



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

SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

JUNE 29, 2021

11:30 EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

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

DECISIONS MADE

1.

Welcome – Ray Hessinger, Chair, S305 NGEC Executive Board:

Chairman 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 with all Executive Board members 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 (6-29-21).

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 550 electronic copies have been distributed.

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

Industry Participation:

Industry involvement continues to be consistent at just over 200 participants. In June 2021, Ricardo Rail joined the NGEC industry group adding two representatives and Talgo increased its representation by adding three new members and last week (week of 6-21-21) Halosil International. Inc. joined the group.

Update: States and Amtrak – Charger Locomotive Experience:

In-depth updates were provided during the 2021 Annual Meeting and were included in the minutes (2-23-21).

The PowerPoint presentation was distributed and posted to the website.

Next Update: As appropriate

METRA Equipment Procurement Effort:

This item was tabled until John Oimoen receives an update from his contact at METRA. He will let Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger know when that is, and the item will be included on the following Board agenda.

Next Update: As appropriate

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 NGECC specifications to ensure compliance and make any necessary changes by utilizing the NGECC 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 NGECC technical subcommittee informed as the process is completed.

As of 6-29-21 – 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 NGECC 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 (possibly a 6-month update – 8-2021)

CtDOT Rail Car Procurement:

On 4-15-21, Marci Petterson reported to Steve Hewitt that this procurement remains in the "cone of silence" period.

On 6-10-21 – Marci Petterson reported that the "cone of silence" period continues.

Next Update: As appropriate

Update- Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Equipment as of 6-15-21:

Initial Design Review meetings continue with a focus on systems that remain unchanged from the ACL42.

Next Update: 7-13-21

Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements as of 6-15-21:

On The CAF cars – 2 more were accepted – the last few are expected to by the end of the Fiscal Year.

On the Acela Express 21 – Testing of prototype two continues on the Northeast Corridor. Amtrak is getting ready for Trainset 3.

On the Intercity Passenger Rail Trainset – Final contract discussions continue to advance quickly. Discussions with FRA and the Hill are taking place as required.

On the Long-Distance Locomotives – the first 1 is in Chicago for pictures and then will be shipped East to begin the commissioning process.

Next Update: 7-13-21

NGECC 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 NGEN will meet at that location on the morning of the 25th. More information to come...

Next Update: Late summer – early Fall 2021

4. Approval of the Minutes from the 6-15-21 Meetings -Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:

On a motion by Brian Beeler II for Maine DOT, and a second by Jon Dees for NCDOT, the minutes from the 6-15-21 meetings were approved as submitted.

5. Update: Finance and Administrative subcommittee (FASC) 6-29-21 – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Balance and Spend Rate

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

Amount Spent through April 2021: \$766,612.50

Balance remaining: \$ 483,387.50.

Estimated spend at current rate for the remaining grant period (through 9-30-23): \$404,213.86.

Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$13,938.41

Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$79,173.64

6. Announcement about the new Mid-West Equipment – Venture cars – John Oimoen, IDOT:

John Oimoen, IDOT announced that last week (week of 6-21-21) was an exciting week for IDOT and the Mid-West states as 5 Venture cars manufactured by Siemens were completed and will be ready to begin revenue service within 5 weeks. The 5 cars are the first of 88 that are being manufactured.

John noted that while the effort had some starts and stops the collaboration among the states, the NGEN, Amtrak, FRA, and the industry helped them to persevere and get to this point where they will soon be ready for customers to enjoy and use the new technology and new next generation passenger rail cars.

John expressed his appreciation to the NGEN – NGEN specifications and procedures were used – and to all of the stakeholders, partner agencies and the industry as well as Amtrak and FRA. John noted that he is “thankful for all who played a part in this project”.

Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, and Chair of the NGEN executive Board commented “outstanding news – congratulations on behalf of the NGEN”.

Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans, also congratulated John and the IDOT team for reaching this great milestone. Kyle also singled out Jennifer Bastian, IDOT for her role and hard work in making this a success. Kyle also thanked Jeff Gordon, FRA, “for all you have done”.

John Oimoen also noted the value of the Lessons learned and Best Practices document produced and released recently by the NGEN which is a tool that will be invaluable to states that have not been through the procurement process before and also as a reference for those who have experienced it and will again.

Jeff Gordon, FRA, congratulated IDOT and the Mid-West State partners and note that he has been involved from the beginning (nearly 12 years ago) and knows the hard work that went into this and the collaboration that played a critical part. “Congratulations to all.”

7. Update: Multi-State Car Procurement – Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans:

Kyle Gradinger provided the following update for inclusion in today’s minutes (6-29-21):

Design review for the standard coach is complete. The Cab Car structure FDR is complete and in the approval process. The Cab Car HVAC FDR occurred on June 14. The Cab Car Cab Layout FDR is scheduled for July 1st and the Cab Car Safety Appliance & Clearance FDR is scheduled for July 14. IDOT Café Car FDR releases are ongoing and the Galley FAI occurred June 23 in Texas.

The Cab Car Compression Test setup is in process in Sacramento with testing planned to begin July 13. Cab Car

Collision and Corner Post testing has been reserved for August in Germany. NEC testing for standard coach is complete and the report is accepted by FRA. Caltrans and IDOT 238.111 testing is complete and both reports have been submitted to Amtrak and FRA.

90 cars total are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. Car deliveries are ongoing to Chicago and Beech Grove for IDOT, and Stockton for Caltrans. The initial consists for Caltrans and IDOT are being prepared for Conditional Acceptance and revenue service while open items are addressed.

8.

Discussion/set Deadline for consideration of approval of the DRAFT TSSSA Primer – Ray:

Ray Hessinger reminded Board members that they have had the DRAFT TSSSA Primer in their hands since 5-13-21, and, with all that has been going on, many have not reviewed it yet. Understanding that a timeline needs to be set, to get this DRAFT to the point of consideration by the Executive Board, Ray set a date on 7-13-21 (the next Board meeting) for a discussion and consideration of approval to take place.

Ray also set a deadline for “substantive” comments to be submitted by COB on 7-8-21 to George Hull, Ray Hessinger, and Steve Hewitt.

9.

Update: Document Control Management – as of 6-29-21 - Tammy Krause:

Tammy Krause provided the following update for inclusion in today’s minutes (6-29-21):

The rewrite of the trainset specification continues. All the chapters have been reviewed. The non-technical specification change sheet is now complete. The DCRs are now all complete and were sent to the Working Groups.

I have reached out to the WGs that are working on the DCRs for the DMU and I have received the status on the comments from two of the four groups. The last two Working Groups are expected to provide their comments to Tammy tomorrow (6-30-21). That will allow the document compiling to be complete by 7/16/21 and sent to the Technical subcommittee prior to the 7/22/21 meeting.

The Electronics on Trains Working Group is meeting today (6/29/21) and will discuss the possible development of a new specification concerning Cellular Communication on Railcars.

Steve Hewitt asked Larry Salci if he has provided an updated scope and budget for the DMU to AASHTO so that the task order can be adjusted accordingly. Larry responded that he has not yet but has the information he needs now to prepare and submit an amended scope and budget.

Tammy informed Larry that the Trainset rewrite has also resulted in some DCRs that will need to be reviewed. Steve Hewitt commented that that would require a separate Task Order that AASHTO and Larry Salci would need to execute. Larry agreed and said he would prepare a scope and budget for that one as well.

10.

Update: Reauthorization of the NGEC – as of 6-29-21 - Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt reiterated to Executive Board Members that the House and Senate Committees of jurisdiction released their versions of Federal Surface Transportation Authorization legislation. The House has passed its bill through the T&I Committee – next step the Floor of the House. The Senate Commerce Committee passed its bill through the committee as well.

Neither bill included NGEC reauthorization despite requests to do so by numerous associations and the industry (SPRC, MIPRC, AASHTO, CSG-East, Siemens).

No amendments to either bill in committee were presented – so as the bills go to their next step, the NGEC remains out of reauthorization.

Steve Hewitt has since followed up with industry members to make them aware of this and asking for them to reach out to see if they could get a member to request a managers’ amendment when the House bill is on the Floor. On 6-21-21, Steve Hewitt spoke to Steve Morrison, Siemens, who conferenced him in with their lobbyist Harrison Wadsworth. Steve Hewitt provided Harrison with context and background on the NGEC – its history, what it does and what it has accomplished and what the ask is legislatively. Harrison reached out immediately to Ken Altman, Amtrak to get his sense of Amtrak’s support, and planned to reach out to try to also get an AASHTO decision maker involved. Siemens is concerned about going it alone as it would seem self-serving, so they wanted to work with Amtrak and AASHTO on this.

Following the call with Siemens, Steve Hewitt informed AASHTO (Shayne Gill) of the conversation as a heads up and informed Tim Ziethen who also had been reaching out to Ken Altman.

On 6-24-21, Steve Morrison emailed Steve Hewitt to let him know that he did not have anything new to report but would let Steve H know as soon as he did.

While there is still some opportunity to get the NGEN into the reauthorization bill, that opportunity is narrowing.

Shayne Gill, AASHTO, reported that AASHTO did review both bills and all amendments and concurred that neither included reauthorization of the NGEN.

AASHTO followed up by sending in a recommendation to the House that reauthorization of the NGEN is important and should be added. AASHTO fully supports reauthorizing the NGEN.

Tim Ziethen, Amtrak, reported that he has been reaching out to Ken Altman, Amtrak Government Affairs, and has provided follow-up information.

Tim expects to speak with Ken Altman sometime today (6-29-21). Steve Hewitt recommended that Tim ask Ken if he has discussed the issue with the Siemens lobbyist who reached out via email last week. Tim agreed to try to get a status update.

Tim also reiterated that Amtrak is supportive of reauthorizing the NGEN.

Following the 6-29-21 call – John Oimoen, IDOT, called Steve Hewitt to inform him that IDOT Deputy Secretary Doug House has agreed to reach out to Senator Durbin and Representative Castin. Steve provided John with background information and proposed legislative language scope and funding for the Deputy Secretary to use in his discussions with Durbin and Castin.

Steve informed Siemens of this activity and they are willing to help with Durbin following the IDOT outreach.

**11.
Other:**

With no other business forthcoming, Chairman Hessinger adjourned the meeting at 11:58am

Next meeting – 7-13-21.

Decisions/Action Items

Update – Multi-State Rail Car Procurement as of 6-29-21:

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Next Update: As appropriate

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Next Update: as appropriate

DRAFT TSSSA Primer – Executive Board review/consideration:

The DRAFT primer was approved by the Technical subcommittee (5-13-21) for submittal to the NGEC Executive Board. Steve Hewitt distributed the approved DRAFT to all Board members on 5-13-21.

On 6-29-21, Ray Hessinger set a date on 7-13-21 (the next Board meeting) for a discussion and consideration of approval to take place.

Ray also set a deadline for "substantive" comments to be submitted by COB on 7-8-21 to George Hull, Ray Hessinger, and Steve Hewitt.

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:

As of 6-15-21, this procurement continues to be in the "cone of silence" phase.

Next Update – as appropriate

Reauthorizing the NGEC:

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

NGEC Executive Board Meeting

6-29-21

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 6-15-21 meeting | Ray Hessinger |

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| 5. Treasurer's Report/FASC update – Balance/Spend Rate | Tim Ziethen |
| 6. Announcement about the new Mid-West Equipment (Venture Cars) | John Oimoen |
| 7. Update: Multi-State Car Procurement | Kyle Gradinger |
| 8. Discussion/set timeline for consideration Draft TSSSA Primer | Ray/George |
| 9. Update: Document Control Management | Tammy Krause |
| 10. Update: Reauthorization of the NGEC | Steve Hewitt |
| 11. Other | Ray Hessinger/All |

Next call/meeting – 7-13-21