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

## SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

MARCH 7, 2023

11:30 EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

<b>FACILITATOR</b>	<i>Ray Hessinger, Chair S305 NGEC Executive Board</i>
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<b>Board Members:</b> Ray Hessinger, George Hull, Jeff Gordon, Amanda Martin, Amanda Martin also as proxy for John Oimoen, Mike Jenkins, Mike Jenkins also as proxy for Jason Biggs, Tim Ziethen, Troy Hughes, Richard Kedzior, Jon Dees for Jason Orthner, Kyle Gradinger <b>Support Staff and Colleagues:</b> Steve Hewitt, Dave "Mr. Emeritus/Cone" Warner, Tammy Krause, Larry Salci, Joe Paul, Shayne Gill, Barley Fields, Patrick Centolanzi
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<b>Board Members: Support:</b> John Oimoen. Jason Biggs, Jason Orthner, Mike Murray,

### DECISIONS MADE

**1.**

**Welcome – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, Chair, NGEC Executive Board:**

Chairman Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, opened the meeting, and Steve Hewitt called the roll.

**2.**

**Roll Call –Steve Hewitt, NGEC Program Manager:**

Following the roll call, Steve Hewitt confirmed the presence of a quorum.

**3.**

**Action items Review – Steve Hewitt:**

The action items review was tabled for this meeting. These minutes provide the current status.

**Industry Participation:**

Industry involvement continues to be consistent at just over two hundred participants.

**2023 NGEC two-pager Handout Flyer:**

The 2023 version of the two-page educational flyer is now available electronically or in hard copy by request from Steve Hewitt. It is also posted on the NGEC website [www.ngec.org](http://www.ngec.org).

To date: 325 copies have been distributed.

**VIA Rail Equipment Procurement:**

VIA Rail gave a detailed presentation during the 2023 NGEC Annual Meeting. The presentation is available on the NGEC website or by request from Steve Hewitt.

**Next Update - 2024 – NGEC Annual Meeting**

**Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:**

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As of 1-5-23 proposals were due by the end of the month (January). At that point they will enter the “cone of silence.”

**Next Update – as appropriate**

**4. Approval of the Minutes from the 2-21-23 NGEAC Annual Meeting– Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:**

On a motion by Amanda Martin, Iowa DOT, and a second by Richard Kedzior, Wisconsin DOT, the minutes from the 2-21-23 Executive Board Meeting were approved as presented.

**5. Update: Multi-state Venture Car Procurement – Kyle Grading, Caltrans:**

*The remaining Cab Car FDR submittals are in the final closure stage and the Cab Car dynamic framing representative approach has been submitted to FRA for review, with comments from FRA received. IDOT Café Car system level FDR reviews are nearly closed.*

*The Cab Car Collision and Corner Post Appendix F test reports are approved. The Cab Car emergency egress demo occurred on October 25 with Amtrak and FRA in attendance. The Car Complete FAI for Cab Car is tentatively scheduled for June or July.*

*125 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches are currently in revenue service and Caltrans is planning revenue start first half of 2023 once all necessary agreements are in place.*

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

Production began on the first car shell on January 10th. Siemens and Metro-North are close to resolving the remaining Final Design Review items. As of the January report from Metro-North there were six of thirty-three items remaining to be resolved. Ray has not yet received the February report, so these items could very well already be resolved. As of January they were beginning to schedule first article inspections.

**7. Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements – George Hull, Amtrak:**

On the Acela – Work is progressing well with one trainset now in production.

On the Charger Locomotives – There are thirty locomotives – twenty-eight have been shipped. Two are to be shipped in the next few weeks. There are twenty in service. They are operating on the Empire Builder, the City of New Orleans and the Coast Starlight.

On the new Airos– they continue with Final Design Review and the first shell is now in production.

**8. Update: Document Control – Tammy Krause:**

The only document control activity since the Annual Meeting is the continued work on the Bi-Level Specification. The technical writer is currently working on the update. Tammy is answering questions from the technical writer as she works to compile the changes into the updated Bi-Level Specification.

Ray Hessinger asked if there was an estimated timeline for completion. Tammy responded that she did not have a timeline yet.

**9. FASC Update and Treasurer’s Report – Tim Ziethen:**

Tim Ziethen walked through the financials for current balance and spend rate through December 2022 and the forecast for the remaining months (January 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023) of the current Grant performance period. He noted that it is “tight and could go either way” as far as having a favorable or unfavorable balance at the end of the performance period. Tim added “it will probably come down to around \$1,000.00 either way”.

**Balance/Spend Rate Through December 2022:**

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Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
Expenses Incurred through December 2022: \$1,084,266.24  
Balance remaining: \$165,733.42.  
Estimated spend at current rate for balance of the Grant: \$130,112.01  
Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,456.89.  
Estimated Balance at the end of the Grant Period: \$35,621.00.

**Forecast:**

Remaining Funds through December 2022: \$165,733.26  
Balance Run Rate: \$35,621.25  
Carry Forward Balance: \$15,008.00  
**Available: \$50,629.25**

**Expenses Above Run Rate:**

Larry Salci: Tech Review: \$19,131.35  
Casamar/TLK: \$19,546.30  
Website Refresh: \$10,000.00  
Annual Meeting Travel/Misc.: \$3,000.00

**Forecast Above Run Rate: \$ 51,677.65**

**Balance Favorable/Unfavorable: \$ (1,048.40)**

After going through the numbers, Tim reported that he has reached out to Amtrak's Grants Office "looking for two things." The first is to see if there is gap funding if there is a shortfall or if the NGEC needs to come to a "hard stop". The second is that there is a challenge with the timing of CRISI Grant if the NGEC's is approved. The timeframe for announcing the applications that are approved is May – June 2023. There is a "ramp-up period" that would mean the NGEC would need about six months of bridge funding while the Grant agreement is finalized and funds are obligated. Tim noted that there is a mechanism to apply for pre-award funding if you can prove the need. Amtrak Grants is looking into both of these issues.

There is also the scenario where the CRISI Grant application for the NGEC is not approved. In that case, Tim commented "we are back to square one". In this case it would be necessary to explore other funding options either through Amtrak resources or through FRA avenues of potential funding.

Amtrak continues to look at potential funding options if this worse-case scenario occurs.

Tim emphasized that it is "not time to hit the panic button". He reported that the Finance and Administrative subcommittee (FASC) had in depth discussions around all of these scenarios and recommended that all activities continue as they are while watching the expenditures closely.

Steve Hewitt commented, for the Board members, that several of the work products did come in under budget -0 namely Larry Salci's technical review of the Bi-Level specification changes – which came in around \$2,000 under the estimate and the website refresh which came in \$2,000 under budget as well. Tim commented that these actuals were included in his analysis, but that it is a possibility that some items will come in a bit less than anticipated, but some could go over.

Tim noted that after its discussions on its call on March 1, 2023, the FASC came up with the following recommendation for the Executive Board's consideration:

Continue to monitor the current funding and expenditures closely.

Accept the reduced scope and budget for Casamar through 9-30-23.

Continue to look at alternate funding sources.

Make a hard decision no later than June 2023 based on what happens with the CRISI Grant application.

Request other Amtrak projects sources to fill the gap if there is a shortfall - possibly \$10-\$15,000.

Look for bridge funds or pre-award funding depending on the results of the CRISI Grant application.

Basically, Tim added, the recommendation is to “hold steady and be ready to react to the worst-case scenario of a hard stop” while “looking for gap funding in the case of a shortfall and bridge funding as needed”.

**10.**

**NGEC Executive Board consideration of the FASC Recommendations – Ray Hessinger:**

Before calling for a motion and a second to consider the FASC recommendations, Ray Hessinger commented, “I was on the FASC call (3-1-23) so, obviously, I knew this was coming. I thought this was the right path forward and it will be tight and that March is not the time for drastic action”.

Ray urged that all expenses from the Annual Meeting that members may be requesting reimbursement for be submitted asap. “We have to have a full understanding of our expenses.”

Tim Ziethen added “it’s in your hands – we will be ready to act...we are hoping to squeak across the finish line and are looking for sustainment mode”.

Ray Hessinger called for a motion to accept the Finance and Administrative subcommittee’s recommendation as described by Tim Ziethen:

A motion to accept the FASC recommendation was offered by Troy Hughes, MODOT and was seconded by Jon Dees for NCDOT.

Ray Hessinger asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he asked if there were any objections. Again, hearing none, Ray Hessinger determined that “it is the consensus of the Board to move forward as recommended by the FASC.”

Tim Ziethen will continue to monitor the situation and provide bi-weekly updates to the Executive Board.

**11.**

**Other – all:**

With no other business forthcoming, Ray Hessinger adjourned the meeting at 11:55pm Eastern.

**Next Executive Board Meeting 3-21-23**

**Decisions/Action Items**

**Treasurer’s Report – 3-7-23:**

**Balance/Spend Rate Through December 2022:**

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
Expenses Incurred through December 2022: \$1,084,266.24  
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Estimated spend at current rate for balance of the Grant: \$130,112.01  
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Annual Meeting Travel/Misc.: \$3,000.00

**Forecast Above Run Rate: \$ 51,677.65**

**Balance Favorable/Unfavorable: \$ (1,048.40)**

**Path Forward:**

On 3-7-23, the Executive Board accepted the FASC Recommendations to:

Continue to monitor the current funding and expenditures closely.

Accept the reduced scope and budget for Casamar through 9-30-23.

Continue to look at alternate funding sources.

Make a hard decision no later than June 2023 based on what happens with the CRISI Grant application.

Request other Amtrak projects sources to fill the gap if there is a shortfall - possibly \$10-\$15,000.

Look for bridge funds or pre-award funding depending on the results of the CRISI Grant application.

**2023 NGENC Backgrounder educational document:**

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To date: 325 copies have been distributed (hard/soft).

**Status – Multi-State Rail Car Procurement as of 3-7-23:**

*The remaining Cab Car FDR submittals are in the final closure stage and the Cab Car dynamic framing representative approach has been submitted to FRA for review, with comments from FRA received. IDOT Café Car system level FDR reviews are nearly closed.*

*The Cab Car Collision and Corner Post Appendix F test reports are approved. The Cab Car emergency egress demo occurred on October 25 with Amtrak and FRA in attendance. The Car Complete FAI for Cab Car is tentatively scheduled for June or July.*

*125 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches are currently in revenue service and Caltrans is planning revenue start first half of 2023 once all necessary agreements are in place.*

**Next Update – 3-21-23**

**Status: – Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement as of 1-5-23:**

On 1-5-23, Marci Petterson, CtDOT reported that they expect to receive proposals by the end of January. At that point they will enter the “cone of silence.”

**Next Update – as appropriate**

**Status - Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Equipment as of 3-7-23**

Production began on the first car shell on January 10th. Siemens and Metro-North are close to resolving the remaining Final Design Review items. As of the January report from Metro-North there were six of thirty-three items remaining to be resolved. Ray has not yet received the February report, so these items could very well already be resolved. As of January they were beginning to schedule first article inspections.

**Next Update – 4-4-23**

**Status - Amtrak Vehicle Procurements as of 3-7-23:**

On the Acela – Work is progressing well with one trainset now in production.

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On the Charger Locomotives – There are thirty locomotives – twenty-eight have been shipped. Two are to be shipped in the next few weeks. There are twenty in service. They are operating on the Empire Builder, the City of New Orleans and the Coast Starlight.

On the Airo trainsets– they continue with Final Design Review and the first shell is now in production.

**Next Update – 4-4-23**

**Status - Document Control Management as of 3-7-23:**

The only document control activity since the Annual Meeting is the continued work on the Bi-Level Specification. The technical writer is currently working on the update. Tammy is answering questions from the technical writer as she works to compile the changes into the updated Bi-Level Specification.

**Next Update – 3-21-23**

**VIA Rail Equipment Procurement:**

VIA Rail gave a detailed presentation during the 2023 NGEC Annual Meeting. The presentation is available on the NGEC website or by request from Steve Hewitt.

**Next Update: 2024 – NGEC Annual Meeting**

**Status CRISI Grant Application:**

On 12-13-22, Tim Ziethen reported that the CRISI Grant for funding for the NGEC was submitted on time (early). He thanked the Board for its feedback – especially in light of the short turnaround time.

Tim has requested a count on the number of support letters received and included with the application package.

Tim added that the Amtrak grants office was impressed with the number of support letters and the enthusiasm for this application.

The grants office also noted that the application was a strong and well put together document.

It is anticipated that the timeline for announcing which CRISIO Grant applications are approved is May-June 2023.

**Next Update: As appropriate.**

**Updates: States and Amtrak – Charger Locomotive and Venture Cars Experience:**

Detailed Updates were provided during the 2023 Annual Meeting.

**Next Update: As appropriate**

**Next Meeting -3-21-23**

**NGEC Executive Board Meeting**

**3-7-23**

**11:30 AM – 12:30 Noon Eastern**

**By computer:**

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

**By phone:**

**1-415-655-0001**

**Access code:**

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**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 2-21-23 Exec Board Meeting         | Ray Hessinger  |
| 5. Update: Multi State Venture Car Procurement                 | Kyle Gradinger |
| 6. Update: Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement        | Ray Hessinger  |
| 7. Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements                         | George Hull    |
| 8. Update: Document Control                                    | Tammy Krause   |
| 9. FASC Update   | Tim Ziethen    |
| - Balance/Spend Rate   |                |
| - Review of anticipated expenses and budget through 9-30-23    |                |
| - Gap Funding and Bridge funding options                       |                |
| - FASC Recommendations   |                |
| 10. NGEN Executive Board consideration of FASC Recommendations | Ray Hessinger  |
| 11. Other  | All            |
| 12. Adjourn  | Ray Hessinger  |

**Next meeting 3-21-23**