next steps and priorities in developing the work plan for 2022 – Ray Hessinger:

Ray Hessinger reported that he and Steve Hewitt had begun discussions on setting priorities for 2022, and that the goal is to have them wrapped up in time for the Annual Meeting in February 2022.

Ray would like input from Board members on what is next – what set of specifications do we want to update? What are the needs in the near future?

Jason Biggs, WSDOT, suggested that this be a homework assignment as he, for one, would like time to think about this. Ray agreed and set a timeline for input/comments to be sent to himself and Steve Hewitt by Thursday October 14th so that he and Steve Hewitt would be able to discuss and compile the comments during their one- on -one conversation scheduled for 10-15-21.

Steve Hewitt will send an email request for input and provide the deadline date.

Ray Hessinger also noted that he and Steve Hewitt discussed the possibility of adopting administrative changes Metro-North made to Dual mode specification. The changes provided numbers rather than bullets and simply made it easier for the contract administrator to read. Ray would like to discuss the possibility of making these changes “across the board” for all PRIIA specifications. It would not be a technical change – just administrative/format change to improve the specifications.

12. Other:

With no other business forthcoming, Chairman Ray Hessinger adjourned the meeting at 11:59am Eastern

Next meeting – 10-19-21.

Decisions/Action Items

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Next Update: 11-2-21

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Amtrak Equipment Procurement Update – 10-5-21

On the Acela 21 – work continues to progress on testing and modeling. The FRA sample car inspection was completed. (nothing new reported on 10-5-21)

On the Intercity Passenger Rail Trainset (Amfleet) – it is progressing well. It is in the initial design review stage. (nothing new reported on 10-5-21)

On 10-5-21, Joe Paul reported on the ALC 42 – there are two units in Wilmington. PTC testing begins tomorrow as well as some additional testing. They are looking at revenue service by Amtrak's first Quarter of FY 2022 (which begins in October 2021).

Next Update – 11-2-21

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Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,008.24
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Exploring/confirming funding options beyond 9-30-2023:

On 10-5-21, Mike Murray, FRA, reported that the FRA is looking at options and briefing leadership in the Office of Railroad Policy and Development. This will take a couple of months and Mike suggested that the Board not carry this as an agenda item for the bi-weekly meetings as it will take some time. When he has more information, he will let the Board know.

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Decisions/Actions:

Ray Hessinger suggested that the FASC follow these issues and keep this on their monthly agenda, and report back to the NGEC Executive Board as more information is forthcoming.

The NGEC will explore potential grant opportunities and potential appropriations requests for funding beyond 2023.

2021 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:

The 2021 version of the NGEC two-page backgrounder/educational document continues to be available electronically or in hard copy by request - contact Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com. To date 575 electronic copies have been distributed.

Updating the NGEC 2021 two-pager for 2022:

The FASC has begun its review and updating of the NGEC two-pager for 2022. Some suggestions have been provided by the members.

On the 9-15-21 call, it was agreed that FASC members will review the two-pager and provide comments/edits/improvements to Steve Hewitt and Tim Ziethen by 10-6-21 so that they can be compiled and discussed on the next FASC call on 10-13-21.

Developing a strategy for raising NGEC awareness:

During the 9-15-21 FASC call, Tim Ziethen brought up the need to raise the awareness of the NGEC to Congress and others with a more aggressive approach by an outward focused effort within the parameters of the NGEC's abilities. He noted that the NGEC is a "victim of its own success" and, as demonstrated in the Reauthorization effort, it goes unnoticed or is overlooked. The NGEC will need to be more aggressive in its approach.

Actions:

It was agreed that the FASC should begin to look into this issue and identify where opportunities exist to raise awareness of the NGEC and its activities/accomplishments. The FASC should develop recommendations for opportunities to be proactive and bring them to the Executive Board.

NGEC Annual By-Laws Review:

The FASC has begun its review of the NGEC By-Laws and expects the process to be completed in time for Executive Board consideration by December 2021.

Technical subcommittee review of the Access Board Proposed Rulemaking regarding accessibility guidelines for Rail vehicles:

The intent of this effort is for states to submit their comments to the Access Board Docket on the Accessibility Requirement Guidelines Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Amtrak has submitted its comments already and will share them with the Executive Board. Once the comments have come back and there is a final Rule, the Technical subcommittee (through its technical working groups) will compare them with the NGEC specifications to ensure compliance and make any necessary changes by utilizing the NGEC DCR process.

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Next Update: as appropriate

Updates: States and Amtrak – Charger Locomotive Experience:

In-depth updates were provided during the Annual Meeting and were included in the minutes.

The presentations were distributed and posted to the website.

Next Update: as appropriate

Status Update – Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:

This procurement continues to be in the "cone of silence" phase.

Next Update – as appropriate

Follow-up: discussion of next steps and priorities in developing the work plan for 2022 – Ray Hessinger:

On 10-5-21, Ray Hessinger reported that he and Steve Hewitt had begun discussions on setting priorities for 2022, and that the goal is to have them wrapped up in time for the Annual Meeting in February 2022.

Ray would like input from Board members on what is next – what set of specifications do we want to update? What are the needs in the near future?

Decisions/Actions:

Executive Board members are asked to provide their thoughts/comments on priorities for updates to the NGEC specification to Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger by COB 10-14-21.

This will be an agenda item for the 10-19-21 NGEC Executive Board call.

Steve Hewitt will re-send the NGEC two-pager to all members to use as a reference of where each specification is as far as revisions/updates made.

NGEC in-person Annual Meeting – Washington DC – Hyatt Regency on the Hill – 2-25-22.

AASHTO has announced that it will hold its Council on Rail Transportation (CORT) meeting in Washington, DC in-person the week of 2-21-22 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill.

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On 10-5-21, Shayne Gill, AASHTO, confirmed that as of this date, the AASHTO meetings (including the NGEC) will take place in-person as scheduled. These things are always fluid due to COVID issues, but AASHTO recently held in-person meetings in Milwaukee and plan to hold the February meetings in-person as well. If there are any changes Shayne will let the NGEC know.

NGEC Executive Board Meeting

10-5-21

11:30 AM – 12:00 Noon Eastern

By computer:

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

By phone:

1-415-655-0001

Access code:

126-073-1531

Agenda

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| 1. Welcome and Open the Meeting | Ray Hessinger |
| 2. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Action Items Status Review | Steve Hewitt |
| 4. Approval of Minutes from 9-21-21 meeting | Ray Hessinger |
| 5. Treasurer's Report/Balance Spend Rate | Tim Ziethen |
| 6. Follow up: Discussions with FRA and Amtrak re: funding options beyond 9-30-23 | Tim Ziethen/Jeff Gordon |
| 7. Update: Multi-State Car Procurement | Kyle Gradinger |
| 8. Update: Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement | Ray Hessinger |
| 9. Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements | George Hull |
| 10. Document Control Management | Tammy Krause |
| Update on Technical subcommittee review of DMU DCRs/anticipated timeline for TSC consideration | |
| Status/Timeline for Trainset re-write | |
| 11. Follow up: discussion of next steps and priorities in developing the work plan for 2022. | Ray Hessinger |
| 12. Other | Ray Hessinger/All |
| 13. Adjourn | Ray Hessinger |

Next call/meeting – 10-19-21