



[www.ngec.org](http://www.ngec.org)

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

## SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

MAY 16 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, Amanda Martin, Amanda Martin as proxy for John Oimoen, Jeff Gordon, Troy Hughes, Jason Orthner, Kyle Gradinger, Mike Jenkins, Richard Kedzior, Kyle Gradinger, Brian Beeler II <b>Support Staff and Colleagues:</b> Steve Hewitt, Tammy Krause, Larry Salci, Barley Fields, Strat Cavros, Patrick Centolanzi, Jon Dees, Jodi Lehmkuhl, Mike Murray, Dave "PowerPoint" Warner
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<b>Board Members:</b> Jason Biggs, George Hull, Tim Ziethen <b>Support:</b> Shayne Gill, Joe Paul

### DECISIONS MADE

**1.**

**Welcome – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, Chair, 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 could not confirm the presence of a quorum with no representation from Amtrak.

It was agreed that the meeting would continue with no votes being taken.

**3.**

**Action items Review – Steve Hewitt:**

Steve Hewitt provided a brief review of action/ongoing tracking items not on today’s agenda.

**Industry Participation:**

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

As a note – we did lose an original member of the NGEC industry group – Richard Curtis who passed away last week. He was an active member from the very beginning. Steve Hewitt sent a notice out to all tech SC members and all industry 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: 332 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 – NGEN Annual Meeting or as appropriate**

**Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:**

As of 1-5-23 proposals were due by the end of the month (January) at which point they entered the “cone of silence.”

**Next Update – As appropriate**

**Status CRISI Grant Application:**

On 12-13-22, Tim Ziethen reported that the CRISI Grant for funding for the NGEN 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.

The timeframe for announcing which CRISI Grant applications are approved has been pushed back from May-June to August-September 2023.

**Next Update: As available**

**4.**

**Approval of the Minutes from the 5-2-23 Meeting– Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – NGEN Chair:**

Due to the lack of a quorum, consideration of approval of the DRAFT minutes from the 5-2-23 meeting was tabled.

**5.**

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

Kyle Grading, Caltrans, provided the following update for inclusion in today’s minutes (5-16-23):

- *The remaining Cab Car FDR submittals are in the final closure stage with nearly all subsystems ready for approval. The Cab Car dynamic framing representative approach has been submitted to FRA, with comments from FRA under review. 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 Complete FAI is tentatively scheduled for June, to be followed by the FRA Sample Car Inspection.*
- *129 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches are currently in revenue service and Caltrans is targeting revenue start in first half of 2023 once all necessary agreements are in place.*

Steve Hewitt added that on the 5-11-23 Technical Subcommittee meeting, IDOT reported that the first Café Car arrived in Chicago and this means that at least one of each of the four styles have arrived. Not all are yet in service, but this is a great step in that direction.

**6.**

**Update: Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement – Ray Hessinger:**

Ray Hessinger reported that Siemens and Metro-North have closed all Final Design Review items and are performing FAIs on various components such as brakes, air compressors, and roofs. Car Shells are scheduled to be done in the May-June timeframe.

Car Shells 301 and 302 are ready for blasting and are way ahead of schedule.

Ray also noted that they have identified the fact that Pueblo has no under running third rail so they cannot test third rail there. They are looking at options for testing the locomotive in third rail mode.

**7.**

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

In the absence of George Hull, this item was tabled until the next meeting – 5-30-23.

**8.**

**Update: Document Control Management – Tammy Krause:**

Tammy Krause provided the following update/plan for inclusion in the minutes of today's meeting (5-16-23):

*The Bi-Level Specification Revision D is OnTrack to be completed by May 26<sup>th</sup>.*

*The Bi-Level specification update is still on track to be completed this Month. The Next specification to be updated will be the Diesel Electric Locomotive.*

*Updating specifications based upon actual use by Authorities.*

1. *Who has used the Specifications, which ones and a Contact.*
  - a. *Connecticut DoT –*
    - i. *Single Level*
    - ii. *Marcy Petterson*
  - b. *Amtrak*
    - i. *Single level, Diesel Locomotive, Trainset*
    - ii. *George Hull*
  - c. *California DoT*
    - i. *Single level, Diesel Locomotive*
    - ii. *Gurleen Boparai*
  - d. *North Carolina DoT*
    - i. *Single Level*
    - ii. *Curtis McDowell*
  - e. *Brightline*
    - i. *Single Level, Trainset*
    - ii.
  - f. *VIA Rail*
    - i. *Locomotives*
    - ii. *Single level cars*
  - g. *MTA*
    - i. *Dual Mode Locomotive*
    - ii. *Ray Hessinger*
2. *Reach out to the contact person and request; (Should this be a formal written request form Ray)*
  - a. *Copy of their revised specification*
  - b. *List of changes that were made.*
  - c. *We can ask the users to provide the changes in a DCR spreadsheet, but I doubt that is going to happen.*
3. *Analyze the changes – I will work with the Technical Writer to create a chapter-to-chapter comparison and provide the technical differences.*
4. *Create DCRs and process them as normal DCRs.*

At this point, Tammy asked if a letter should be drafted for Ray Hessinger's signature to go to the various entities as a formal request for the specifications and the changes made to them.

---

Ray agreed and Tammy will draft the proposed letter.

*Materials Working Group Update – The materials WG has come to a stop. They are reviewing the approved welding standards and these are all AWS standards. The WG wants to review the EN standards. Stadler only uses the EN welding standards. Some carbuilders will try a hybrid approach, use the EN standards for design and ensure that the design and production work will comply with the AWS. This will add undue cost and burden and not all carbuilders (Stadler) are willing to go down that route.*

*Question: Can the Materials WG evaluate the use of EN welding standards for Aluminum carbodies? They feel that they need to do this to continue with this effort.*

A long discussion ensued in response to the question posed by Tammy.

Larry Salci commented that the Venture Car project has faced some issues with conflicts between European standards and AWS. This issue is causing a problem on the project and the working group needs to take a look at this and try to resolve it.

Rich Kedzior, Wisconsin DOT, agreed and stated that the confusion has brought the Wisconsin cars to a standstill. Siemens has been using European notations on the drawings. AWS in the notations is needed to prevent conflicts.

Larry Salci added that testing in welding is based on AWS – so this will result in a major issue for Caltrans and IDOT going forward.

Tammy Krause commented – AWS is required in the spec.

Larry responded that dealing with European builders/suppliers is difficult, even though they are building in the US, since the pandemic there has been a labor shortage and those brought in to fill the gap are not trained in AWS.

Dave Warner asked – there are 129 Venture Cars in service – so this issue had to be solved – no? Why has it stopped in Wisconsin?

Richard Kedzior responded that the problem has not been solved. Siemens is going back to do modeling on the cars as is.

Larry Salci added that – luckily - the design by Siemens is robust – but there still could be a problem. The European suppliers used European Drawings. In essence, the cars that are in service are not PRIIA compliant. The issue was caught at the beginning of the Wisconsin project.

Asked if they are CFR compliant, Larry responded that the FRA Office of Safety is looking to see if they are CFR compliant.

Larry added it is a QA issue that should have been caught between Siemens and the suppliers in the FAI.

Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans, provided a customer perspective noting that the issue may not just be the drawings. There has been an issue with Siemens since the pandemic with their ability to get sub-suppliers under contract. There is little American Aluminum material modeling – hard to get vendors who are experts in this area.

Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT stated that he believes the Materials Working Group should go with AWS standards. They will fall under Buy America standards and the notations need to be consistent with North American practices.

Kyle Gradinger added that Siemens is doing a lot of training as they bring in sub-contractors, and Stadler is as well. He again emphasized that this discussion should take place up front – there is more to it than just notations. It would be worthwhile to take advantage of their EN expertise and hear them out.

Larry Salci weighed in, adding that the purpose of the working group was to examine this issue (materials). The purpose was to have the working group look at the standards. PRIIA specs are silent on materials they only look at the performance of the design. The working group should be analyzing this and providing recommendations. They should proceed with a look at the standards.

Ray Hessinger asked “can they evaluate the use of European standards? Look at them and compare them with AWS? Can they then recommend which way to go?” He added that the working group should “make the case.”

Larry Salci again noted that “this is the reason for the working group” having been established. The burden is on Stadler to make a recommendation – they were the ones who raised the issue with the Technical subcommittee during the DCR process.

Larry added that this goes beyond the standards and into testing.

Tammy Krause asked – “why look if not allowed to use them ever?”

Larry, again, commented, someone needs to look at it.

Dave Warner suggested that this is an opportunity for the working group to look at it and come back with a report.

Ultimately, the Executive Board members agreed that this question needs to be brought to the Technical subcommittee.

Tammy will plan to raise it at next week’s subcommittee meeting on 5-25-23. Steve Hewitt will make sure it is included in the agenda that he presents to George Hull.

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

Tim Ziethen was in another meeting which ran late, Steve Hewitt provided the following update as sent to him just prior to this call:

**Treasurer’s Update:**

**Balance/Spend Rate Through March 2023**

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
Expenses Incurred through March 2023: \$1,161,003.14  
Balance remaining: \$89,996.85.  
Estimated spend at current rate for balance of the Grant: \$89,307.93  
Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,884.66.  
Estimated Balance at the end of the Grant Period: **(\$311.07)**

**Pending:**

Casamar/TLK: \$17,346.30

**NGEC funding issues/potential interim solutions:**

Highlights provided by Tim Ziethen are as follows:

*I am working with our grants office to confirm the process to request additional funding to close out this year under the current grant. At this point we are projecting to be slightly over budget but most likely within 1% and may need to request the FRA for authorized funding to cover this small amount. Amtrak with George Hull’s support is moving forward to request a project for next year (at least until the CRISI grants are determined) to fund the continued operation of the NGE 305 at the current spend rate that would be covered out of annual grant from the FRA.*

Steve added that, although it is not in Tim’s summary, Steve is certain that Tim understands that once this goes through the approval process internally with its Senior Management, it still will need FRA approval.

**Status - Quarterly Progress Report to FRA:**

Steve Hewitt added that Tim has provided him with the final quarterly report (Quarter 2 of FY23) as submitted to FRA on time. The report was for the quarter ending 3-31-23 and was due to FRA on 4-30-23. Steve will transmit the report to the Board members (and support) along with today’s draft minutes.

Steve noted to AASHTO (Barley Fields) that the Quarterly Reports do not get posted to the website.

**10.  
Other – all:**

With no other business forthcoming, Ray Hessinger adjourned the meeting at 12:08am Eastern.

**Next Executive Board Meeting 5-30-23**

---

## Decisions/Action Items

### Treasurer's Report – 5-16-23:

#### Balance/Spend Rate Through March 2023

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
Expenses Incurred through March 2023: \$1,161,003.14  
Balance remaining: \$89,996.85.  
Estimated spend at current rate for balance of the Grant: \$89,307.93  
Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$14,884.66.  
Estimated Balance at the end of the Grant Period: **(\$311.07)**

#### Pending:

Casamar/TLK: \$17,346.30

#### Path Forward:

##### NGEC funding issues/potential interim solutions:

*Highlights are as follows:*

*I am working with our grants office to confirm the process to request additional funding to close out this year under the current grant. At this point we are projecting to be slightly over budget but most likely within 1% and may need to request the FRA for authorized funding to cover this small amount. Amtrak with George Hull's support is moving forward to request a project for next year (at least until the CRISI grants are determined) to fund the continued operation of the NGEC 305 at the current spend rate that would be covered out of annual grant from the FRA.*

Steve added that, although it is not in Tim's summary, Steve is certain that Tim understands that once this goes through the approval process internally with its Senior Management, it still will need FRA approval.

##### Status - Quarterly Progress Report to FRA:

Steve Hewitt added that Tim has provided him with the final quarterly report (Quarter 2 of FY23) as submitted to FRA on time. The report was for the quarter ending 3-31-23 and was due to FRA on 4-30-23. Steve will transmit the report to the Board members (and support) along with today's draft minutes.

##### 2023 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:

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: 332 copies have been distributed (hard/soft).

##### Status – Multi-State Rail Car Procurement as of 5-16-23:

- *The remaining Cab Car FDR submittals are in the final closure stage with nearly all subsystems ready for approval. The Cab Car dynamic framing representative approach has been submitted to FRA, with comments from FRA under review. 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 Complete FAI is tentatively scheduled for June, to be followed by the FRA Sample Car Inspection.*
- *129 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches are currently in revenue service and Caltrans is targeting revenue start in first half of 2023 once all necessary agreements are in place.*

Steve Hewitt added that on the 5-11-23 Technical Subcommittee meeting, IDOT reported that the first Café Car arrived in Chicago and this means that at least one of each of the four styles have arrived. Not all are yet in service, but this is a

---

great step in that direction.

**Next Update – 5-30-23**

**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 5-16-23**

Siemens and Metro-North have closed all Final Design Review items and are performing FAIs on various components such as brakes, air compressors, and roofs. Car Shells are scheduled to be done in the May-June timeframe.

Car Shells 301 and 302 are ready for blasting and are way ahead of schedule.

Ray also noted that they have identified the fact that Pueblo has no under running third rail so they cannot test third rail there. They are looking at options for testing the locomotive in third rail mode.

**Next Update – 6-13-23**

**Status - Amtrak Vehicle Procurement as of 4-18-23:**

On the new Acela:

Work continues on completing qualification and acceptance. Trainset #6 is to be delivered to Amtrak property this week.

On the Charger Locomotives:

Twenty-two are available for service and six are ready to come from the factory.

There was good news on issues related to the ATC cab signal and they will be able to begin operating on additional service lines (currently on the Empire Builder, City of New Orleans, and the Coast Starlight).

On the Airo trainset:

Final Design Review (FDR) has begun.

The first car shell is complete.

**Next Update – 5-30-23**

**Status - Document Control Management as of 5-16-23:**

Tammy Krause provided an update on current activities and an action plan to obtain and review changes made to the PRIIA specs used by various entities.

A long discussion related to a question posed by the Materials working group took place and was ultimately deferred to the Technical subcommittee for its consideration.

Tammy will raise the issue on the next subcommittee call scheduled for 5-25-23.

See agenda item 8 above for details.

**Next Update -5-30-23**

**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 at request from Steve Hewitt.

**Next Update: 2024 – NGEC Annual Meeting or As Appropriate**

---

**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 now anticipated that the timeline for announcing which CRISI Grant applications are approved is August-September 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 -5-30-23**

**NGEC Executive Board Meeting**

**5-16-23**

**11:30 AM – 12:30 Noon Eastern**

**By computer:**

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

**By phone:**

**1-415-655-0001**

**Access code:**

**126-073-1531**

**Agenda**

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 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 5-2-23 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 Management                  | Tammy Krause   |

Status: Current activities

Status: Car Body Materials working group

Status: Planning to acquire specifications from entities that used the PRIIA specs as a baseline and made changes

Status: Turning those changes into DCRs – following NGEC Procedures

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| 9. FASC Update | Tim Ziethen |
|----------------|-------------|



- 
- Balance/Spend Rate/Forecast
  - Review of anticipated expenses and budget through 9-30-23
  - Status: Internal (Amtrak) Discussions - Gap Funding and Bridge funding discussions.
  - Status: Amtrak/FRA discussions
  - June Timeline for decision?

10. Other

All

11. Adjourn

Ray Hessinger

**Next Meeting: 5-30-23**