



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

SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

DECEMBER 15, 2020

11:30 EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Ray Hessinger, Chair, S305 NGEC Executive Board</i>
ATTENDEES	Board Members: <i>Ray Hessinger, George Hull, John Oimoen, Tim Ziethen, Arun Rao, Amanda Martin, Michael Lestingi, Troy Hughes, Jason Orthner, Jason Biggs for Ron Pate, Kyle Gradinger, Mike Jenkins, Brian Beeler II</i> Support Staff and Colleagues: <i>Jon Dees, Jeff Gordon, Joe Paul, Steve Hewitt, Shayne Gill, Oscar Bermudez, Tammy Krause, Patrick Centolanzi, Larry Salci</i>
ABSENTEES	Board Members: <i>Michigan State DOT – which has yet to name its representative to the Board, Ron Pate, Support: Mike Kraft, Mike Murray, Strat Cavros, Momo Tamaoki</i>

DECISIONS MADE

1.

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

Chairman Hessinger 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 (12-1-20).

Update: States and Amtrak – Charger Locomotive Experience:

In-depth updates were provided during the Annual Meeting and were included in the minutes (2-21-20). Presentations were 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 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 NGE C technical subcommittee informed as the process is completed.

As of 10-15-20 (Technical subcommittee meeting) there was nothing new to report – the Access Board seems to be in a holding pattern.

Next Update: As appropriate

Update: TSSSA Primer/Template development:

As of 10-15-20, the Amtrak team was continuing to work on the development of the TSSSA primer. They are developing the verbiage after having received permission to use some of the diagrams.

As of 12-1-20, this effort remains on the back burner due to other workload issues facing the same team including the California venture cars and other issues related to VSIP, etc.

Next Update: As appropriate

VIA Rail Equipment Procurement:

On 10-20-20, Ron Bartels, VIA Rail, provided the NGE C Executive Board with an update on the VIA Rail vehicle procurement program.

He gave an overview of an exciting program that will result in 32 trainsets - each with 1 locomotive, 4 coaches and a cab car. Ron provided a general overview of milestones and an anticipated timeline for delivery.

He also described the great level of progress that has taken place, even with a tight schedule and the challenges presented by the COVID 19 pandemic.

Next Update - Either 6 months – or - during the NGE C Annual Meeting in February 2021

Update:

On 12-15-20, Steve Hewitt noted that he will reach out to Mario Bergeron to see if VIA rail would like to provide an update at the Virtual Annual Meeting on 2-23-21.

Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:

Update: - 12-15-20:

On 12-10-20, Marci Petterson, CtDOT informed Steve Hewitt that Connecticut DOT was in the process of reviewing proposals. There was nothing more to report at this time.

Steve Hewitt will reach out to Marci Petterson to see if she will provide an update at the NGE C Annual Meeting on 2-23-21.

Next Update – 1-12-21

Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement:

As of 12-10-20, this procurement remained in the "cone of silence".

See Update provided under agenda item 6(a) of this call 12-15-20.

Next Update: 1-12-21

Amtrak Vehicle Procurements:

As of 12-10-20 (reported to the NGE C Technical subcommittee):

CAF Cars – 2 sleeper cars delivered – down to the last 11.

Acela – the first prototype is in testing in Pueblo and the second is in testing on the North East Corridor (NEC)
Long Distance Diesel-Electric Locomotives - they are progressing well – 13 are in production with the first in final stage.
Amfleet replacement procurement remains in the cone of silence, with Amtrak and vendors continuing to be in discussions.

Next Update: 12-29-20

4. Approval of the Minutes from the 12-1-20 conference call meeting – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:

On a motion by Amanda Martin, Iowa DOT, and a second by John Oimoen, Illinois DOT, the minutes from the 12-1-20 conference call meeting were approved as presented.

5. Update: Finance and Administrative subcommittee (FASC) 12-15-20 – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Tim Ziethen provided the following Treasurer's Report:

Balance/Spend Rate:

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.
Amount Spent: \$681,579.65.
Balance remaining: \$ 568,420.35.
Estimated spend at current rate for the remaining grant period (through 9-30-23) - \$486,842.61.
Current Spend Rate (as info and used in calculating) - \$13,909.79.
Estimated balance at the end of the Extension Period – 9-30-23 – (Contingency) - \$81,577.74.

Overview/discussion DRAFT NGEC two-pager updates as approved by the FASC on 12-9-20 - Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt walked through the updated two-pager, as approved by the FASC on its last call (12-9-20), noting that the approval was pending filling in some dates and getting permission to use an IDOT picture of the coach car.

Action:

John Oimoen, IDOT, agreed to get the appropriate permissions for use of a coach car picture on page 2 of the document. John also agreed to provide the requested dates to complete the NGEC timelines on rail car and Charger deliveries.

With the pending permissions and requested information, and no further comments, Chairman Hessinger determined that there was agreement in the direction the two-pager is taking and, once the information requested has been obtained, it will be sent to MODOT to compile and format into a final DRAFT for the Board to give final approval.

6. Update – Multi-State Rail Car Procurement as of 12-15-20 – Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans:

Kyle Gradinger provided the following update:

Design review for the standard coach is complete. The Cab Car structure FDR is complete and the structural test plans are being coordinated with Caltrans, Siemens, and FRA. IDOT Café Car releases are ongoing and the Electrical FDR is scheduled for December 15. The updated FDR documents for Cab Car Safety Appliances and Clearance are in review. The new emergency egress windows are being installed on cars in California and Illinois.

Workstation table testing for the new economy table has been successfully completed and work is ongoing to address Buy America compliance. NEC testing for standard coach is complete and the report is accepted by FRA. Caltrans 238.111 testing is complete, and the report has been submitted to Amtrak for final review and submittal to FRA. The IDOT 238.111 test runs are pending test date confirmation from Amtrak.

65 cars total are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. System-level FAIs and the Complete Coach FAI are approved for the standard coach. There are now twelve CALTRANS cars at the Stockton Facility. Five IDOT cars were shipped to Chicago during the second week of November.

6 a.

Update- Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Equipment – Ray Hessinger:

Ray Hessinger added agenda item "6a." to provide an update on the Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive procurement. The MTA Board will be meeting to consider awarding a contract to Siemens Mobility for a base order of 19 dual mode locomotives with options for a total of 152 for Metro-North, Long Island Railroad, NYSDOT and Connecticut DOT. The base order cost is at \$12.2 million each and the option orders will be at \$10.3 million each.

Ray noted that Siemens Mobility was the only bidder. Two other companies had submitted pre-qualification documents but, in the end, decided not to submit bids.

7.

Status: Recommended Practices Document – next working group meeting – 12-15-20 – Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT:

Ray Hessinger reported that the Equipment Acquisition and Ownership working group met on 12-8-20 and began a comprehensive walk-through/review of comments and edits received on DRAFT Revision 4 of the Recommended Practices Document 305-200. Numerous comments and suggested edits were reconciled. The group reviewed the document up through Section 2-36 when allotted time for the meeting expires. The group will meet later today (12-15-20) to continue, and, hopefully, complete its review.

Once complete, it will be returned to the technical writer to be updated and then go back for one more review by the working group. After that it will be sent to the Board for its review. The Board will have it for a minimum of two weeks before being asked to consider its approval. The intent is to have a completed and approved document in time for releasing it by the NGE2021 Annual Meeting (2-23-21).

8.

Update: Document Control Management - Tammy Krause:

Tammy Krause provided the following update for inclusion in today's (12-15-20) minutes:

On 12-10-20, the Technical subcommittee established a new technical working group on Equipment Weights, this will be led by Jeff Gordon, FRA.

The request for contact information from all technical working group members has been issued.

The Equipment Acquisition and Ownership working group is meeting today to complete the review of the Best Practices document. (Recommended Practices PRIIA 305-200)

The DMU specification DCR approval is currently on hold until January to allow Stadler Rail to complete their review of the specification and propose changes.

The Trainset specification changes will be completed after the Equipment Acquisition and Ownership document is completed.

9.

Establishment of a technical working group on the issue of weight – George Hull, Amtrak:

George Hull confirmed that the NGE2021 Technical subcommittee had established the technical working group to resolve issues related to weight. Jeff Gordon, FRA, has been named as team leader and is organizing the working group.

Steve Hewitt added that an emphasis is being placed on getting manufacturers involved in the group as their expertise and input is critical.

Jeff Gordon confirmed that he is pleased with the responses he has gotten, thus far, from NGE2021 members volunteering to participate on the working group. He will plan to provide a list of members and an update on the next Technical subcommittee call

On a separate topic, Steve Hewitt mentioned that the next Technical subcommittee call is currently scheduled for 12-24-20 which has recently been designated as a Federal Holiday. That being the case, Steve suggested it be canceled. George Hull, Technical subcommittee chair, concurred. Steve will send out a notice to Technical subcommittee members. The next Technical subcommittee call will take place on 1-7-21.

10.

NGE2021 Virtual Annual Meeting – Ray Hessinger/Steve Hewitt:

Overview DRAFT agenda –establishing meeting topics/presentations:

Ray Hessinger and Steve Hewitt provided an overview of the DRAFT agenda for the Annual Meeting (sent to all members in advance of this call) and asked for feedback.

The agenda, as presented, met no objections and a general concurrence was determined by the Chair, with the following actions/decisions determined:

Tim Ziethen agreed to contact Amtrak Government Affairs to invite them to participate.

Michael Lestingi, FRA, agreed to provide the FRA update.

Ray Hessinger will reach out to Metro-North to see if they would like to send a representative to provide a presentation on the Dual Mode Locomotive procurement update.

Steve Hewitt will reach out to Mario Bergeron to confirm that VIA Rail will provide an update.

Steve Hewitt will reach out to Marci Petterson, to confirm her availability to provide an update on the CtDOT Rail car procurement.

The time of the meeting has been extended to 2 ½ hours rather than the original 2 hours, in order to provide ample time for the various presentations.

PowerPoint Presentations are requested to be submitted to Steve Hewitt by 2-16-21.

Oscar Bermudez, AASHTO, agreed (thank you Oscar!) to manage the presentations during the Annual meeting as Dave “ Emeritus” Warner, who usually does it, is not available for the entire meeting.

Outreach to Michigan DOT re: NGEC membership:

Ray Hessinger and Steve Hewitt raised the issue of Michigan Membership. With the retirement of Tim Hoeffner and others, Michigan (which asked to remain on the NGEC executive Board) has never named a representative. This means the Board is always reporting at least one absent member. Ray asked if a Mid-West state member would be willing to reach out to Michigan to determine if they want to remain on the Board, and if so, name a representative.

John Oimoen, IDOT, agreed to reach out to Jeff Martin, Michigan DOT, and will get back to the Board with the response.

Registration:

Steve Hewitt noted while there are over 70 NGEC members who have accepted the calendar appointment, a better head count would be established if there was a registration for the meeting. Steve will send out a notice to all members to register (free) with him if they intend to participate on the web/conference.

11.

Other:

With no other business forthcoming, Chairman Hessinger adjourned today's meeting (12-15-20) at 12:03PM.

The next conference call will be held on 12-29-20

Decisions/Action Items

Update – Multi-State Rail Car Procurement - 12-15-20 – as provided by Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans:

Design review for the standard coach is complete. The Cab Car structure FDR is complete and the structural test plans are being coordinated with Caltrans, Siemens, and FRA. IDOT Café Car releases are ongoing and the Electrical FDR is scheduled for December 15. The updated FDR documents for Cab Car Safety Appliances and Clearance are in review. The new emergency egress windows are being installed on cars in California and Illinois.

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Update: Document Control Management as of 12-15-20 reported by Tammy Krause:

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Update:

On 12-15-20, Steve Hewitt agreed to reach out to Mario Bergeron to see if VIA rail would like to provide an update at the Virtual Annual Meeting on 2-23-21.

METRA Equipment Procurement Effort:

This item has been tabled until John Oimoen, IDOT, 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.

NGEC Treasurer's Report and FASC Activities update as of 11-17-20:

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.
Amount Spent: \$681,579.65.
Balance remaining: \$ 568,420.35.
Estimated balance remaining at the end of FFY 2020 (9-30-20): \$580,353.13.
Estimated spend at current rate for the next 35 months (through 9-30-23) - \$518,593.21.
Current Spend Rate (as info and used in calculating) - \$14,816.95
Estimated balance at the end of the Extension Period – 9-30-23 – (Contingency) - \$49,827.14.

Updating the NGEC two pager:

As reported previously, on 11-16-20, the FASC two-pager update working group (Tim Ziethen Ray Hessinger, Troy Hughes, and Steve Hewitt) met for the second time via web conference.

On the call on 11-16-20, the working group prepared a rough draft mark-up of the two-pager with proposed changes in content and in design format. On 11-17-20 the proposed changes were discussed to get a sense of the Board's thoughts on the direction being taken.

A request was also made to get a picture of the new coach car – possibly from the Mid-West. (This remains an open item)

On the Executive Board call (11-17-20) Ray Hessinger and Tim Ziethen encouraged Board members to provide any comments/edits/suggestions they have to Steve Hewitt in advance of the next FASC call – 12-9-20. Meanwhile, the working group was to move forward and make the formatting improvements and confirm some of the information contained in the DRAFT.

With no comments received as of 12-1-20, the next step will be to have the proposed changes presented to the FASC on its next call (12-9-20). Steve Hewitt asked Troy Hughes, MODOT if he would ask Laura Seabaugh, MODOT graphics arts, to format it and smooth it out prior to next week's FASC call (12-9-20) If that is not possible, the rough DRAFT version will be presented to the FASC for discussion on 12-9-20 – with any changes going back to MODOT for formatting and then on to the NGEC Executive Board for final approval.

The intent is to have a finished product ready for distribution by mid to late January 2021.

When completed, the document will be distributed electronically to the entire NGEC universe (over 300 participants) and posted to the NGEC website by AASHTO. It will also be provided to sister organizations for their information and all recipients, including states, Amtrak, other organizations –will be asked to include the two-pager in any "virtual" Hill visits they make to get the word out to Congress.

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

Developing a template – TSSSA:

The Amtrak team continues to work on the development of the TSSSA primer. They are developing the verbiage after having received permission to use some of the diagrams. This effort has been put on the back burner due to other workload issues facing the same team including the California venture cars.

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. Presentations were distributed and posted to the website.

Next Update: as appropriate

Status Update – Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:

Update: - 12-15-20:

On 12-10-20, Marci Petterson, CtDOT informed Steve Hewitt that Connecticut DOT was in the process of reviewing proposals. There was nothing more to report at this time.

Steve Hewitt will reach out to Marci Petterson to see if she will provide an update at the NGEC Annual Meeting on 2-23-21.

Next Update: 1-12-21

**10.
NGEC 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting 2-23-21 11:30AM-2:00PM Eastern:**

Overview DRAFT agenda –establishing meeting topics/presentations:

Ray Hessinger and Steve Hewitt provided an overview of the DRAFT agenda for the Annual Meeting (sent to all members in advance of this call) and asked for feedback.

The agenda, as presented, met no objections and a general concurrence was determined by the Chair, with the following actions/decisions determined:

Decisions/Actions 12-15-20:

Tim Ziethen agreed to contact Amtrak Government Affairs to invite them to participate.

Michael Lestingi, FRA, agreed to provide the FRA update.

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**S305 NGEC Executive Board Conference Call
12-15-20
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM 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 12-1-20 conference call meeting | Ray Hessinger |
| 5. Update: Finance and Administrative subcommittee activities | |
| - Treasurer's Report – Balance/Spend rate | Tim Ziethen |
| - Overview/discussion NGEC two-pager updates as approved by the FASC | Steve/Tim |
| 6. Update: Multi-State Car Procurement | Kyle Gradinger |
| 7. Status: Recommended Practices Document – next meeting -12-15-20 | Ray Hessinger |
| 8. Update: Document Control Management | Tammy Krause |
| 9. Establishment of a Technical Working Group on the issue of weight | George Hull |
| 10. NGEC Virtual Annual meeting | Steve/Ray |
| Overview DRAFT agenda –establishing meeting topics/presentations
Outreach to VIA Rail re: Annual Meeting presentation
Outreach to Michigan DOT re: NGEC membership
Registration | |
| 11. Other | All |

Next Meeting – 12-29-20