

# NEW JERSEY SHORT LINE RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

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*MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 13, 2017*



THE NEW JERSEY SHORT LINE RAILROAD ASSOCIATION IS AN ORGANIZATION MADE UP OF RAILROADS SERVING THE GREAT STATE OF NEW JERSEY. THE PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION IS TO ADDRESS CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS WHICH FACE SHORT LINE RAILROADS AND TO FIND MEANS OF MITIGATING PROBLEMS AND FINDING SOLUTIONS THROUGH COLLECTIVE EFFORT AND COOPERATION.

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We want to thank **Tim Tierney, Kathy Pitt** and the Conrail staff for again hosting this meeting in Mount Laurel and providing lunch.

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**Next Meeting:** Wednesday November 8, 2017 at 10:30 a.m.  
**Location:** Hilton Garden Inn at Raritan Center, Edison, NJ

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**October 23-25, 2017 ASLRRA Eastern Region Meeting, Providence, RI**

## MEETING ATTENDEES

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COMPANY/ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>TELEPHONE NUMBER</u>
Kelvin MacKavanagh	MacKavanagh RR Consulting	609-704-1270
Bob Bailey	Munro Associates	201-232-0389
Bob Ryan	Independent Railroad Contractor	973-220-8963
Deven Patel	NJDOT	09-530-29121
Ken Spahn	Dewberry	973-780-9326
Donald B. Hutton	NYNJR	201-433-0360
Ron Klempner	Jersey Marine Rail	201-840-0766
Miki Krakauer	NJ Operation Lifesaver	609-977-3055
Xiang Liu	Rutgers	848-445-2868
Zhipeng Zhang	Rutgers	217-819-2405
Neil Ferrone	Conrail	856-231-2007
Jim Orgill	NJ OHSP	609-584-4269
Joe Garofolo	Conrail	856-231-2013
John McCreavy	SMS	609-868-1342
Larry Warren	FRA	617-276-4706
Michael Fesen	Norfolk Southern	717-319-6870
Denise Bailey	NS	215-756-1497
Steven Hart	Conrail	856-231-2075
Tony Macrie	CMSL	609-602-1264
Lisa Tackach	RCC Paterson, NJ	973-413-1814
Paul Mulligan	CMSL	732-770-7186
Ron Baile	CMSL	609-828-9881
Steven Friedland	NJ TRANSIT	973-491-8761
Arthur C. Ivins, Jr.	Hatch & Kirk	215-499-3275
Tom Noon	FRA	732-397-3095

## MEETING MINUTES

NJSLRRA president Bob Bailey began the meeting at 10:43 a.m. with a safety briefing. This was followed by a round of introductions.

### **1. NJDOT rail grant status.**

Deven Patel said that applications for 2018 rail grants are due on September 15, 2017; there will be no extensions. NJDOT will evaluate these over 30 working days.

\$7M were awarded for the 2017 rail grants; in 2018, thanks to the Transportation Trust Fund, the total will be \$25M.

NJDOT is working on new criteria for the awards of rail grants.

SJTPO has applied for a rail grant using SAGE.

Speaking of SAGE, Kel MacKavanagh said that Dominick Critelli, who was in charge of the NJDOT rail program for several years and introduced the railroads to SAGE, has retired from NJDOT. We wish Dom a long and happy retirement and thank him for all that he did for New Jersey's railroads.

### **2. STB Railroad-Shipper Transportation Advisory Council (RSTAC) current and recent activities, including its involvement in CSXT service issues (John McCreavy, RSTAC chair).**

John said that the STB is waiting for a decision to increase the Board from three to five members.

The STB is in direct contact with E. Hunter Harrison about CSXT's service problems.

CSXT is starting to get rid of the Selkirk, NY hump. This is creating great concerns because Selkirk is very important to everybody.

John said that the three STB commissioners and the RSTAC members had a tour of Philadelphia and its railroad business during the summer. Special thanks for this are due to Ted Dahlburg and Barry Seymour of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Sam Katz, a former mayoral candidate, gave them the history of Philadelphia.

The group also saw the Port of Philadelphia and the large industrial park at Pureland in Bridgeport, NJ.

More information about RSTAC, including its members and position papers, may be found on the STB website ([www.stb.gov](http://www.stb.gov)). Under 'Rail Consumers', click on 'Rail Shipper Council'.

There was a discussion about problems in New York State. Short lines were advised to stay close to their CSXT connections on account of the turnovers in personnel there.

Mike Fesen said that we need to “preserve the endangered species of the blue collar worker.”

### **3. ASLRRRA Eastern Region meeting in Providence, RI on October 23-25, 2017.**

Information about the meeting is on the website, [www.aslrra.org](http://www.aslrra.org). The meeting has an excellent program lined up.

### **4. Status of rail-related bills in the United States Congress.**

There are 115 bills in Congress which contain the word ‘railroad’ somewhere in the text.

There is a majority of support for the BRACE (Building Rail Access for Customers and the Economy) Act. There are 246 co-sponsors in the House and 54 in the Senate. Six of New Jersey’s representatives are co-sponsors (Representatives Sires, Norcross, Payne, Lance, Smith, and Gottheimer. Neither Senator Booker or Senator Menendez are co-sponsors of the companion bill in the Senate (S.407).

There will probably be no further action on this bill until Congress takes up tax reform.

Other railroad-related bills have few or no co-sponsors. Rep. Sires’ bill, H.R. 1093, which would require the FRA and FTA to notify Congress of safety audits of railroads and rail transit agencies, has two co-sponsors (Representatives Payne and Esty (CT).

### **4. Status of rail-related bills in the NJ Legislature.**

There are two current bills in the Legislature:

- A. 2360; this would require railroads to submit bridge inspection reports to the DOT.
- A. 3429; this bill would clarify police powers of railroad police officers and impose training requirements.

Senator Loretta Weinberg is still fighting for S. 806, the hazmat bill which would require all hazmat routes to be put on websites. Green groups in Bergen County are pushing for this. Governor Christie conditionally vetoed the bill. The NJ railroads need to fight this bill and build a caucus.

Joe Garofolo mentioned that railroads used to send people to the AAR facility in Pueblo, CO for training. The CSXT and NS safety trains have also been in NJ; the fire chiefs praise this program.

Conrail spent weeks doing around the clock hazmat training in Jersey City.

TransCAER and the AAR are also supporting training; Phillips 66 is also supporting this.

## **5. TransAction 2018 plans.**

Kel MacKavanagh said that the first planning meeting was held on August 18; 966 people attended TransAction 2017.

TransAction 2018 will be at the Tropicana in Atlantic City on April 17-19. Retired NJDOT Commissioner Jack Lettiere has tentatively agreed to be the master of ceremonies at the April 18 luncheon.

An update session on PTC is planned since there is a December 31, 2018 deadline for its implementation.

## **6. Member reports.**

### **a. Norfolk Southern.**

Denise Bailey reported that the 2018 date for the NS short line meeting has not yet been set; Jay Traywick is the new short line AVP, he came from the Operating Department.

Industrial Products traffic was flat during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2017; however, the short line segment was up 4-6 percent over last year.

Mike Fesen said that the Portage Bridge in Letchworth State Park in New York should be up to 286K gross weight on rail by the middle of December 2017.

Efforts to increase truck sizes and weights are still going on in states; we just lost this in North Dakota. Jerry Vest of the Genesee and Wyoming continues to lead the effort to stop these increases.

Autonomous vehicles remain in the research mode. They are opposed by the truck driver unions.

### **b. Conrail.**

Joe Garofolo said that this year's meeting of the American Association of Railroad Superintendents (AARS) was one of the best in the past 15 years. The organization is getting young people as members and is being revitalized. Conrail's Rodney Gordon is now 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the AARS.

Joe agreed to talk more about the AARS at the January 2018 NJSLRRA meeting.

### **c. NJ Railroad Crossing Safety Guide.**

The design of this manual for law enforcement response to railroad incidents has been approved. The NJSLRRA will pay for its printing.

**d. FRA.**

Tom Noon introduced Larry Warren as the PTC expert. He said that the FRA will get a new head signal person. He also said that sleep apnea tests are being left up to the railroads.

**Tom also said that under CFR 219, Subpart C, testing is required if a crossing accident is deemed to be ‘human error’.**

**e. New York New Jersey Rail.**

Don Hutton said that the Greenville renovations are still under way. Global Container will be able to have five 7,000-ft. container trains.

The new carfloats will be delivered in September and will be in service next year.

Don also said that railroads should remember their vendors and invite their ‘green’ friends.

**f. NJ TRANSIT.**

Steve Friedland, who did his stint in the field for Customer Service during the track repairs in New York’s Penn Station, said that the 20,000 daily customers who were moved from Penn Station to Hoboken during the summer can now go back to Penn Station since the track repairs are finished.

He also stated that NJT is moving along with PTC and is working to make the deadline.

**g. Operation Lifesaver.**

Miki Krakauer informed the group that September 24-30 is Rail Safety Week; various events are planned; Amtrak police are taking the lead on this. Members should wear **red on September 29** to support rail safety.

**h. Rutgers University.**

Dr. Xiang Liu introduced Zhipeng Zhang, a Ph.D candidate in the railroad engineering program and the new president of the Rutgers Chapter of AREMA (American Railway Engineering and Maintenance of Way Association).

Xiang thanked the Association for the \$2,000 contribution to the Rutgers Chapter earlier this year. The Rutgers Railroad Student Chapter is making good use of this donation to grow this railroad student organization and engaging multidisciplinary students in railroad education and industry outreach. In 2016, NS offered a field trip to its Croxton intermodal facility to the Rutgers AREMA Student Chapter. The student chapter is planning to host a regular railroad seminar, inviting industry professionals to campus and for them to communicate with students.

Xiang has established **two rail engineering courses**, which are “Introduction to Rail Transportation Systems” and “Railroad Track Engineering and Safety.” He plans to offer

a new course related to railroad operations and control (particularly covering Positive Train Control) in 2018.

Xiang would like to have at least four or five railroad courses to give students a better view of the industry. Rutgers is considering the creation of several new “Railway Engineering Lecturer” positions and hiring top (retired) railroad experts to work with Xiang and his colleagues on the expansion of the unique railroad educational portfolio in the region.

Interested industry supporters /collaborators are welcome to contact Xiang Liu via [xiang.liu@rutgers.edu](mailto:xiang.liu@rutgers.edu) or (848)-445-2868.

**i. Art Ivins.**

Art Ivins mentioned the Railway Interchange meeting which was coming up in Indianapolis the week after the NJSLRRA meeting. The jobs of the suppliers depend on the railroads.

**7. New business.**

New business was covered under the previous items.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

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