



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

SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 2, 2021

11:30 EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

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

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 (11-2-21).

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 615 electronic copies have been distributed.

The FASC is in the process of finalizing updates to the two-pager for the 2022 version and will discuss those changes on next week's call (11-10-21).

Annual By-Law Review/Update:

On 10-13-21, the FASC approved proposed revisions/edits to the NGEC By-Laws. The proposed changes were provided to the NGEC Executive Board on 10-14-21. Per the By-Laws, members of the NGEC Executive Board must have proposed changes in writing at least 30 days prior to taking a vote. The vote in consideration of the By-Laws revisions is scheduled for 11-16-21 – the next Executive Board meeting/call.

Industry Participation:

Industry involvement continues to be consistent at around 200 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 11-2-21 – 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 11-2-21 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.

Next Update: Late Fall 2021

4.

Approval of the Minutes from the 10-19-21 Meetings -Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:

On a motion by John Oimoen, IDOT, and a second by Arun Rao, Wisconsin DOT, the minutes from the 10-19-21 meetings were approved as submitted.

5.

Treasurer's Report –Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Tim Ziethen provided the current Balance and Spend rate as of 11-2-21:

Balance/ Spend Rate:

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.
Amount Spent through August 2021: \$823,248.64
Balance remaining: \$ 426,751.36
Estimated spend at current rate for the remaining grant period (through 9-30-23): \$348,834.17
Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$13,953.37
Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$77,917.19

Quarterly Grant Agreement Progress Report to FRA was submitted on time on 10-29-21.

Tim commented that the report highlights activities for the quarter ending on 9-30-21 and bases much of its information on the activities reports prepared by Steve Hewitt.

Tim added that there is one glitch in the PDF certification box. When saving the file, the check mark in that box showed as unmarked. It is a PDF issue.

Tim will correct and provide Steve Hewitt with the corrected version for distribution to the Executive Board members.

6.

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

Kyle Gradinger was not on the call today, 11-2-21, but Caltrans provided the following update to the Technical subcommittee on 10-28-21. Steve Hewitt read it into the record for today's call (11-2-21):

Design review for the standard coach is complete. The Cab Car shell final design has been approved and the first cab structures are in production. Remaining Cab Car FDRs are in the final submittal and review stage and the cab car Clearance information has been submitted to Amtrak. IDOT Café Car FDRs are in the closure stage and Galley open items are being addressed.

The Cab Car Collision and Corner Post Appendix F testing is scheduled to resume in November and the compression test report is in work. The FAI for the cab Side Window is occurring this week in Canada.

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

7.

Update: Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – 11-2-21:

Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, reported that Metro-North and Siemens continue with the initial design review of various locomotive components for approval by Metro-North.

8.

Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements – George Hull, Amtrak – 11-2-21:

On the Acela 21 – The next one should be out of Hornell and in Wilmington, DE. tomorrow (11-3-21) for testing.

On the ACL 42 Locomotive – progress is continuing with the next one being shipped for testing on the corridor. Two others are awaiting resolution of PTC issues.

On the intercity passenger rail trains – they continue to be in the initial design review phase.

9.

Update: Document Control Management – Tammy Krause:

Tammy Krause provided the following update for inclusion in the meeting minutes (11-2-21):

Document Control has been focused on the proposed changes to the DMU specification that were proposed by Stadler Rail. At the Technical subcommittee meeting of 10/28/21 the changes were approved by the subcommittee as it voted to send the document to the Executive Board for its consideration.

Steve Hewitt clarified that the approved changes were sent to the Executive Board chair (Ray Hessinger) and the NGEN DMU Review Panel members and support. Larry Salci, as Review Panel Consultant will now complete his review and prepare a Review Panel Report with recommendations. Following that, the Panel will meet to consider the report and submit it to the Executive Board for its consideration of adoption.

Steve Hewitt also reaffirmed those who were appointed at the Annual meeting in February 2021 as members of the DMU Review Panel are:

Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – Review Panel Chairman

Jeff Gordon, FRA

Brian Beeler II, NNEPRA for Maine DOT

Caltrans Representative (need to confirm if Momo Tamaoki will remain as the member or if it is Gurleen Boparai)

Support:

Mike Kraft, Amtrak

Tammy Krause, Document Control Manager

Larry Salci, Review Panel Consultant

Steve Hewitt, NGEN Manager

10.

Next Steps/Timeline for DMU Review Panel Report with Recommendations – Larry Salci:

Larry Salci provided an overview of the review process and gave a brief background:

Two batches of DCRs have been submitted -and approved out of the Technical subcommittee.

The first batch was approved in October or November of 2020 and contained 85 DCRs – 43 are errata which the Document Control Manager can correct on her own. Forty-two were what are considered major and needed approval by the Technical subcommittee.

Subsequently, a second batch that included 90 DCRS was submitted by Stadler Rail after getting the subcommittee's approval to extend the review off the DMU specification process to allow time to submit their DCRs. This process has taken nearly a year. Of the 90 DCRs submitted by Stadler, thirty-two were accepted and fifty-eight were rejected by the subcommittee and its technical working groups. Most of those rejected were related to carbody material.

In total there are seventy-four major DCRs in the Document Control Manager's report that will need to be considered by the Review Panel after being compared against the DMU Requirements Document for compliance.

Larry is targeting next week (week of 11-8-21) for completion of the Review Panel Report with Recommendations. Once complete, he will provide it to Steve Hewitt for distribution to the Review panel members.

After some discussion with Review Panel members on today's call, a tentative date for a Review Panel meeting to discuss and consider the Review Panel Report was scheduled for 11-17-21 at 2:00pm Eastern. It is anticipated that the report will be provided on or around 11-10-21 so that the panel members will have it for about a week in advance of the meeting.

Following the call, Steve Hewitt sent a calendar notice to Review Panel members including both Momo Tamaoki and Gurleen Boparai from Caltrans.

11.

Establishing Priorities and developing updated work plan for 2022 – Ray Hessinger:

Ray Hessinger opened the discussion commenting that this is ongoing and that to date he (and Steve Hewitt) have received input from Dave Warner suggesting that the Reference documents (305-800 and 305-900 series) should be a priority. These were adopted by the NGENC early on and apply across the Board to all specs. It is important that they are reviewed to ensure that they are up to date. Ray believes this should be the first priority for the next round of updates going into 2022.

He would also like to get input from Board members on any upcoming procurements that would identify which vehicle specification should be updated next.

Jeff Gordon, FRA, suggested that because of the extensive discussion around the DMU specification and the issue of car body materials, plus the fact that the Stadler DMU can also be considered a trainset – it may be that the Trainset specification should be reviewed and updated more completely.

Currently the Trainset specification is being updated to be consistent with changes previously made to the single level car specification where applicable and, in that process, it was discovered that the spec was not in the same format as the other PRIIA specifications. Therefore, the Trainset specification has been undergoing a re-write/re-formatting to make it consistent with all PRIIA specs. Several paragraphs were also being added to the specification.

Jeff suggested that since the Stadler DMU can be considered a trainset, and since the PRIIA Trainset spec is in its Initial Release until the aforementioned re-write has been approved, now may be the time to open it up for a general review.

Ray Hessinger agreed that Jeff's point is valid. He again mentioned that any upcoming procurements should be next up on the priority list. He has not yet heard of any and would like input as he develops the 2022 work plan and priority list.

Ray asked Steve Hewitt to keep this as a standing agenda item for the next few calls before figuring out the priorities for 2022.

He emphasized that he looks forward to receiving more input over the next few weeks.

12.

Other:

With no other business forthcoming, Chairman Ray Hessinger adjourned the meeting at 12:01 pm Eastern

Next meeting – 11-16-21.

Decisions/Action Items

Treasurer's Report:

Tim Ziethen provided the current Balance and Spend rate as of 11-2-21:

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Action:

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

Next Update: 11-16-21

Status Update – Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:

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

Next Update – as appropriate

Update- Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Equipment as of 11-2-21:

Metro-North and Siemens continue with the initial design review of various locomotive components for approval by Metro-North.

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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.

Tim Ziethen 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.

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.

Next Update – As appropriate

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

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NGEC Executive Board Meeting

11-2-21

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 10-19-21 meeting | Ray Hessinger |

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| 5. Treasurer's Report | Tim Ziethen |
| a. Balance/spend Rate | |
| b. Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA | |
| 6. Update: Multi-State Car Procurement | Kyle Gradinger |
| 7. Update: Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement | Ray Hessinger |
| 8. Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements | George Hull |
| 9. Document Control Management | Tammy Krause |
| 10. Next Steps/Timeline for DMU Review Panel Report with Recommendations | Larry Salci |
| 11. Establishing priorities and developing updated work plan for 2022 | Ray Hessinger |
| 12. Other | All |
| 13. Adjourn | Ray Hessinger |

Next call/meeting – 11-16-21