



NH Railroad Revitalization Association

November 23, 2009

Tonight's meeting was called to order by President Peter Griffin @ 7:05 PM at the Health and Safety Council in Concord.

Attendees:

Name	Town
Peter Griffin	Windham, NH
Tom Noel	New Boston, NH
Bill Remington	Concord, NH
Dennis Grimes	Bedford, NH
Andrew Duguay	Franklin, NH

Name	Town
Gary Kerr	Chichester, NH
Steve Flanders	Weare, NH
Ken Milender	Warner, NH
Steve Piper	Dover, NH

Guest: Gary Seneschal (Allenstown, NH)

October Minutes

The October 26 meeting minutes were accepted with one correction: MBTA was not present at the NH Rail Transit Authority meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Steve Flanders reported the organization's account balance. He paid out \$3.23 to Bill Remington for postage.

NH Rail Transit Authority Meeting

Tom Noel attended their last meeting. The contact person for Trans Systems, who prepared the application for stimulus funding, reported that there is sufficient money left over from the \$120,000 raised for this purpose to complete an economic impact study. This should be completed by December or January.

Commissioner Campbell attended. He and Peter Burling will be meeting with Amtrak next week to discuss the NH Capitol Corridor. Campbell, Burling and Deputy Commissioner Clement will also be meeting with Norfolk Southern.

Application reviews for stimulus money are now not expected to be completed until March of 2010. The NHRTA is still confident that their planning application will be approved.

Peter Burling discussed two pieces of upcoming legislation, neither of which is expected to go very far:

- 1) Remove the NHRTA's bonding authority
- 2) Remove NHDOT representation from the NHRTA Board

Commissioner Campbell responded to recent criticism about all New England states not working together (as evidenced by separate applications for stimulus funding being submitted), but he assured they are. He further commented that a combined application might not work logistically

A recent Kevin Landrigan article asked the question, "Is the goal still to go to Concord?", to which the NHRTA responded, "Yes". Kathy Hersh raised the question again and the NHRTA's consensus was also, "Yes", but to not preclude the possibility of other options (i.e., to go to Nashua first).

There was discussion on the recent news of the Downeaster possibly cutting out some NH stops on two of their current trains to shorten up the travel time. Several members expressed serious concern.

The apparent winning entry of the NHRTA logo contest was passed around for review and comment.

Manchester Chamber Infrastructure Meeting

Peter attended and reported on the meeting as a very good event. Six years ago, there was no discussion on rail. This year, Peter Burling and Chris Clement both attended to provide their support. The Manchester Airport is focusing on the NH Capitol Corridor in their master plan. Some question whether the Manchester & Lawrence corridor might still factor in, especially with approximately 1000 acres of development just to the south in Londonderry. Transportation and the current state of the economy were the two major topics.

Downeaster

Steve Piper reported that the Downeaster's ridership continues to be strong and steady, despite being down a few percentage points from last year's record travel. He reiterated that the express train concept that was being discussed (and reported in the media) would actually not be a reduction in the current service level, but rather might be an option when 6th and 7th round trips are instituted. NNEPRA is still waiting to hear whether or not stimulus funding would be approved for the extension of service to Freeport and Brunswick.

Other Business

- Dennis commented on a congressional bill that would hope to amend the federal match for rail from 50/50 to 80/20. The full document can be found at: http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Rail/20091014/SSM_RR.pdf
- Bill submitted a UTU News Flash – “Truckers Renew Assault on Railroads with Anti-Rail Advertisements”.
- Bill reported that the Milford & Bennington's 10-year lease has been approved by the Governor & Council.
- Dennis recommended that we include links to other like-minded rail advocacy groups in New England on the NHRRA web site.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

Next meeting: Monday, December 28, 2009 at 7 PM
Safety & Health Council
57 Regional Drive, Concord

Minutes by: Stephen R. Piper, Secretary