



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

SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

MARCH 22, 2022,

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, Arun Rao, Arun Rao also for Amanda Martin, Jon Dees for Jason Orthner, Jason Biggs for Ron Pate, Kyle Gradinger, Mike Jenkins, Brian Beeler II Support Staff and Colleagues: Joe Paul, Tammy Krause, Larry Salci, Mike Murray, Steve Hewitt, Dave "Emeritus" Warner, Strat Cavros, Rebecca Anger
ABSENTEES	Board Members: Ron Pate, Troy Hughes, Jason Orthner, Amanda Martin Support: Michael Kraft, Patrick Centolanzi, Momo Tamaoki, Gurleen Boparai, 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:

Following the roll call, Steve Hewitt confirmed the presence of a quorum with all members of the Executive Board represented.

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 (3-22-22).

Industry Participation:

Industry involvement continues to be consistent at just over two hundred participants. Following the Annual Meeting, the industry participants list added 4 new members.

2022 NGEC two-pager Handout Flyer:

The 2022 version of the two-page educational flyer remains available in both electronic and hard copy.

Hard copies were distributed to all in-person attendees at the NGEC Annual Meeting.

To date 125 hard copies and 425 electronic copies have been distributed.

VIA Rail Equipment Procurement:

On 2-25-22 – during the 12th NGEC Annual Meeting, VIA Rail provided a comprehensive update on its vehicle procurement.

The PowerPoint presentation was distributed and is posted to the website.

Following the meeting, Steve Hewitt received an email from Joe DiLiello, VIA Rail thanking him for the invitation to VIA

Rail. Although Joe and his colleagues participated virtually, he said it was a great meeting – it had good flow, was timely and all presentations were informative and well done.

Next Update: As Appropriate

CtDOT Rail Car Procurement as of 3-22-22:

The “cone of silence” period continues.

Next Update: As appropriate

Status – Exploring/confirming funding options beyond 9-30-2023:

There is nothing new to report as of this date. FRA has not provided the NGEC with its input at this point.

TRB question regarding future – next generation equipment needs:

On 1-25-22, Ray Hessinger noted that on the last Technical subcommittee call held on 1-20-22, a member of the industry who is also involved with a TRB committee asked if the NGEC had needs for research for the next generation of equipment.

Ray noted that, at this time the NGEC is looking at possibly updating the primer prepared by the Locomotive Task Force early in the NGEC’s history. Dave Warner gave a presentation during the Annual Meeting on zero emissions propulsion – a then and now look, and this should set the stage for potential activities yet to be determined..

As for now, as long as the Committee does not move into areas beyond where we have gone before such as higher speed rail, there is no immediate need for additional research. However, he did add “we will see where we go after Dave Warner’s presentation.”

No Status Update – 3-22-22

4.

Approval of the Minutes from the 2-25-22 NGEC Annual Meeting:

On a motion by John Oimoen, IDOT, and a second by Arun Rao, WisDOT, the minutes from the Annual Meeting held on 2-25-22 were approved as submitted.

5.

Review Annual Meeting – Ray Hessinger/Steve Hewitt:

Overview/reactions/comments

Ray Hessinger provided a brief summary of the Annual Meeting stating that the presentations went well, and the meeting was productive and well attended. All reactions he has heard were positive.

Steve Hewitt reported that the 2022 Annual Meeting – the first held as a hybrid - was one of the most well attended in the 12 years the NGEC has been active. There were 70 members in attendance in-person and 41 attending virtually.

A highlight of the meeting was Amit Bose, FRA Administrator, stopping by to address NGEC members. The Administrator mentioned that he had previously met with the NGEC Executive Board and that he wanted to stop by to re-emphasize the importance of the Committee and “all the work you have done over the years.”

He noted that the recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) has a lot of focus on Rail – passenger and Freight.

He added that there is a lot of interest in the area of passenger rail and new equipment – mentioning that the Venture Cars are beginning to enter into service.

For the Administration – equipment manufacturing is an important part of the overall rail efforts. Per the Law – the key is US manufactured equipment.

Steve also noted that Chairman Hessinger sent a thank you letter to the Administrator expressing his appreciation for his participation at the meeting his expression of support for the committee.

In the meeting there were presentations from the two NGEC standing subcommittees (Technical and Finance and Administration), a Treasurer's report, Chairman's report, update presentations on the ongoing procurements and presentations on how the Charger Locomotives are performing. We also heard from Document control on the year's activities as well as a look ahead with a focus on the Chairman's priorities.

All of the presentations are available on the NGEC website or by request (shewitt109@aol.com).

The NGEC Executive Board and its officers were all elected to new two year terms.

Overall, it was a great meeting! The feedback has been all positive. The flow of the meeting and the information provided has been widely complimented, and, of course one of the major highlights was the presence of Administrator Bose!

Action Items – Ray Hessinger:

One of the critical action items coming out of the meeting was the need to seek a source of funding. To date, the FRA has not responded to the NGEC's request for funding out of the FRA budget or any other potential pocket of money.

Given that and the fact that the NGEC has only enough funding to get it about 3 or 4 months past the grant agreement end date of 9-30-23, it is time that the Committee look for another source. One suggestion that came up after the meeting, was a suggestion that the more viable path forward may be for the NGEC to seek a grant in the next round of CRISI. Ray believes that with the partnership the NGEC has with members of the industry, states, Amtrak, and FRA there should be strong support for the Committee to receive a grant under CRISI. The ask is relatively small, and the benefits are huge.

Ray emphasized the point that "absent the FRA coming to us to say yes we will fund you out of some pocket, we need to pursue this path".

Discussion of Next Steps – Ray Hessinger/Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt recommended that the Finance and Administrative subcommittee (FASC) would be the place to look into CRISI and to put together a framework. With Amtrak as the Fund Administrator for our current grant – it would likely also be the applicant for a CRISI grant.

FASC Chair and NGEC Treasurer Tim Ziethen noted that he has reached out to Amtrak grants to discuss the process and timing. He also expressed his concurrence with the thoughts and recommendations expressed by the Chair today.

Ray Hessinger commented that the FASC will be the lead and will come back to the Executive Board with content and "we will go from there".

Tim Ziethen agreed that the FASC will be active and will set the marker.

Steve Hewitt noted that the FASC meets next week (3-30-22) and he will add this item to the agenda for that meeting.

6.

Discussion: NGEC Website Refresh – Ray Hessinger:

Ray Hessinger reported that he recently had a need to go to the NGEC website. He found what he was looking for but the "look and feel of the website is stale". He added that "in light of the States for Passenger Rail Coalition's (SPRC) recent refresh of its website which looks great, it is appropriate for the NGEC to have a conversation about updating its website".

Strat Cavros, AASHTO, said they could put out an RFP - leave it open ended - and see what they get back.

Steve Hewitt mentioned that this too, would be a FASC assignment. The FASC has the NGEC Treasurer and manages the budget.

Tim Ziethen agreed the site does need an update and advised Strat Cavros that it would be prudent to mention that the Committee has "limited resources".

Ray Hessinger also noted that the website is under a broader AASHTO website address – www.high-speedrail.org and he would like to see if it is feasible to have "our" own web address. This would help the NGEC in its efforts to increase awareness. It would raise the NGEC profile. "I don't know if it will work or not, but it should be something we look into".

Jason Biggs, WSDOT mentioned that states are technically savvy and may be able to help. In WSDOT they just recently did an overhaul. It is possible that states may have some resources and could partner with the NGECC on its efforts to refresh its website.

Strat Cavros recommended that the NGECC put together a Statement of Work and AASHTO will put out an RFI. He said he already has 3 firms in mind.

This will be another agenda item for the FASC on its call on 3-30-22.

**7.
FASC Report –Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:**

On 3-22-22, Tim Ziethen provided the following update:

Balance/ Spend Rate:

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.
Amount Spent through January: \$912,469.91
Balance remaining: \$ 337,530
Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,257
Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$52,000

Ray Hessinger asked Arun Rao, Chair of the SPRC what their cost was to refresh the website. Arun didn't have the exact number but he and Steve Hewitt both stated that there was a \$10,000 budget for it, and it came in below that.

Tim Ziethen noted that the cost of a website refresh would likely eat into the contingency funds which were hoped to be used to extend the life of the NGECC beyond 9-30-23. If the cost comes in around the \$10,000 range, it is possible to spend that amount and still retain some funding to carry the Committee for a few months beyond 9-30-23.

**8.
Multi-State Rail Car Procurement – Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans:**

Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans provided the following update for inclusion in the minutes (3-22-23):

The Cab Car Shell final design has been approved and the cab structures are in production. Remaining Cab Car FDRs are in the final submittal and review stage. Cab Car Safety Appliance documents have been sent to the FRA for review, and the Cab Car Clearance information has been approved by 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 complete, and the test report has been submitted for review. The cab car compression test report review is complete, and Siemens is preparing responses. FAIs will continue for café and cab car subsystems.

103 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. Revenue Service relevant FMIs are in progress and open items are being addressed.

**9.
Update: Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:**

Ray Hessinger reported that Metro-North and Siemens are still in the Preliminary Design Review phase. They have only a few open items left to resolve, and they continue to move forward.

**10.
Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements – George Hull:**

On the Acela: They continue to work on the qualification efforts with FRA. One trainset is in Philadelphia for APTA's meeting and can be seen there.

On the Intercity Passenger Rail Trainset – they continue with Design Review.

On the Charger Locomotives: Amtrak continues to deliver units. There are two in service between Chicago and Seattle – and things are going well.

11.

Update: Document Control Management – Tammy Krause:

Tammy Krause provided the following update for inclusion in today’s minutes (3-22-22):

Document Control has been working on the DMU Specification and it will be completed by the end of the month. I have put together a proposed timeline to accomplish the tasks for the TSC this year. The first item is the new revision of the Bi-Level specification. I will be reviewing all the DCRs that have been processed since 2016 for applicability to the Bi-Level specification. I also would like everyone to look at the current version and start thinking of any changes that you think should be made. I would like the WGs to be able to review all the Bi-Level DCRs at the same time. I have tried to arrange the timeline so that once the WGs are back to regular meetings, they will be able to continue them. I also would like you to review the proposed timeline and get back to me with any comments.

Tammy walked through the timeline she had prepared, and which Steve Hewitt sent out to Board members in advance of this call.

Ray Hessinger had several questions related to how the timeline will work together with one depending on another. He did not want to complete the Bi-Level review and then do the review of the Metro-North Dual Mode revisions to the administrative side of the spec. He worried that if the changes were accepted it would require going back to the Bi-Level and revising it again.

Tammy explained that the timeline is set up so that some items will move concurrently to make sure that there is no duplication of effort.

Tammy has designed the schedule to keep the Technical subcommittee working groups meeting on a regular basis while “we go through the Bi-Level review”. It is better to keep them busy rather than having months of down time.

Tammy also explained that the review of the APTA PRESS standards is on-going by APTA and will be a living document. Changes pertaining to PRIIA specs will be taken up as they happen but will not impact completion of specification updates as the refer to APTA standards and the references will be to what is currently the standard.

She noted similarly that as the NGEC goes through the review of its 900 and 800 series reference specs and drawings the ongoing Bi-Level spec update will reference those specs and drawings – so if they are updated it will not impact the vehicle spec.

Tammy did raise the issue of the need for a working group to be established to address car body materials.

Steve Hewitt said that this would be “up to George Hull as Chair of the Technical subcommittee”. George agreed and noted that he thought it may be something that could be handled within the current working groups. Tammy commented that she thought a working group solely focused on car body materials would be a better way to go.

George thought it was worth discussing and Steve Hewitt agreed to have this included as a discussion item on the next Technical subcommittee call (3-31-22).

Larry Salci said there was a “white paper” on this subject that may help get the effort started. Larry agreed to provide it to Steve Hewitt and Tammy Krause.

12.

Other – all:

With no other business forthcoming, Ray Hessinger adjourned the meeting at 12:15PM Eastern.

Next meeting – 4-5-22

Decisions/Action Items

Treasurer’s Report:

On 3-22-22, Tim Ziethen provided the following update:

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2022 NGENC Backgrounder educational document:

The 2022 version of the two-page educational flyer remains available in both electronic and hard copy.
Hard copies were distributed to all in-person attendees at the NGENC Annual Meeting.
To date 125 hard copies and 425 electronic copies have been distributed.

NGENC Website Refresh:

On 3-22-22, Chairman Hessinger tasked the FASC to develop a Statement of Work for a website refresh and provide it to AASHTO (Strat Cavros). AASHTO will prepare and post an RFI.
The FASC will have this item on its agenda for the 3-30-22 call.

Update – Multi-State Rail Car Procurement:

Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans provided the following update for inclusion in the minutes (3-22-23):

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103 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. Revenue Service relevant FMIs are in progress and open items are being addressed.

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 3-22-22:

Ray Hessinger reported that Metro-North and Siemens are still in the Preliminary Design Review phase. They have only a few open items left to resolve, and they continue to move forward.

Next Update: 4-19-22

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Next Update: As Appropriate

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 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.

Mike Murray notified Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger prior to the NGEC Annual Meeting that the FRA would not have an answer on this for the Annual meeting.

Steve Hewitt noted that he will keep this item open to see if it is possible that FRA will have a response before the Annual Meeting.

Update/Action – 3-22-22:

One of the critical action items coming out of the meeting was the need to seek a source of funding. To date, the FRA has not responded to the NGEC's request for funding out of the FRA budget or any other potential pocket of money.

Given that and the fact that the NGEC has only enough funding to get it about 3 or 4 months past the grant agreement end date of 9-30-23, it is time that the Committee look for another source. One suggestion that came up after the meeting, was a suggestion that the more viable path forward may be for the NGEC to seek a grant in the next round of CRISI. Ray believes that with the partnership the NGEC has with members of the industry, states, Amtrak, and FRA there should be strong support for the Committee to receive a grant under CRISI. The ask is relatively small, and the benefits are huge.

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Tim Ziethen agreed that the FASC will be active and will set the marker.

Steve Hewitt noted that the FASC meets next week (3-30-22) and he will add this item to the agenda for that meeting.

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: 2-25-22 – NGEC 2022 Annual Meeting

Establishing 2022 Priorities – Ray Hessinger:

Ray Hessinger noted that this has been a standing agenda item for several months and based on previous discussions he planned to move forward with the following identified priorities for 2022:

Review/update NGEC Reference and Drawings series 305-900 and 305-800.

Review/Update the Bi-level specification currently in Revision C.4. With Amtrak looking at using some of the funding from the new IJA for its western fleet, it makes sense for the NGEC to review and update the Bi-Level car specification.

Review the car body materials issue from a broader perspective for all NGEC equipment not only DMUs. Ray would like to take a look at developing a consistent approach for all of the NGEC vehicle specifications.

Review “emerging technologies”: On the last technical subcommittee call (12-9-21) the topic of emerging technologies for propulsion was raised. Ray believes that the technical subcommittee should conduct a scan of the industry regarding emerging technologies for propulsion and how they relate to the NGEC.

Review and consider using the Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Specification organizational changes to determine if they should be adopted by the NGEC and applied across the board to all NGEC specifications. This would be an administrative change not impacting technical content of any of the specifications and could be resolved by the Executive Board.

Tammy Krause has prepared an action plan and timeline for the Chair’s priorities and discussed each item on 2-25-22. The timeline was distributed to all members prior to the Executive Board call.

Action:

One specific action that is needed in support of the priority of dealing with cat body materials is to determine whether a focused working group should be established. This will be an agenda item on the next (3-31-22) NGE Technical subcommittee call.

NGEC Executive Board Meeting

3-22-22

11:30 AM – 12:30 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 |

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| 4. Approval of Minutes from 2-25-22 NGEC Annual Meeting | Ray Hessinger |
| 5. Review Annual Meeting | Ray Hessinger |
| - Overview/reactions/comments | |
| - Action Items coming out of the Annual Meeting | |
| - Discussion of next steps | |
| 6. Discussion: NGEC Website Refresh | Ray Hessinger |
| 7. FASC Update – Balance/Spend Rate | Tim Ziethen |
| 8. Update – Multi-state Rail Car procurement | Kyle Gradinger |
| 9. Update – Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement | Ray Hessinger |
| 10. Update – Amtrak Vehicle Procurements | George Hull |
| 11. Update: Document Control | Tammy Krause |
| - Discussion/Overview -proposed Document Control timeline 2022 | |
| 12. Other | All |
| 13. Adjourn | Ray Hessinger |

Next Meeting – 4-5-22