

SECTION 305 FINANCE and ADMINISTRATIVE SUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES JULY 22, 2020 3:00PM EASTERN CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>Tim Ziethen, Chair of the S305 Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)</i>
ATTENDEES	<i>Tim Ziethen, Brent Thompson, John Oimoen, Jeff Gordon for Michael Lestingi, Amanda Martin, Amanda Martin also as proxy for Arun Rao, Brian Beeler II, Shayne Gill, Strat Cavros, Oscar Bermudez, Steve Hewitt</i>
ABSENTEES	<i>Michael Lestingi, Arun Rao, Ray Hessinger, Troy Hughes, Larry Salci</i>

DECISIONS MADE

1. Welcome and Open Meeting – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

Subcommittee Chair, Tim Ziethen, Amtrak, opened the conference call meeting and asked Steve Hewitt to call the roll.

2. Roll Call – Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

3. Approval of Minutes from the 5-27-20 conference call – Tim Ziethen, Amtrak:

On a motion by John Oimoen, IDOT, and a second by Brian Beeler II, for Maine DOT, the minutes from 5-27-20 were approved as presented.

4. Treasurer's Update – Tim Ziethen:

Tim Ziethen provided the following Treasurer's update:

Balance/Spend Rate:

Through May 2020

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

Amount Spent: \$620,692.48

Balance remaining: \$ 629,307.52

Anticipated spending through the remainder of the current grant period: approximately \$76,000.

Estimated balance remaining at the end of the current grant period (9-30-20): \$552,000.

Approximate current spend rate: \$14,000.

Average Monthly expenditure estimated for the extension period is: \$15,000.00

Amount utilized if the Grant is extended for 36 months at estimated spend rate: \$540,000.00

Projected total remaining at the end of the 36-month extension: \$10-20,000.

Grant Agreement extension request:

Tim Ziethen reported that Amtrak grants has gotten some feedback from FRA on the grant extension request. The most recent interaction was this week. Some suggested verbiage changes have been agreed to, and Tim understands that there is now "conceptual" agreement on the 36 month "no-cost" extension. He believes that most, if not all, reviews have been completed and they are awaiting final confirmation of approval.

As soon as gets an update, Tim will let the FASC members and the Executive Board know.

5. Status Update: NGEN Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices/Lessons Learned Document – Steve Hewitt:

The group last met on 6-25-20 to go over comments received on the most recent draft. It was a productive session with all comments addressed in one way or another. The title of the document was agreed on by the working group members. Unless the Executive Board has a different name for it, the document will be titled "Recommended Practices".

Some edits suggested on the 6-25-20 call required additional rewriting to address comments made and will be incorporated into an updated DRAFT and there will be another round of working group review.

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on 7-30-20, but, as of today, because we have not received the updated DRAFT, Chairman Hessinger asked Steve Hewitt to cancel the call. It will be rescheduled once the updated version has been received and circulated. The intent is to give working group members at least two weeks for review. It is hoped that this will be the last round of reviews by the working group before advancing the DRAFT to the Executive Board for its review and comment.

Once the working group has approved the DRAFT document, the Executive Board will be provided at least two weeks of review prior to discussion on a subsequent Board call.

6.

Status: Conveying the Message – Steve Hewitt:

One of the NGEN Grant requirements is to develop and keep updated an educational document to provide congress and others (states, Amtrak, industry) with information describing what the NGEN is and what it does, and to highlight its accomplishments.

The FASC oversees this effort with Executive Board approval. In January 2020, the NGEN released its updated background and educational document. To date over 400 hard copies and electronic versions have been distributed. Overall, in the past 15 months we have distributed more than 1300 copies of the most recent versions of the educational document.

It remains available, by request, from Steve Hewitt in both versions hard copy and PDF and is useful in conveying the message – (something that is critical with reauthorization on the table).

With Reauthorization beginning to take shape – at least in the House - it should be noted that, it does not appear to be in the House version of the bill. The NGEN cannot lobby or advocate, which does make it difficult, but other organizations including AASHTO, SPRC, CSG-ERC do have the NGEN reauthorization in their principles.

Steve Hewitt recommended that states check with their government affairs offices individually so that this issue can be worked through the appropriate channels. Tim Ziethen will check with Amtrak government affairs to be sure they have this on their radar as well.

Steve asked Shayne Gill, AASHTO, if his assessment was correct. Shayne acknowledged it is not in the House bill and agreed that Senate Commerce has not yet introduced its DRAFT bill.

Tim Ziethen asked all FASC members to check in with their appropriate channels to make sure this item is on their radar.

7.

Status: Preparing the Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA – due 7-31-20 – Tim Ziethen:

Tim Ziethen reported that he has begun preparing the progress report for the quarter ending 6-30-20 and will be providing a DRAFT for Steve Hewitt's review within the next day or two.

It is due to FRA by 7-31-20.

8.

Other Issues/Questions – All:

Adjourn:

With no further business forthcoming, Chairman Ziethen adjourned today's meeting at 3:20pm Eastern.

The next call is scheduled for August 19, 2019

The call-in number is:

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#

Decisions - Action Items

Treasurer's Report – 7-22-20:

On 7-22-20, Tim Ziethen provided the following Treasurer's report:

Balance/Spend Rate:

Through May 2020

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

Amount Spent: \$620,692.48

Balance remaining: \$ 629,307.52

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Approximate current spend rate: \$14,000.

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Amount utilized if the Grant is extended for 36 months at estimated spend rate: \$540,000.00

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Grant Agreement extension request:

Tim Ziethen reported that Amtrak grants has gotten some feedback from FRA on the grant extension request. The most recent interaction was this week. Some suggested verbiage changes have been agreed to, and Tim understands that there is now "conceptual" agreement on the 36 month "no-cost" extension. He believes that most, if not all, reviews have been completed and they are awaiting final confirmation of approval.

As soon as gets an update, Tim will let the FASC members and the Executive Board know.

Conveying the message:

One of the NGEC Grant requirements is to develop and keep updated an educational document to provide congress and others (states, Amtrak, industry) with information describing what the NGEC is and what it does, and to highlight its accomplishments.

The FASC oversees this effort with Executive Board approval. In January 2020, the NGEC released its updated background and educational document. To date over 400 hard copies and electronic versions have been distributed. Overall, in the past 15 months we have distributed more than 1300 copies of the most recent versions of the educational document.

It remains available, by request, from Steve Hewitt in both versions hard copy and PDF and is useful in conveying the message – (something that is critical with reauthorization on the table).

With Reauthorization beginning to take shape – at least in the House - it should be noted that, it does not appear to be in the House version of the bill. The NGEC cannot lobby or advocate, which does make it difficult, but other organizations including AASHTO, SPRC, CSG-ERC do have the NGEC reauthorization in their principles.

Steve Hewitt recommended that states check with their government affairs offices individually so that this issue can be worked through the appropriate channels. Tim Ziethen will check with Amtrak government affairs to be sure they have this on their radar as well.

Steve asked Shayne Gill, AASHTO, if his assessment was correct. Shayne acknowledged it is not in the House bill and agreed that Senate Commerce has not yet introduced its DRAFT bill.

Tim Ziethen asked all FASC members to check in with their appropriate channels to make sure this item is on their radar.

Overview: Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA:

The quarterly report for the period ending 3-31-20 was submitted to FRA on time on 4-30-20.

The next quarterly report will be for the period ending June 30, 2020 and will be due to FRA by July 31, 2020.

On 7-22-20, Tim Ziethen reported that he has begun preparing the progress report for the quarter ending 6-30-20 and will be providing a DRAFT for Steve Hewitt's review within the next day or two.

Status Update: NGEC Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices Working Group:

The group last met on 6-25-20 to go over comments received on the most recent draft. It was a productive session with all comments addressed in one way or another. The title of the document was agreed on by the working group members. Unless the Executive Board has a different name for it, the document will be titled "Recommended Practices".

Some edits suggested on the 6-25-20 call required additional rewriting to address comments made and will be incorporated into an updated DRAFT and there will be another round of working group review.

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on 7-30-20, but, as of today, because we have not received the updated DRAFT, Chairman Hessinger asked Steve Hewitt to cancel the call. It will be rescheduled once the updated version has been received and circulated. The intent is to give working group members at least two weeks for review. It is hoped that this will be the last round of reviews by the working group before advancing the DRAFT to the Executive Board for its review and comment.

Once the working group has approved the DRAFT document, the Executive Board will be provided at least two weeks of review prior to discussion on a subsequent Board call.

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#
Next Call 8-19-20

ATTACHMENTS



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

SECTION 305 NGEC Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC)

Conference call
7-22-2020
3:00PM Eastern

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#

AGENDA

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| 1. Welcome/Open | Tim Ziethen |
| 2. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |

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| 3. Approval of the Minutes from 5-27-20 | Tim Ziethen |
| 4. Treasurer's Update | Tim Ziethen |
| a. Balance-Spend Rate | |
| b. Status: Grant Agreement No-Cost 36 months Extension Request | |
| 5. Status: NGECE Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices Document | Steve Hewitt |
| 6. Status: Conveying the Message | Steve Hewitt |
| 7. Status: Preparing the Quarterly Grant Progress Report to FRA – due 7-31-20 | Tim Ziethen |
| 8. Other Issues/questions | All |

Next Call August 19, 2020

888 585-9008 passcode 559-120-127#