

Draft Minutes

Train Committee Meeting

March 25, 2013

- Downeaster update and performance stats;
- New Schedule
- NNEPRA & TrainRiders NE update
- Station Project update
- Exeter 375 anniversary celebration
- Establishing Exeter Station hosts
- New business

The station committee commenced at 5 pm at the Chamber Offices. Attendees were Bob Hall, Don Briselden, Julie Gilman, Don Woodward, Mike Schidlovsky, and Arthur Baillargeon.

Bob provided an update of the Downeaster performance which remains strong. However, ridership was down 4% in February due to winter storms and service curtailment south of Haverhill due to bridge work in Mass.

Bob also reported that NNEPRA (Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority) has announced that full funding for the design and construction of the layover facility in Brunswick, ME, has been received. Design will commence shortly. This is a major facility addition for the Downeaster which will provide for enclosed winter maintenance of engines and improve operations between Brunswick and Portland.

The summer schedule will begin April 1st. The second commuter train will leave North Station at 5:40 and the last train will now leave Boston at 11:20 pm.

The National Association of Rail Passengers will hold their annual meeting in Portland on Sat., April 6th. The meeting is co-hosted by TrainRiders Northeast.

TrainRiders Northeast will hold its annual meeting at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, ME in June; specific date to be determined.

Don provided an update on the progress of the station visitor's center project. The architect/engineer has been selected and the appraiser selection is now in progress.

The committee discussed Downeaster related ideas for supporting the Town's 375 anniversary celebrations this summer. Ideas included press coverage that highlighted the history of the railroad and service to Exeter, the success of the Downeaster in Exeter, displays at the station, and assistance from NNEPRA such as special fares. More discussions to follow.

Bob initiated a discussion regarding implementing a station host program at the Exeter station such as exists at Dover. The station hosts meet train arrivals and provide information assistance to riders. Beginning the discussions now is timely so that the preparations are completed ahead of the station visitor's center completion. Bob stated that TrainRiders has a program guidance book that will be helpful and should be reviewed. It was also suggested that Steve Piper, Dover's host leader, be invited to our next meeting to discuss the program. Julie also suggested that the

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committee brief the town manager and select board so that they are aware and can provide guidance.

Bob stated that a spring station cleanup should be scheduled following the next station committee meeting in mid-to late April (dates for both events to be announced).

The meeting adjourned at 5:50.

Submitted: Don Briselden