

**NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**MARCH 24, 2022**

Transcript of Video Recording  
of Proceedings held at NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION  
AUTHORITY, 181 Ellicott Street, Buffalo New York,  
STENOGRAPHICALLY TRANSCRIBED BY LARA K. SENIW, NOTARY PUBLIC.

1 MEMBERS IN THE BOARDROOM:

2 Sister Denise Roche, Chair  
3 Commissioner Michael Hughes, Vice Chair  
4 Commissioner Anthony Baynes  
5 Commissioner Mark Blue  
6 Commissioner Adam Perry

7 OFFICERS IN THE BOARDROOM:

8 Kimberley Minkel, Executive Director  
9 John Cox, Chief Financial Officer

10 STAFF IN THE BOARDROOM:

11 Vicky-Marie Brunette, Deputy General Counsel  
12 Christine D'Aloise, Director, Risk Management and Special Projects  
13 Pat Dalton, Director, Internal Audit  
14 Lyle Death, Director, HSEQ  
15 Steve Duquette, Chief Information Officer  
16 John Fenz, Counsel  
17 Tom George, Director, Public Transit  
18 Darren Kempner, Manager, Government Affairs and Grants  
19 Jim Lavelle, Deputy Director, HSEQ  
20 Karen Novo, Director, Human Resources  
21 Brian Patterson, Chief of Police  
22 Mary Perla, Senior Counsel  
23 Chris Ruminski, Manager, Financial Planning & Analysis  
24 John Schaefer, Director, Engineering  
25 Helen Tederous, Director, Public Affairs  
26 Bill Vanecek, Director, Aviation  
27 Lee Weitz, Deputy Director of Aviation

28 MEMBERS ON THE PHONE:

Commissioner Joan Aul, Treasurer

OFFICERS ABSENT:

David State, General Counsel

CHAIR ROCHE:

Welcome All to our new schedule which is our old schedule [laughter] revisited. We have today our different Committee Meetings and we will take them one (1) at a time. We welcome all people who are here in the room today. It's wonderful to be able to see your faces, and to have you present with us. So, we are going to begin now with the Audit Committee.

MS. BRUNETTE:

Do we do roll call for Audit and Governance, Sister?

CHAIR ROCHE:

Do we do roll call for the meeting?

1 MS. MINKEL: We can.

2 CHAIR ROCHE: OK. Yes. Good. Thank you, Vicky.

3 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Aul? Commissioner Aul?  
4 Commissioner Baynes? Commissioner Blue? Commissioner Downey?  
5 Commissioner Hicks?

6 MR. VANACEK: They're all muted.

7 MS. MINKEL: They're all muted. I think you have to unmute  
8 them all.

9 MS. SENIW: Sorry. Bear with me. I don't have them on, I  
10 don't have them muted, so they have themselves muted on their end.

11 MS. MINKEL: Commissioner Aul? We're gone.

12 MS. SENIW: Alright. Let me do it again.

13 MS. MINKEL: Good morning. We're struggling a bit with  
14 technology so give us a minute.

15 CHAIR ROCHE: [Laughter] It been a while since we've done  
16 this. This is practice. [Laughter]

17 MS. MINKEL: So, good morning. We'll try it again.  
18 Commissioner Aul? Commissioner Downey? Can you hear us?

19 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes, I can Kim.

20 MS. MINKEL: OK. I'm sorry about that. I think we're all  
21 set.

22 COMMISSIONER DOWNEY: Yes, I can hear you.

23 MS. MINKEL: OK. I think we're all set now to go.

24 MS. BRUNETTE: OK. We'll try again. This is the roll call for  
25 attendance for the Audit and Governance Committee Meeting. We know we  
26 had Commissioner Aul. She just spoke to us. Is that correct?

27 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes, thanks Vicky.

28 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Baynes? Commissioner Blue?

1 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Here.

2 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Downey?

3 COMMISSIONER DOWNEY: Here.

4 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Hicks? Commissioner Hughes?

5 Commissioner Perry?

6 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Present.

7 MS. BRUNETTE: Sister Denise?

8 CHAIR ROCHE: Here.

9 MS. BRUNETTE: We know certain people weren't going to be

10 here.

11 MS. MINKEL Right. That's correct.

12 CHAIR ROCHE: Thank you.

13 MS. BRUNETTE: We do not have a quorum but there will be no

14 action items. No action taken so...

15 CHAIR ROCHE: Good. I am going to first ask Patrick Dalton if

16 he will give us an Audit Status Report?

17 MR. DALTON: Thank you, Commissioner. Good morning. I will

18 give the Audit Status Report for the month of March. I will do a brief

19 summary of the audits that are ongoing. SP Plus Corporation is the

20 first one noted on the report starting on page two (2), formerly

21 Standard Parking. The audit is going to entail reviewing all of the

22 expenses associated with that parking operation to determine if they're

23 allowable in accordance with the contract term, basically vouge and

24 confirm that the expenses are legitimate and allowable, an allowable

25 expense against our parking revenues. But that is going to go through

26 the month of June. We'll have that wrapped up on or around that point

27 in time.

28 Next one we're working on is the construction

1 monitoring services, CH2M Hill. It's an engineering type contract, cost  
2 plus fixed fee. The good thing about this particular audit is we're  
3 almost in the wrap up stages. We're waiting for the final invoice on  
4 that particular audit and then once we get the final invoices, then we  
5 can close this audit up and put it to bed. So, that would be good. It's  
6 been ongoing for several years.

7 Next one we're working on is TAC Air. It is strictly  
8 a revenue audit. This is their first full year on their contract. So,  
9 what we like to do on these newer contracts is go in and take a look at  
10 what they have recorded and ensuring that they are reporting it  
11 according to the contract terms. A lot of variety of different revenue  
12 sources on this one and a lot of different percentages. So, it's a  
13 little more complex but that's why we want to take a look at that one.

14 Moving on to page three (3), we have DAL Global  
15 Services. That's a ground handling operation at BNIA. We get five  
16 percent (5%) of gross revenue. So, again the purpose of that particular  
17 audit is ensuring that they are reporting all of their revenue  
18 associated with the ground handling services out there.

19 And finally, the last audit we're currently working  
20 on is JE Architects. Again that is a cost plus fixed fee, an  
21 engineering type of an audit. We're looking at labor and overhead and  
22 currently we're just waiting for the 2021 overhead rates. We expect  
23 them to come in about a month, at the end of this month, from their CPA  
24 firms.

25 And the last item is the Model Governance Principals.  
26 That is our Sarbanes-Oxley testing our, testing our internal controls  
27 and financial reporting. Lumsden & McCormick is our auditor, so our  
28 external auditor has part of our financial statements and we have

1 provided them all of the work that we've done year-to-date on any  
2 particular audit. And what they do is they do an attestation report as  
3 part of our overall financial statement package.

4 Finally on the last page, we have our Corporate  
5 Compliance item. That is the Five (5) Year Capital and Operating Plan.  
6 That's going to be up, that's actually currently being uploaded into  
7 PARIS and it's almost in a wrap. So basically that's required per  
8 Public Authorities Law, we have to provide that information to the  
9 State of New York as well as others and the PARIS System, that's the  
10 Public Authorities Reporting Information System which provides that  
11 mechanism for that reporting and we will do that certification either  
12 tomorrow or today. And it's due tomorrow, so one of those days, we will  
13 push the button and get that certified and uploaded into New York  
14 State. So we will be in compliance with that particular reporting  
15 requirement. That's the Audit Status Report for the month of March.

16 CHAIR ROCHE: Thank you very much. Any questions of Patrick?  
17 Good work.

18 MR. DALTON: Thank you.

19 CHAIR ROCHE: And now our performance, Chris Ruminski.

20 MR. RUMINSKI: Good morning, Commissioners.

21 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Good morning.

22 MR. RUMINSKI: We'll start with the February and year-to-date  
23 performance beginning with February. Overall we had a positive budget  
24 variance for the month at \$1.4 million dollars as the result of an  
25 actual surplus of \$937,000.00 compared to the budget deficit for the  
26 month of \$477,000.00. We had higher than budgeted operating revenues  
27 and assistance of \$2.7 million dollars for February. The highlights of  
28 that are Metro passenger fares were \$513,000.00 favorable to budget for

1 the month, BNIA concessions and commissions revenue is \$803,000.00  
2 favorable as enplanements were about forty percent (40%) higher than we  
3 had forecasted for the month. And mortgage and sales tax revenue  
4 combined was about \$900, oh excuse me, about \$898,000.00 favorable to  
5 the budget for the month of February. We also had lower than budgeted  
6 operating expenses with a favorable variance of \$1.2 million dollars.  
7 This is mostly related to personnel, which had a \$1.3 million dollar  
8 favorable variance. And that is due to Metro having a positive variance  
9 due to service modifications, and vacancies and also lower central  
10 administrative overtime costs. Utilities for the month were \$156,000.00  
11 unfavorable and that's primarily due to higher electric billing across  
12 all business centers for the month. And insurance and injuries were  
13 favorable to budget by \$108,000.00 as there were lower than anticipated  
14 Metro claim loss reserve appropriations and insurance premiums. And  
15 finally non-operating and capital items were about \$2.6 million dollar  
16 unfavorable to budget and we are continuing to use the better than  
17 anticipated Metro results to fund our reserves at a faster pace than we  
18 originally budgeted for, for the year. Moving on to the year-to-date,  
19 uh, excuse me. Is there any questions on the February performance  
20 before I move on?

21 CHAIR ROCHE: Everybody's good?

22 MR. RUMINSKI: Year-to-date, we have a favorable variance of  
23 \$20 million dollars. That's the result of a \$3 million surplus for the  
24 year compared to the budget deficit of \$17 million dollars. Our  
25 operating revenues are \$13.5 million dollars favorable to budget for  
26 the year. That's primarily due to higher concessions and commissions  
27 revenue at the BNIA as enplanement numbers have recovered much sooner  
28 than we anticipated when we created this budget. Also operating

1 assistance is favorable to budget due to higher-than-expected mortgage  
2 tax revenue, sales tax revenue and STOA revenue, and we also had lower  
3 than budgeted Metro operating expenses throughout the year.  
4 And you can see on the next slide, breaking down the business centers'  
5 year-to-date performance and that the positive variance is primarily  
6 due to BNIA and Metro. BNIA is \$8.5 million dollar favorable to budget  
7 for the year due to higher than anticipated enplanements of about  
8 fifty-nine percent (59%) and that has led to concessions and  
9 commissions revenue to be about sixty percent (60%) favorable to budget  
10 for the year. And Metro is \$11 million favorable to budget for the year  
11 due to favorable variances in fare revenue, STOA, mortgage and sales  
12 tax revenue as well as operating expenses being about nine percent (9%)  
13 below budget for the year. Are there any questions relating to the  
14 year-to-date performance?

15                   Alright. One last report. The Cash Management Report  
16 for the year, oh, excuse me, at the end of February, we had \$221  
17 million dollars on hand which is about \$43 million dollars ahead of  
18 budget, or ahead of budget due to Federal COVID relief funds that have  
19 been received but not yet recognized as revenue in the budget, higher  
20 BNIA concessions and commissions revenue, New York State Transit  
21 Operating Assistance, mortgage and sales tax revenue along with lower  
22 operating expenses Authority-wide. So, we're in a strong position right  
23 now with cash.

24 CHAIR ROCHE:                   Thank you very much Chris. Any questions at all  
25 for Chris? That's a good report.

26 MR. RUMINSKI:                   Thank you.

27 CHAIR ROCHE:                   And the next, the discussion items, John Cox?

28 MR. COX:                        Yes. Good morning, Commissioners. So we



1 originally, if we could flip to the next page here, so we originally  
2 came to you in December with our preliminary budget. We're now in the  
3 final phases of, we have a budget for your consideration later on today  
4 at the Regular Board Meeting. We're now at the blue line. We've just  
5 got these last few final steps as Pat Dalton mentioned. We'll finish it  
6 up, the budget. We'll send it to the State in March and of course the  
7 new fiscal year begins on April 1<sup>st</sup>. And I'll just go over some of the,  
8 if we can flip to the next page please, I'll just go over some of the  
9 major changes that we made from the budget that we brought you in  
10 December to what we're actually bringing for your consideration later  
11 on today. As you can see, the original budget we brought you was a  
12 total operating revenue assistance was \$287, \$288 million dollar budget  
13 in revenues and assistance which of course support all of our expenses,  
14 our capital expenditures, everything that you see below there. Now if  
15 you shift over to the last column, you'll see the final budget, it's  
16 now a \$360 million dollar budget approximately so overall, that's about  
17 a \$72 million dollar increase from the prior original budget that we  
18 brought to you. I will go into more detail to explain why there's that  
19 significant change from what we first brought you to what we're  
20 bringing you today. If we can shift to the next page, OK, so, here we  
21 have, as we're required by New York State, the requirement is that we  
22 pass a balanced budget so that means that of course our revenues  
23 support all of our expenditures and you ultimately have to come to a  
24 zero (0) bottom line. So at the top, you see BNIA, you can see the  
25 final budget there. BNIA is anticipated to approximately a \$4.5 million  
26 dollar surplus. That surplus then goes to offset NFIA's loss which we  
27 anticipate to be, essentially, \$4.5 million dollars. So, that brings us  
28 to a balanced budget within the aviation group because the airports

1 operate as a unit. Now if you move on to Metro, Metro you see that  
2 there's an approximate \$3.2 million dollar surplus that we're  
3 anticipating and of course that surplus goes to offset the  
4 transportation centers. That's this building downstairs, you've got the  
5 Niagara Falls center, you've got the center down in West Seneca and all  
6 of the, and also Niagara Street, and all of those other transit  
7 centers, that are located out, throughout the city and throughout our  
8 service area. So again, you know, you have a balanced budget. Now, then  
9 you have the two (2) other, the small areas, which is you've got  
10 Property Development, they have a balanced budget so their anticipated  
11 revenues will offset their expenditures as we have budgeted. And then,  
12 of course, the NFTA combined when you bring it all together, that zero  
13 (0) shows that ultimately, we have a balanced budget. If we can move on  
14 to page ten (10) please?

15 OK, so on an Operating Assistance and overall  
16 revenues, for this budget just some of the key items... Metro base fares  
17 still remain the same at \$2.00. Those have not increased since May of  
18 2012. We're budgeting a \$4.1 million dollar increase in fare revenues  
19 from fiscal year 2022 as we anticipate further recovery and of course  
20 ridership on the Metro system. New York State Operating Assistance, we  
21 have that going up \$7.7 million dollars or approximately \$13 million  
22 dollars and that's based on the Executive Budget that was passed. And  
23 so that's, you know, so that's certainly greatly appreciated and  
24 something that, you know, we need to support the service that we put  
25 out there on the street. And it's not included in here, but since then,  
26 there's also been two (2) proposals from the Assembly and also for the  
27 Senate, they're talking about instead of us getting as the Executive  
28 Budget proposed about \$67 million, they proposed approximately \$81

1 million. So, that, you know, that would be, those two (2) proposals  
2 would be approximately thirty-six percent (36%). I think it's  
3 important. Not... Those are significant amounts and those will make a big  
4 difference for us, but I think it's also important to keep those in  
5 perspective because you have to look at the overall costs that are  
6 associated with Metro. So, excluding, you know, any kind of CARES Act  
7 funding, if I just take what it takes for Metro to operate, and that's  
8 approximately \$160 million dollars in operating revenues that need to  
9 be generated so to support the expenses to operate. The Executive  
10 Budget is five percent (5%) of that overall cost for revenues that we  
11 need to support those expenses. And the thirty-six percent (36%)  
12 increase is approximately, both of those other, the Assembly and the  
13 Senate proposals are approximately fourteen percent (14%). Now, I'm  
14 just saying that, you know, certainly, you know, those are significant  
15 amounts, but I just want it to be put in perspective, so you consider  
16 the whole, the entire operations of Metro so that you can understand  
17 kind of the scale of what that means as far as the expenses that Metro  
18 has and the amount of revenues and assistance that are required to  
19 operate the Metro operations, and the bus and the rail and everything  
20 associated with it.

21 OK, so from there, we have a, as I mentioned the  
22 operating, the main driver of that increase, that \$68 million dollar  
23 increase that you see, oh, we're on the next.

24 MR. RUMINKSI: Can we go back two slides?

25 MR. COX: Can we go back two slides?

26 MR. RUMINKSI: One more.

27 MR. COX: Yeah. Oh, one more.

28 MS. SENIW: Gotcha.

1 MR. RUMINKSI: There.

2 MR. COX: Is that? OK. Yup. OK. So, if you see the  
3 variance there, the \$60, approximately the \$69 million dollars, just to  
4 give you some information on that. That operating assistance increase  
5 is due mainly to a \$2.2 million dollar increase in anticipated STOA and  
6 of course, that reflects the increase that we, that we're anticipating  
7 from the Executive Budget. Again, the Assembly and Senate proposals are  
8 not included in there. We have increases in sales tax of approximately  
9 \$3.4 million and mortgage tax going up about \$4.1 million. And also a  
10 increase in our COVID relief funds we budgeted, that has increased  
11 about \$62 million dollars and that's of course to, for ongoing erosion  
12 of passenger fares because typically our passenger fares, during pre-  
13 COVID ran in the \$35 million dollar area. We're looking at, you know,  
14 approximately \$25 to \$26 million dollars. So, there's about a \$10  
15 million dollar difference from pre-COVID to where we are now. Of  
16 course, we do, we are anticipating improvements but, you know, we're  
17 still not quite back where we were. We still have a ways to go. So that  
18 additional for the erosion of passenger fares and also, another item,  
19 that we had a number on and we had, you know, we at least, we have a  
20 pretty good, a solid estimate is, is for mandated capital projects. As  
21 you're aware, there's a big push to transition to battery electric  
22 buses and to make that transition to battery electric buses, we've  
23 gotten an estimate for the big buses of about \$390 million dollars is  
24 the cost associated with that, approximately another \$60 million for  
25 paratransit. So, that's why you see that big increase in the use of  
26 COVID relief funds because we're anticipating, you know, those capital  
27 costs. Because the mandate is that by 2025, we have to be twenty-five  
28 percent (25%) towards or twenty-five percent (25%) battery electric

1 buses and then by 2035 the mandate is, and this is by the end of those  
2 years, at 100%. So, not insignificant costs but you know, there are  
3 certainly, you know, important things that we need to do. And the one  
4 final item that is included there is using the COVID Relief funds that  
5 the airports received and using that for debt service and that allows  
6 us to meet a certain requirement that we have to satisfy as a covenant  
7 contained with our budget documents and it keeps us, it's just to make  
8 sure that the assurance to the bond holders that we're able to repay.  
9 So, we have to make sure our revenues exceed our expenses by a certain  
10 amount and so we're using those to meet that requirement while we've  
11 been depressed.

12 MR. VANACEK: And John, that goes to offset airline costs  
13 because the debt service is billed to the airlines.

14 MR. COX: That is correct. And, and, well, that is true,  
15 and it also avoids any additional billing that we may have to make to  
16 the airlines because within our agreements with them, it contains that  
17 they will get us to that ratio of revenues over expenses. So, this  
18 avoids that having to occur because it would've, it would've had to  
19 occur in, in certainly in '21 and '22 if we didn't have the COVID  
20 funding. So, moving on from there, the BNIA, we have the enplanements,  
21 we have those increasing, approximately 160% so that would be the  
22 estimate was about a million enplanements in 2022. We're looking at  
23 about 2.5 million. We have, so we'll anticipate concession and  
24 commission revenues at the airport going up about \$14 million dollars.  
25 We also anticipate, because of that higher activity, additional  
26 billings to the airlines. That's looking at an increase of  
27 approximately \$5 million dollars to the airlines.

28 At NFIA, we're seeing significant increases again in

1 enplanements, 170%, going from about 30,000 enplanements in '22 to  
2 approximately 74,000 in '23. We have personnel increases. Those  
3 increases, if I can just touch on those, it's anything as far as  
4 contractual increases are included there, also increases for non-reps  
5 and also amounts are included there for anything that we're in the  
6 process of negotiating so we have funds available for that too. And  
7 before I move on from that, I just want to say, also within this  
8 budget, I know we mentioned this back in December, but I just want to  
9 reiterate it, this also includes new positions. We have purchasing, we  
10 are adding an entry level buyer, engineering, a bus shelter technician,  
11 HSEQ, an additional safety manager, a Chief Technology Officer, a Chief  
12 Records Officer, a Deputy Police Chief, and BNIA is looking to add a  
13 four (4) assistant air terminal superintendents and Metro has a  
14 maintenance planner for rail. And the last item there is our diesel  
15 budgeted fuel. In 2022, we had our average price at about \$2.16. Right  
16 now, we've budgeted at \$2.81, so it is an increase but as you've seen,  
17 the price of oil has essentially doubled over the last twelve (12)  
18 months and at this point, we don't have any locked in amounts for the  
19 fuel. So, that's, those are all the major changes that are in this  
20 budget from what we brought you from December. And if you have any  
21 questions, I can certainly, before I move on to the five-year, I can  
22 certainly address those now.

23 COMMISSIONER TUCKER: I have a question.

24 MR. COX: Sure.

25 COMMISSIONER TUCKER: So this budget is projected with us being fully  
26 manned with any type of contractual increases that may happen, so it's  
27 already taken care of?

28 MR. COX: Yes, we have those funds in there to fully

1 operate. It's the, so yes, to answer your question very simply, yes.

2 COMMISSIONER AUL: Hey, John?

3 MR. COX: Yes.

4 COMMISSIONER AUL: John, it's Joan Aul. Good morning.

5 MR. COX: Good morning, Joan.

6 COMMISSIONER AUL: Just a quick question. So the positions that

7 you outlined, all of those positions that you mentioned, those are all

8 new?

9 MR. COX: That is correct.

10 MR. RUMINSKI: No, no, no. Joan. Those were in the budget that

11 we presented..

12 MS. MINKEL: In December.

13 MR. RUMINSKI: In December. John was just reiterating them.

14 MR. COX: Right. But they're new from the prior budget

15 from 2022.

16 COMMISSIONER AUL: OK. OK.

17 MR. COX: But we did, they're not new since December,

18 just to clarify.

19 COMMISSIONER AUL: Got it. Thank you.

20 CHAIR ROCHE: Would you tell us once again about the new

21 electric buses?

22 MR. COX: Oh, sure. I can actually, I plan to address

23 that more in depth during the, when we go to the five-year but..

24 CHAIR ROCHE: OK.

25 MR. COX: ...but the, but, just, again to reiterate the

26 cost, we have an estimate for the large buses of approximately \$390

27 million dollars. That would be, and it's scheduled out, you'll see that

28 in the five-year. We'll look at that next, and it's scheduled out, that

1 we need to be at twenty-five percent (25%) of our fleet by 2025, the  
2 end of it, and 100% of our fleet by 2035. And, and then there's the, an  
3 additional cost that, if you just um... So overall the additional cost is  
4 approximately \$60 million for paratransit for that, that same process.  
5 So in total about \$450 million is our current estimate. Now of course,  
6 you know, supply chain, all of those things, if those aren't resolved,  
7 demand, because everybody's trying to move to this, whether materials  
8 are available, whether they can build them fast enough, not that these  
9 won't, this won't happen, it's that, you know, they may be delayed or  
10 it may, it may accelerate. But, you know, but at this point, those are  
11 all things that are certainly, you know, over the next, what, twelve  
12 (12) years that'll, that'll, that'll play out.

13 CHAIR ROCHE: Thank you. Any other questions for John? OK.

14 Take us forward.

15 MR. COX: OK. If we could move forward to the five-year?

16 Oops.

17 MS. SENIW: Gotta go back one?

18 MR. COX: Back one, yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER AUL: John, are you on page ten (10) or heading to  
20 that page?

21 MR. COX: Yes, we are headed to page ten (10). Laughter.

22 MS. MINKEL: Thank you.

23 MR. COX: Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER AUL: OK.

25 MR. COX: So, again you see here, we have, this is just  
26 everything put together in total. This year looking at \$360 million  
27 dollar budget and then in out years, as we make these transitions,  
28 going forward and also operate and all of our originally planned



1 capital projects are all included there. If you look, we're \$36  
2 million, I mean \$360 million, that is a little bit different  
3 [laughter], \$350 million or \$351, \$330, \$337, \$336 [million]  
4 approximately. Of course, timing will shift those numbers around but  
5 that's at a top, top level look of what the five-year projection is  
6 going out, you know, that's what our current projections are. Of  
7 course, the first year being the budget, and then the four (4) out  
8 years of projections. If we can move forward one button, uh, one page?

9 Again, it's same as before, we're planning for a  
10 budget, a balanced budget, so again in this process, we put together a  
11 balanced budget. So, again you can see BNIA, NFIA, the Aviation and  
12 then the Surface and then Property Development and then the total  
13 combined at the bottom. So, we've balanced this budget. Of course based  
14 on some, some assumptions that will go on, we'll go into once we go on  
15 to the next page, please.

16 OK. So, if you look, the first line here is the  
17 fiscal year 2023 budget. That is, you know, what's starting here on  
18 April 1<sup>st</sup>. So, again, that is a \$360 million dollars budget. Then if you  
19 move to fiscal year 2024, if you look just above the total operating  
20 assistance, we have additional operating and capital assistance. And  
21 this is something we've regularly included in our five-year plan. Now  
22 as I mentioned, the current capital needs and also that transition to  
23 battery electric vehicles, you can see, you know, next year, fiscal  
24 year '24 we're anticipating a need for approximately \$89 million  
25 dollars in additional operating or capital assistance and as we go out  
26 it's \$73 million, \$72 million, approximately \$65 million [dollars]. And  
27 it's important to put it into perspective. It's certainly important  
28 that we do this but it's going to need significant investment to meet

1 those mandated times as far as when we hit, when we get to fully  
2 battery, fully, full use of battery electric buses within the system.

3 MS. MINKEL: So, if I could just state it a little bit  
4 differently... We're required to have a balanced five-year operating and  
5 capital investment plan which we have provided today. But that  
6 additional operating and capital assistance, without that, that would  
7 be the deficit in order to have the balanced plan so if you look in the  
8 out years, because of the need to move to battery electric buses which  
9 we support, it's the right thing to do, for the community and for the  
10 organization, those deficits that are looming in out years, next year,  
11 \$88 million, the following year \$73 million, \$72 million [dollars] are  
12 pretty significant for the agency. So, we'll be pushing for additional  
13 funds on the state, local and federal level to help cover those  
14 deficits going forward.

15 MR. COX: OK. If we can move on to the next page. So,  
16 here are the expenses associated with that. So, again, we have at the  
17 top line, we have the personnel services, as you can see, we are  
18 anticipating, of course, an increase in those costs going out. That  
19 would be, you know, wages, retirement, health insurance, all of those  
20 items. That's what's included in there. Then maintenance and repairs,  
21 of course, you know, you'll see that in all these lines here, as the  
22 year goes on, of course, everything gets a little more expensive every  
23 year so we've put in additional increases in those costs, going out  
24 into future years. So, on the expense side, of course, we have  
25 represented and non-represented salaries based on our contractual  
26 agreements in our recent proposals, we have the assumption on health  
27 insurance, that's increasing five percent (5%) annually and that's  
28 based on recent trends. We have Workers' Compensation increasing

1 annually, about ten percent (10%). The Metro transit fuel power  
2 increasing annually, about three percent (3%) and then other expenses  
3 are varying based on various trends and outlooks.

4 Now, if we can go to the next page, it will be, we're  
5 on to our non-operating items and with that we have the NORESCO, one of  
6 the, some of the major things that will be occurring within here, in  
7 this current budget year that we're about to start, we have our NORESCO  
8 debt service. That will be going away. That's actually, we did energy  
9 efficient projects at the airport, better lighting out in all of our  
10 garages, and also some HVAC work here, and some various things that we  
11 did to bar-off that we then used to increase the efficiency of our  
12 operations. And starting in fiscal year '24, we have Metro capital  
13 increasing approximately \$12 million dollars and that includes again  
14 electric bus deployments, some bus lift rebuilds and replacements and  
15 garage roof design and construction. We have BNIA capital decreasing  
16 and that's primarily due to completion of some various projects of  
17 course the improvement, the Airport Improvement Project, and also we  
18 have purchased some, we won't be purchasing as much IT software and we  
19 had a bucket truck that was purchased in fiscal year 2023. In, at NFIA,  
20 we included Seneca proceeds and those go through September of 2020, of  
21 2023. And Property Development has a increase of approximately  
22 \$750,000.00 in capital as a result of new elevators and some, and a  
23 pond liner project at 485 Cayuga. In, a significant item in there is  
24 debt service, BNIA bond debt service will decrease approximately \$5.4  
25 million or thirty percent (30%) in fiscal year '22 and that's as we  
26 make the final payment on our refinance series 2004 bonds and the final  
27 payment will actually occur in fiscal year '24. BNIA PFC funding for  
28 debt service will increase as the funds that we got from COVID relief

1 are no longer available, so we need to shift back to PFC funding. We  
2 have NFIA capital increasing in fiscal year '26. That's approximately  
3 \$400,000.00 and that's due to parking lot revenue control construction  
4 costs. We have the transportation centers in fiscal year '27, an  
5 increase of approximately \$1 million dollars, and again, that's  
6 further, as we've, as John has mentioned, you know, we were doing the  
7 panel liner rehabs. This is the next phase of doing the panel liner  
8 rehabs. And the final item is, we do with interest rates, of course  
9 increasing, we do see that interest will probably be increasing  
10 approximately from about \$250,000.00 to \$350,000.00 on an ongoing  
11 basis. And, of course, those deficits that you see, as Kim did mention,  
12 those are mitigated by the continued efforts to seek additional revenue  
13 sources, operating assistance, and whether it's at the federal, state  
14 or local level. And that concludes the review of the five-year.  
15 Certainly if there are any questions?

16 CHAIR ROCHE: Any questions for John? Lot of work to put that  
17 together and the numbers just keep shifting. [Laughter.] And that, this  
18 gets sent in as well on that report that we, John?

19 MR. COX: That is correct. Yes, this is part of the  
20 complete package that we send into New York State.

21 CHAIR ROCHE: Good. Any other questions? Thank you very much.  
22 This is great. And now the Safety Report.

23 MR. DEATH: Thank you, Sister. Good morning, Commissioners.  
24 I'll do a quick review of the February Safety results. During the month  
25 of February, there were two (2) recordable injuries, both of those  
26 resulting in lost work time with a total of 30 days away from work. The  
27 injured employees were one (1) bus operator and one (1) rail  
28 maintenance employee. One injury due to a vehicle accident, it's been

1 referred to the accident review committee, and the other was a fall  
2 when exiting a vehicle that was positioned on a maintenance lift. When  
3 compared to the previous year in February, there have been three (3)  
4 less recordable injuries, three (3) less lost workday cases and eighty-  
5 two (82) fewer days away. So, just some quick comments: our employees  
6 have started out the year with excellent safety performance, with the,  
7 if you remember, the tough winter in January and February. They were  
8 building on the best performance they've delivered in 2021. So, just a  
9 few highlights, year-to-date there have been zero (0) injuries for the  
10 following work units: all of Aviation, so all of the employees at  
11 Niagara Falls and Buffalo Airport, no injuries, all of bus maintenance  
12 and shops, two (2) out of the three (3) of our bus stations, all of  
13 Paratransit, our Facilities Maintenance Department and our MTC and  
14 Transportation Center Facilities Maintenance Group. Also year-to-date  
15 preventable vehicle accidents are down by fifteen percent (15%) and  
16 Paratransit has zero (0) preventable vehicle accidents. So, again,  
17 great start by our employees across the board. That concludes the  
18 Safety Report unless there are any questions?

19 CHAIR ROCHE: That's a wonderful report. [laughter]

20 MR. DEATH: Great start by our employees. OK. Thank you.

21 CHAIR ROCHE: Any questions? And Governor, Government  
22 Affairs, and Darren's up?

23 MR. KEMPNER: Good morning.

24 CHAIR ROCHE: Exciting update.

25 MR. KEMPNER: Just wanted to give a brief update on the State  
26 budget process and then a couple of Federal Grant awards that were  
27 received recently. So on this slide, we're on page fifty-seven (57) in  
28 the report and this slide in your packet, I've listed the actual budget

1 amounts from 2021-22 and then the proposed budget from 2022-23. State  
2 Transit Operating Assistance in the two (2) one house Budgets was a  
3 proposed increase by thirty-six percent (36%) year-over-year. This was  
4 primarily to address what was seen as an inequitable downstate upstate  
5 non-MTA amount. Downstate had received an increase of thirty-six  
6 percent (36%) in the Executive Budget so this thirty-six percent (36%)  
7 increase for upstate non-MTA matches that amount for the upstate  
8 Authorities. And as John mentioned before, that increase, that thirty-  
9 six percent (36%) increase is about fourteen percent (14%) of our non-  
10 COVID relief fund, revenue for Metro. The capital programs as in the  
11 past and in the current year, all remain consistent save for a doubling  
12 of the Assembly one house budget bill, and these are critical programs  
13 to continue our capital investment. And then at, I just note at the  
14 bottom, two (2) additional programs that were included in the one house  
15 budgets and not in the Executive Budget are On-Demand Transit Grants,  
16 which was basically put in for an on-demand transit across non-MTA  
17 areas, and then a Paratransit Expansion amount in the Senate Budget.

18 And then, final item, for Federal Government Affairs,  
19 there were four (4) recent grants awards to note. Approximately \$5  
20 million [dollars] in a competitive grant that we applied for the bus  
21 facilities program that will support ten (10) new battery electric  
22 buses and ten (10) chargers for those buses. And there were about  
23 seventy (70) awards across the country, two (2) in New York State and  
24 we were one (1) of those two (2), so that was exciting to receive that.  
25 And then under the recent omnibus bill that was signed at the Federal  
26 level, we are, we've been allocated \$2 million [dollars] for a DL&W  
27 skywalk, \$1.76 million [dollars] for another ten (10) battery electric  
28 bus chargers and \$1 million [dollars] for Riverwalk improvements along

1 the DL&W terminal, yard and shops. That concludes my report.

2 CHAIR ROCHE: Excellent.

3 MS. MINKEL: So Darren went over it quickly and he was  
4 modest, but the grant award where there were only two (2) in New York  
5 State, really was the excellent work of Darren and his group in  
6 submitting that grant, and because there was a lot of applications that  
7 went in across the nation so, thank you Darren.

8 MR. KEMPNER: I'll be back next month to talk about a lot  
9 more applications that we're working on right now.

10 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

11 CHAIR ROCHE: Keep that pencil going. Thank you.

12 MR. KEMPNER: Thank you.

13 CHAIR ROCHE: And Public Affairs, Helen.

14 MS. TEDEROUS: Good morning, Sister. Good morning,  
15 Commissioners.

16 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Good morning.

17 MS. TEDEROUS: The February Public Affairs report includes  
18 forty-one (41) media mentions. We had a very busy month in February,  
19 which included the storm, big storms, and affected our service both at  
20 the airport and bus and rail. We also had the announcement on the  
21 temporary reductions in service with Metro which did create quite a bit  
22 of media interest. We also some really positive news as well, with the  
23 "Good Morning Buffalo", the new fleet of snowplows at the airport and  
24 also our Black Excellence Artwork displayed on one (1) of our buses,  
25 two (2) of our buses rather which received quite a bit of social media  
26 coverage and positive coverage for us. It was a very busy month indeed.  
27 Our business centers, NFTA, led our coverage followed by Police,  
28 Buffalo Airport and Metro Bus. TV led our coverage with twenty-two (22)

1 and we had some top trending stories. WGRZ was our top media outlet,  
2 and there are our most popular days. As I mentioned, there was quite a  
3 bit of publicity in the month of February in the monetary value of  
4 about \$900,000.00. You can see the mentions as they appeared in  
5 different outlets. We sent out a number of media advisories, including  
6 our February Board Meeting, the winning award for the Black History  
7 Month was unveiled and internally we finished ten (10) Creative Service  
8 jobs. And, I wanted to share the pictures, this is just a really  
9 wonderful project and I want to make sure that everyone gets credit. We  
10 worked collaboratively with the Metro Team again during an incredibly  
11 busy time. Crystal Edwards and our Customer Service Department really  
12 led this. She really wanted to do something very unique and wonderful  
13 and impactful for Black History Month and certainly we did. We worked  
14 and we had a contest with local artists and the work was just so  
15 beautiful and that work is going to be on two (2) buses. And it was  
16 just wonderful when the young artist, Monet Kifner, and she was named  
17 after Monet, so, that's how I remember [laughter]...

18 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

19 MS. TEDEROUS: ...when she spoke, it was just wonderful  
20 and just very heartwarming, and she came to Cold Springs and we  
21 unveiled her beautiful artwork which is downstairs. When you get off  
22 the elevator, just turn to your right and you'll see we created a mural  
23 for that work, so people can come in and see that. And this is the  
24 first time that we did that. And it really received a tremendous amount  
25 of positive, not only publicity, but really goodwill in the community.  
26 And that's my report. Does anyone have any questions?

27 CHAIR ROCHE: Any questions for Helen? Thank you very much.

28 MS. TEDEROUS: Thank you.



1 CHAIR ROCHE: And that concludes the meeting of the Audit,  
2 Governance and Finance Committee for March 24<sup>th</sup>. And we will turn now  
3 to...

4 MS. MINKEL: We need to hold on a minute and stop the clock...

5 CHAIR ROCHE: Oh, that's right. Then we can...

6 MS. MINKEL: Yup.

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8 CHAIR ROCHE: We're now ready to begin the Aviation Committee  
9 for March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022. And I am going to call on Commissioner [laughter]  
10 Perry to take us through the report please.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thank you, Sister. We're going to begin,  
12 because he's back, we're going to begin with the Airport Improvement  
13 Project Status Report and Mr. Schaefer.

14 MR. SCHAEFER: Thank you, Commissioner Perry. Good morning,  
15 Commissioners. A little less exciting, no photos this time...

16 CHAIR ROCHE: Laughter.

17 MR. SCHAEFER: ...just me droning on some of the high points.

18 CHAIR ROCHE: Laughter.

19 MR. SCHAEFER: At the Buffalo Airport Terminal Expansion  
20 Project. We have a few remaining items, they're mostly punch list  
21 items, as-builts. One notable one is the solar array, that's the solar  
22 panels on the west expansion roof, that's some weather dependent work.  
23 We expect it to be done by early May.  
24 Buell Avenue project, that's the Buell Avenue parking  
25 lot, this month we're asking the Board's approval to Change Order Two  
26 (2), the second change order for this contract. That's for the removal  
27 of organic soils, 2,350 cubic feet of organic soils. This needs to be  
28 removed because it's a, organics have a tendency to settle at different

1 rates. They breakdown, which means there will be no structural  
2 integrity which would show up in parking lot B, uneven pavement so the  
3 change order you'll see at the General Board Meeting is just to correct  
4 that situation.

5 Runway 5/23, last month we talked about the pavement  
6 study which recommended a pavement rehab supported by the FAA. So this  
7 month we do have a construction contract, and a construction minor in  
8 design support. The contract is with Union Concrete and DiDonato  
9 Associates respectively, to rehabilitate generally speaking three-  
10 quarters of that runway because that is what fits in our budget, so  
11 that's what's coming to the Board this month. To round out the picture,  
12 what's happening with the rest of the runway, the findings, to remind  
13 you what I talked about last month, that's being put through with FAA,  
14 to see if we can get them to agree to the scope, and maybe get some  
15 funding involved. So this will take predominantly over three-quarters  
16 of the way down the runway and we're still pursuing the rest.

17 CHAIR ROCHE: That's good.

18 MR. SCHAEFER: And out at Niagara, out in Niagara Falls,  
19 taxiway D rehab, so we have a notice to proceed, we'll call it notice  
20 to proceed one (1), that's with Edbauer Construction for administrative  
21 work. This will be submittals and getting their submittals  
22 predominantly prioritizing long lead items. We expect to do a notice to  
23 proceed two (2), this will be in April, for the actual construction on  
24 the job site. A little bit of jargon it may hard to keep up with is  
25 notice to proceed one (1), versus notice to proceed two (2). We are  
26 finding opportunities given the state of affairs, with availability of  
27 materials, the whole supply chain or whether materials ,or whatever the  
28 reason is for not showing up on time on projects, we're finding more

1 and more opportunities, working with the contractor, we get their  
2 feedback, what are the long lead items, usually they were obvious to  
3 us, we find that sometimes they're not so obvious, in the current state  
4 of affairs, so we give the contractor the opportunity to say what is  
5 long lead items in your eyes, and we'll see if we can accommodate by  
6 giving you an early NTP that won't count against your long term  
7 schedule. It gives them a head start. I say finding the right  
8 opportunities isn't always cut and dry, we may not always have an  
9 opportunity to fund a piece, this is one where we'll be able to do  
10 that. We'll have them started before we put them on the clock to  
11 complete construction. And that concludes unless anyone has a question?

12 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, for the taxiway rehab and the new fencing  
13 on the newly acquired land, are those projects, does NFTA fund those  
14 all on their own? Or are those costs shared with the Air Base?

15 MR. SCHAEFER: Those are all on our own with FAA support on,  
16 on...

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: With FAA support...

18 MR. SCHAEFER: With FAA support, but nothing with the Air  
19 Base.

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Great. Thank you. Any other questions? Hearing  
21 none, moving on to the Aviation Business Group with Mr. Vanecek.

22 MR. VANACEK: Great. Before we get to the slide, just  
23 quickly, I'll give you an idea on how we are doing on a financial  
24 basis. Our operating revenues for February 2022 versus February 2021  
25 are \$914,000.00 favorable at twenty-two percent (22%) and year-to-date  
26 our variance was \$4.6 million or \$157,000.00 favorable to prior year.  
27 Obviously, this is driven by higher enplanements and by higher parking  
28 revenue predominantly.

1 Moving into the slide, discussions items that we  
2 have, when they are up, alright, so here we go. We have February 2022  
3 enplanement numbers, and what's notable here is that we had a 173%  
4 increase year-over-year. It sounds huge but again we were comparing  
5 ourselves to the down years before but when you look at 2020, which was  
6 the last normalized month before the pandemic hit our airport, we're  
7 only down twenty-three percent (23%) from that, so we're rebounding  
8 nicely and hopefully that will continue, and I think it will. When you  
9 look at what's happening in our parking lots, it's just amazing to see  
10 how full they are. We're in the economy lot and that is starting to  
11 fill up as well. And I think the news that came out with respect to the  
12 Canadian border is going to help us tremendously, tremendously as well.  
13 You no longer have to get the \$250.00 PCR test to go back and forth  
14 across the border, which is great news. All you have to do as you're  
15 coming back and forth you just have to show proof of your vaccination,  
16 which is great. So, if you are an international traveler, though you  
17 still have to do some sort of PCR testing. So, but good news there.  
18 With respect to Niagara Falls, you'll see the numbers here and you'll  
19 see it's a down year, we're up year-over-year with our enplanement  
20 numbers but again we don't have the Spirit flights so it's tough to  
21 kind of balance to see exactly how we are doing. But we're down fifty-  
22 nine percent (59%) down versus 2020 and again that is predominantly due  
23 to the fact that we don't have Spirit flying out of the airport right  
24 now. They just started some flights or are starting some flights now...

25 MR. WEITZ: April 1<sup>st</sup>.

26 MR. VANECEK: They're starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, so they'll come back  
27 but on a limited basis. The next on the slide here, I want to show you  
28 on the bottom one right here, if you combine the year-to-date

1 percentage change in parking revenues at BNIA, we're about \$11 million  
2 dollars now in revenues, which is tremendous, and is really filling our  
3 coffers and we're very happy to see that we're getting those cars  
4 coming back. Next slide please...

5 Here's some good news. Frontier is operating to  
6 Cancun, Mexico. They started on March seventh (7<sup>th</sup>). They operate  
7 Monday, Wednesday and Friday and will go through the end of April. So,  
8 you know, the first flight that came in was close to an empty plane,  
9 but the planes have been going out close to full after that. So, we're  
10 happy that that is being successful. They also announced in March that  
11 they're going to have non-stop Dallas-Fort Worth service. That starts  
12 on the twenty-sixth (26<sup>th</sup>) of May and they'll offer it on Tuesday,  
13 Thursday and Sunday and DFW is also served by American Airlines so we  
14 have a lot of good connections going through the DFW hub to get to the  
15 western destinations. And then non-stop service will start on May 27<sup>th</sup>  
16 by, again, by Frontier and they'll operate it Monday, Wednesday and  
17 Friday and again Atlanta is a big service provider to Atlanta. Those  
18 are two (2) of our major markets so we're happy to see that we have  
19 that. Next, wanted to introduce our new team member for our airport, a  
20 lawyer position, which is John Fenz. John, stand up because you're  
21 here, but you're also here. Whichever one you want to look at...

22 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

23 MR. VANECEK: John, you want to tell us a little bit about  
24 your background and where you came from?

25 MR. FENZ: Background, my last place was I came from the  
26 Erie County Clerk's Office. I was First Deputy County Clerk before  
27 that, I was the Legal Deputy, before that, I was the Town Attorney in  
28 West Seneca. Coming in, it's refreshing to work with such a group of

1 kind professionals. The Airport Division is very buttoned, and I enjoy  
2 that. So I'm looking forward to serve everybody, and do whatever I can  
3 to help.

4 MR. VANECEK: Great.

5 MR. FENZ: Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Welcome.

7 MR. VANECEK: Hopefully you're going to be here for a long

8 time. So the last thing I wanted to talk about here, right before one  
9 very important last thing, but before the important last thing, TAC Air  
10 is, Signature Flight Services is the largest FBO provider in the world.  
11 They have over 2,200 destinations around the world, and they have made  
12 an offer to buy out TAC Air and TAC Air is going to accept that,  
13 they're going to go ahead and sell to them. They have a much smaller  
14 operation around the country. So, it will be a very big upgrade to the  
15 airport. It will actually help us to attract, we think more traffic  
16 coming into Buffalo. So, we're very, very happy about that. And the  
17 other thing I wanted to talk about, it's kind of later braking news, we  
18 heard from TSA that they are going to upgrade our security checkpoint  
19 by providing CT tomography which is basically like a CAT scan. You know  
20 when you are currently putting your bags on the belt right now, it  
21 stops and they can't quite figure out what's in there now, they drag it  
22 out and pull it out and then they go through your bags to figure out  
23 what the issue is with that particular piece of luggage. It's going to  
24 be much like, and a number of you have taken tours of the terminal, of  
25 our baggage certation system. Same type of issue here, they'll be able  
26 to bring up a 3-D issue, a 3-D image if you will, turn it, twist it,  
27 etc., be able to look inside a bag and determine whether or not it is  
28 actually a threat or its not and that will help tremendously, the flow

1 through our passenger screening areas. There'll be one (1) on each side  
2 of our magnetometer that we have at the airport. We currently have five  
3 (5) lanes, but we have one (1) on the last one, but there will be eight  
4 (8)...

5 MR. WEITZ: There will be five (5) zones...

6 MR. VANECEK: There will be five (5) zones...

7 MR. WEITZ: ...two (2) lanes in each zone

8 MR. VANECEK: ...two (2) lanes in each zone so it will

9 dramatically increase the flow-thru through the area. Also talking  
10 about that too, we had big, big crowds coming through the mornings over  
11 the past few weeks, and Karen Renna and Dan Stroehlein, two of the  
12 folks who work at the Airport for us, came up with a tremendous  
13 reconfiguration of the security checkpoint and we had no overflow.  
14 Remember those mornings when we used to have that flow through that  
15 used to go behind the ticket counters? Mm-hmm, not anymore. We were  
16 able to create more space because we took down the Ft. Erie Grill  
17 restaurant and that has provided us with our ability to expand and  
18 contract that as needed now and we had literally no flow over into the  
19 back so we're very, very happy about that.

20 And then lastly, I want to say, not farewell, but  
21 none the less, Mary Perla has been with the Aviation Group for a heck  
22 of a long time. She has thirty-six (36) years in service here at the  
23 NFTA.

24 MS. PERLA: I was sixteen (16)...

25 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

26 MR. VANECEK: No, I was going to say once you graduated  
27 kindergarten you came to work for us. Right, so...

28 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

1 MS. PERLA: Child prodigy.

2 MR. VANECEK: And Mary has been invaluable to us. And, when  
3 you see her in action, a bulldog comes to mind. Absolutely.

4 CHAIR ROCHE: Laughter.

5 MR. VANECEK: And she really can hammer home her points and  
6 she has just been a joy to work with over the years. I'm only twenty-  
7 three (23) years in...

8 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

9 MR. VANECEK: So she's got me by a long shot here. But it was  
10 so refreshing to have somebody who really understood everything about  
11 the functions of aviation and the needs of aviation, and you know, she  
12 was, she always had a smile on her face unless she was barking at  
13 someone that is not in the NFTA...

14 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

15 MR. VANECEK: ...and so we really welcome her retirement for  
16 her. She gets to go out and enjoy life a little bit more. And, Mary,  
17 thank you so very much for everything you've done for all of us. We owe  
18 you a lot. You can't be replaced but John, you can try as hard as you  
19 can. OK?

20 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

21 MR. VANECEK: Over time, you'll be good so anyway I just want  
22 to say, Mary, thank you so much and we really appreciate everything  
23 that you've done for us.

24 [Clapping]

25 MS. MINKEL: You know, I just want to build on what Bill  
26 said.

27 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

28 MS. MINKEL: Yeah. That was easy to say. You know, I know



1 Mary was responsible for Aviation, but she did so much more than that  
2 throughout the Authority. She would provide counsel in terms of  
3 environmental law, she's an expert in that area, throughout the  
4 Authority. She helped in Surface, any, anyone who ever needed  
5 assistance, Mary was always willing and able to provide excellent  
6 counsel and support. So, she did more than just Aviation and we're  
7 really going to miss her.

8 MS. PERLA: Oh, thank you.

9 MR. VANECEK: She was a bulldog with the airlines too by the  
10 way.

11 MS. MINKEL: Yes.

12 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

13 MR. VANECEK: Which helped us out.

14 MS. PERLA: You're welcome. Thank you.

15 MR. VANECEK: So, that concludes my report. If anyone has any  
16 questions, I'd be happy to answer them.

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Any questions?

18 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Bill, any update on the Spirit, Frontier?

19 MR. VANECEK: No. Not yet. You know, our, we truly believe  
20 that that will be approved, and the next step is more than likely,  
21 Spirit will get absorbed into Frontier, that would be my guess. And,  
22 so, what that means is, more than likely, you're not gonna see Spirit  
23 flying again out of Niagara Falls.

24 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Right, that was my...

25 MR. VANECEK: That would be my guess today and it just makes  
26 sense if they're going to consolidate, that they're going to keep one  
27 (1) airline. And you can see, they're looking already forward, they're  
28 starting to add more destinations out of Buffalo. So, you know, it's

1           unfortunate that, in my mind, I don't think they'll be flying out of  
2           Niagara Falls but nonetheless, it's still good for the community. So,  
3           you know, as they expand here, it gives more opportunity for people to  
4           fly so...

5 COMMISSIONER HUGHES:           What's plan B? What do you guys, if they do...

6 MR. VANECEK:                   Well, we keep talking to any airlines that will  
7           listen but there's, with all of the consolidations that have gone on in  
8           the industry now, it's become very few but on the flip side of that,  
9           Allegiant still is at Niagara Falls and that gives Allegiant the  
10          opportunity now to expand flights and services. So, we haven't had  
11          confirmation of that yet, but my guess is, is that they'll start,  
12          they'll start looking at other destinations out of Niagara Falls on  
13          somewhat, at least, on a limited basis and we'll see how that goes.

14 COMMISSIONER HUGHES:           Thanks.

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY:           And any other questions? Hearing none. No  
16          discussion item today. That concludes this Aviation Committee.

17 CHAIR ROCHE:                   Thank you very much Adam and Mary, we wish you  
18          a very long and fruitful retirement and John, we welcome you and you  
19          heard all the things that Mary did so now you...

20 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS:        Laughter.

21 CHAIR ROCHE:                   And that concludes our Aviation Meeting today.

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23 CHAIR ROCHE:                   Good morning and welcome to the Surface  
24          Transportation Committee Meeting of the NFTA for March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022. And I  
25          am going to ask Commissioner Hughes please to lead us through...

26 COMMISSIONER HUGHES:           Thank you, Sister. Good morning, Commissioners.  
27          We'll kick off the Surface Transportation Committee Meeting with Tom  
28          George who has a number of items that he has to go through this

1 morning. Tom?

2 MR. GEORGE: Thank you and good morning. We have one  
3 discussion item this morning, that I would like to go through with the  
4 Board, and that is on Paratransit Customer Satisfaction. So, you often  
5 hear me talk about the American Bus Benchmarking Group, we do  
6 benchmarking with them across the country. As an inaugural in 2021, we  
7 as a group have moved into doing a customer satisfaction survey for  
8 paratransit. Historically, we have not done that. Of the American Bus  
9 Benchmarking Group Members, twelve (12) of the members decided to  
10 participate in that, we were one of the twelve (12). So, this is the  
11 first time we have done benchmarking relative to customer satisfaction  
12 on paratransit, and I wanted to briefly go through the results with the  
13 Board this morning if I could. So, we start with demographic  
14 information. Lara?

15 MS. SENIW: I'm so sorry. Apologies.

16 MR. GEORGE: So this gives kind of an overview of what we're  
17 looking at here, we start out with, of the surveys that were responded  
18 to, the actual customers responded to forty-five percent (45%) of them,  
19 and their representatives responded to fifty-five percent (55%). So,  
20 kind of a reflection on the capabilities of some of our paratransit  
21 riders themselves just may or may not have the ability to actually  
22 respond to a survey but they had someone represent them. The travel  
23 with a personal care attendant, about nine percent (9%) of them travel  
24 with a personal care attendant and that reflects fairly closely our  
25 ridership, relative to personal care attendants. And just so you're  
26 aware, personal care attendant does travel for free on paratransit with  
27 their individual that they are supporting. On the tenure, interesting  
28 to say that only twenty percent (20%) of the respondents have been with

1 us for over ten (10) years. So, fairly new group relative to our  
2 service and the level of service and eligibility, conditional is forty  
3 percent (40%), or unconditional is forty percent (40%) and conditional  
4 was nineteen percent (19%), and thirty-eight percent (38%) didn't know  
5 whether they were conditional or unconditional. And what that means is,  
6 depending on your disability, as an example, you may have difficulty  
7 traveling in the winter. So you may have a conditional eligibility  
8 that allows you to ride paratransit in the winter but doesn't in the  
9 summer, when you'll then be relegated to fixed route because of your  
10 condition and how that affects you. So that's some of our demographics,  
11 we have some more demographics. A couple of things here - the age,  
12 interesting to say that over fifty percent (50%) are over the age of  
13 fifty (50), we have a considerably older group responding here. And  
14 down to the trip purpose, I think it was interesting to note that  
15 greater than seventy-five percent (75%) are either for work or medical.  
16 So the bulk of the riderships are really related to those two (2)  
17 travel modes. And then the frequency of use, you'll see, and I'll get  
18 into this more later, very often, we have a heavy, the respondents were  
19 very heavy users of the system. And then, last but not least, again on  
20 the income level, notice here that of the respondents who responded to  
21 the income level, eighty percent (80%) of those were below \$25,000.00  
22 in income. So, again very reflective of our system in general. And we  
23 really don't collect much demographic data from our paratransit riders  
24 ourselves, so this kind of gives us some info. but it doesn't, we  
25 really don't have the ability to compare it to our raw data so we do  
26 not have the ability to say this is a representative group or not  
27 relative to our riders. But so, so saying that, I will jump into some  
28 of the results.

1                   As I noted, this is American Bus Benchmarking, so we  
2 do compare ourselves to our peers, but we also have a confidentiality  
3 agreement where we do not identify those peers. You'll see in this  
4 group, Buffalo is the second one on the left, and there's two (2) bars  
5 in here. One (1) is overall satisfaction and that's just one (1)  
6 general question. Overall our customers on zero (0) to five (5) rate us  
7 as a 4.34. So, we're very highly rated, as are all of our peers. So you  
8 can generally see that our paratransit customers are very satisfied.  
9 There's a couple groups that are a little higher than us and couple  
10 that are lower but nonetheless, across the group, almost everybody's  
11 above a four (4). And then when you break it down into the individual  
12 questions, our rate goes down to 4.13 and you can see that's consistent  
13 across the board with all of our, all of our peers.

14                   Now I'll get right into the levels of satisfaction.  
15 There's two (2) different questions that were asked in here. One is the  
16 dark blue and that is just general questions about service, and then  
17 the light blue is relative to COVID. So there was actually a number of  
18 questions about COVID. You'll see from left to right is our highest  
19 scoring: fare payment, mask wearing is in the light blue, we scored  
20 very high in that, and you'll see there is a bar across the top. Our  
21 overall satisfaction as I indicated was 4.34. The COVID satisfaction  
22 was 4.26 and the average standard was 4.13. Not a lot of variation in  
23 there but once again, very high. Those of you who have heard me talk  
24 about customer satisfaction in the past, I usually focus on where we  
25 don't do so well, and that's really what we as a Management Team look  
26 at. So, we look down over here further on to the right of the graph, we  
27 see resolving problems, vehicle arrival information, on-time pickup,  
28 eligibility information, call center hold time, and journey time. Some

1 of these are the things we have been challenged with specifically over  
2 the last year or so when we've had a reduction in operators. Journey  
3 time has been extended because we have to do more with less on the  
4 operator. And then we always struggle with vehicle on-time information  
5 or real time information. That's very consistent with the results we  
6 had in customer satisfaction for our fixed route and our rail. So, we  
7 identified that as a business center, that's where we really need to  
8 focus some energy on that. Go to the next slide.

9 So, this is where we rate relative to our peers of  
10 those twelve (12) groups. At the top of the list, we're number one (1)  
11 on some of those categories, two (2) of them, and then we're number two  
12 (2) on a couple. So trip times, that is when the trips are available.  
13 We're ranked highest for when we provide trips and what times of day  
14 those are available. The payment of a fare, ride comfort, scheduling,  
15 and cancelling and changing of trips and safe driving we do very well.  
16 I don't put a lot of emphasis on this because everyone scored very  
17 highly so the difference for being the best and being the worst is  
18 still a very small range. We're still above four (4). And then you'll  
19 see some things down at the bottom, call center staff, mobility device  
20 securement, journey time, again related to what we talked about before.  
21 Mobility device securement, we're actually looking at new technology,  
22 bringing it into our buses now with our next bus build, we've, there's  
23 some new technologies out there that's going to make it easier and this  
24 is also a challenge for our operators as well, and a safety issue that  
25 we have. We have operators that have to physically go down and  
26 sometimes get down on their hands and knees, to secure these devices.  
27 All of the devices our customers use vary drastically from a simple  
28 wheelchair to a 300 lb. scooter that comes in and out of the bus. Some

1 are secured into those devices, some are not. It's a very challenging  
2 environment especially when you are doing 800 trips a day, which is  
3 what we do. Next slide.

4 Distribution of satisfaction levels, again this shows  
5 what the results are, again it's the same numbers, it's the same  
6 results. You'll see down here where we rate on these numbers and again,  
7 the things on the bottom are less than seventy-five percent (75%)  
8 satisfaction. It's a pretty high bar but nonetheless, we need to focus  
9 on those areas. And I show this because the next slide, shows what we  
10 call our net promoters score, and so this again is ranked amongst our  
11 peers. We have a fifty-eight percent (58%) net promoted score. What  
12 that promoter score is those people who rank us very highly minus those  
13 who don't. So who is likely to go out and say "You gotta use NFTA  
14 Metro's paratransit service because it's a great service". Those are  
15 our net promoters. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of our people are  
16 promoters. People actually do that. And you'll see some of the agencies  
17 are as high as eighty-four (84) and some are down as low as forty-five  
18 (45). So this is an important thing, just to see how our customers  
19 generally react. I tell that story about the restaurant, if you have a  
20 lousy time, you are likely to tell a bunch of people, if you don't, ah,  
21 maybe not. So, that was where we are with net promoter. And then the  
22 last thing I wanted to show you, if I could, was frequency of use. This  
23 compares us to our peers. So, on the left side there is the graph that  
24 shows frequency of use of Buffalo and then those of the ABBG group in  
25 general. You'll see our users use it more frequently than others. But  
26 more importantly to me is on the graph on the right side shows after  
27 the restrictions are lifted, and what they think they'll use, after the  
28 restrictions are loosened. And you'll see a significant uptick in open,

1 prior to the... Pre-pandemic, we had fifteen percent (15%) were rarely or  
2 very rarely, after the restrictions are lifted, they're reporting that  
3 only three percent (3%) will be rarely or very rarely. So, we're  
4 anticipating a very robust return to our ridership. That's exactly what  
5 we've seen. We're right back at pre-pandemic levels right now and again  
6 we're going to continue to see that growth pattern that we've  
7 experienced over the last five to ten (5-10) years in paratransit. In  
8 general, we've seen upwards of ten percent (10%) in certain years and  
9 the lower level as much as five percent (5%). So, that growth trend, we  
10 see it continuing based on the results of this survey question right  
11 here. So that's all I wanted to go over with you. There is  
12 significantly more data behind it. Certainly on every one of those  
13 questions, there is responses. But I just wanted to give the Board an  
14 overview, so if there's any questions? I'd be glad to try to answer  
15 them.

16 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Are there terms on publicity for this or  
17 publishing this - website, formal announcement? How will you guys  
18 promote this?

19 MR. GEORGE: We generally don't do a lot of that. We  
20 can certainly take the results and tell the good news story about how  
21 we're rated and work with Helen's group to try to craft something of  
22 that nature. We also do provide this to our Accessibility Advisory  
23 Committee. That's something they're very anxious to see the results of  
24 this obviously because they've all participated. So, we're excited to  
25 get that to them. That will be shared with them this afternoon at 2:30  
26 in the meeting with them.

27 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: OK. Thanks.

28 MR. GEORGE: I think with results as good as this, we



1           probably need to take some credit and let people know...

2 CHAIR ROCHE:                           Yes.

3 MR. GEORGE:                           ...that our customers are very satisfied.

4 CHAIR ROCHE:                           How often do you do these surveys?

5 MR. GEORGE:                           Annually. Annually.

6 CHAIR ROCHE:                           Annually?

7 MR. GEORGE:                           Annually. Yes.

8 CHAIR ROCHE:                           Wow.

9 MR. GEORGE:                           Yes. This was the first year that we've

10           done this. We do all the other, both for the light rail and the bus, we

11           do those annually.

12 CHAIR ROCHE:                           Uh-huh.

13 MR. GEORGE:                           This will also become an annual survey.

14           That is what we would like so then we can see trends.

15 CHAIR ROCHE:                           Yup.

16 MR. GEORGE:                           You know, where are we getting better?

17           Where are we not? That's really what my focus really is on the trend

18           lines for the year to year. But obviously the COVID questions hopefully

19           will evaporate over some point in time.

20 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS:                Laughter.

21 MR. GEORGE:                           So. If there's no other questions,

22           there's a couple things I would just like to go over if I could. On the

23           Initiatives Report, we do have a couple things I wanted to talk about.

24           First of all, about the DL&W Rail Station Project. As Darren reported

25           earlier about the two (2) grants we did receive. One of those grants

26           was for a skybridge. That is the connection from the arena to the new

27           DL&W second floor. We received a \$2 million dollar grant as one of the

28           earmarks in that project. Engineering is right in, initiating a study

1 of that. We did some initial designs for skybridges, but we've had  
2 further discussions with the Buffalo Sabres and our designated  
3 developer for the second floor. We're now going to develop those  
4 further, now that it's actually funded to see if we can't move those  
5 further into construction. We also have a stair tower, that's at the  
6 foot of Illinois Street that goes to the second floor. We want to make  
7 sure that if there are any impacts of bridges that those are accounted  
8 for very early in the design and we can address those before that  
9 actually gets into construction. We're focused on the submittal review  
10 period. Make sure that if there are changes relative to the bridges,  
11 that those are addressed. And then we also received \$1 million dollars  
12 for the Riverwalk. This is the area adjacent to the building, between  
13 the building and the river. Those of you who have walked down through  
14 there, it's a small strip of concrete along the river. So we've  
15 received \$50,000.00 in grant money from the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation  
16 to study that. That study is underway. So, we're looking at that area  
17 and how that can be enhanced to provide better connectivity to  
18 Canalside as well as from the Michigan Avenue side of the building. And  
19 then also as part of that, we're looking at the bicycle, the mobility  
20 issues relative. Right now that has historically been a bike trail  
21 through there, it's just, it's narrow so we're going to be looking to  
22 see if there's ways we can utilize South Park better for bike paths. So  
23 that study we'll undergo, and then we've got that \$1 million dollar  
24 grant to spend it there. So, basically that wraps the exterior of the  
25 DL&W, and provides that connectivity between the arena and the station  
26 itself.

27 And on that note, I am really pleased to report, kind  
28 of off this, that for the NCAA March Madness last week, on Thursday,

1 there was two (2) sets of games and on Saturday there was games, we did  
2 3,000 customers for that, on the rail system itself. So historically  
3 you would see when the Sabres were playing well and having lots of fans  
4 in the stadium, we would move upwards of 1,800 to 2,000 people for  
5 those games. So, this is back to those types of levels which we're  
6 really pleased about that.

7 The other initiative in here, or two others, Erie  
8 Canal Harbor Station, I just want to let everybody know that that  
9 construction has been, notice has been given on that. I know John may  
10 cover that more. And then on the Fare Collection System Replacement,  
11 I'm pleased to say today that, you know, we've been working hard on  
12 that. We anticipate that coming to fruition, actually going into  
13 service later this year. At this point in time, I can say that most of  
14 the construction is done, so the fare boxes are in all of the buses.  
15 The reader devices are in all of the paratransit vehicles. The gates  
16 are in all of the stations. The ticket vending machines that are going  
17 to go in in phase 1 are all in there. And the next phase which will  
18 really be the completion of that is the fencing that goes in to  
19 segregate the fare area from the non-fare area to make the ticket, or  
20 the fare gates operational. So, it's been a long time, but to get to  
21 this point is a significant milestone. So, I'm pleased about that.

22 John, I don't mean to steal your thunder because I know you're up next.

23 MR. SCHAEFER: It's OK. It's all good.

24 MR. GEORGE: So, that's all I have for the Initiatives  
25 Report prior to John doing his Capital Project Report.

26 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Go ahead John.

27 MR. SCHAEFER: Great. Thanks. Good morning, Commissioners.

28 CHAIR ROCHE: Good morning.

1 MR. SCHAEFER: Capital project update for March. University  
2 Station escalator tube liner replacement. You may recall last month, I  
3 had a few photos about Delavan Station, a completed project where we  
4 did the panel liner and the shots of the existing University. So, this  
5 month, you'll see a Board Action or a Board Resolution Request for  
6 approval for the construction contract with Scrufari. When, after this  
7 job gets awarded and is executed, the end result will look very similar  
8 to Delavan Station. That was the point of last month to say it was  
9 coming, now we'll be seeking Board approval for it here at the Board  
10 Meeting.

11 City of Buffalo's Lower Main Street Rehab Project, so  
12 that's the traffic on Main Street, at the lower end between Perry and  
13 Exchange. So we, of course, being a major stakeholder, I have a lot  
14 folks monitoring that, involved with everything from safety reviews,  
15 hazard reviews, construction monitoring, but it is the City of  
16 Buffalo's project. So, important things coming up are our substantial  
17 completion date is April and final completion date is June of this  
18 year. What's the difference? What's substantial completion? Substantial  
19 completion means that at the City of Buffalo's discretion, of course we  
20 would expect some interfacing with our operations, you can open that up  
21 to traffic on Main Street. So, that could be as early as April but  
22 there will have to be some coordination with us. A lot of it has to do  
23 with them satisfying their TIGER grant. They needed to be at that  
24 point, I think they were actually supposed to be a month or so early,  
25 they got an extension to be substantially complete. Whether it goes  
26 live will be at the City of Buffalo's discretion of course, working  
27 with Tom's group. So, that's very much ready, ready to go. Of course,  
28 that corridor is pretty busy with our own work happening a little

1 further down so... We're excited about that, and it's been a great, great  
2 effort working with the City of Buffalo and we look forward to getting  
3 traffic going through there.

4 In, in that same neck of the woods, if you will, the  
5 Canal, the Erie Harbor Canal Station. Tom made mention of it. So this  
6 project will rehab the old, old station, it's an inbound/outbound  
7 station. The preconstruction meeting was held just last month, and  
8 submittals are in progress. We expect to be in mid-May to have actually  
9 on-site construction taking place. Speaking of stations, we have an RFP  
10 out for Church Street Station. This is an RFP for design. This will  
11 rehab the inbound and outbound stations on Church Street and Main. So  
12 we're seeking design services. The RFP is currently on our website.  
13 Expect to get those in in April and assuming a favorable evaluation and  
14 negotiation, we will come to the Board in May of this year to get their  
15 approval for the design services. And that concludes my report, unless  
16 of course, there are any questions.

17 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any questions for John? Thanks John. Tom want  
18 to keep going on performance?

19 MR. GEORGE: Yeah, the only last thing I wanted to cover  
20 quickly was there is a Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting this evening  
21 at 5:30PM. We've got a very robust agenda and we're looking forward to  
22 that. And, there's an AAC Meeting, the Accessibility Advisory Committee  
23 Meeting today at 2PM. We did have a meeting in February. We did talk at  
24 length about the service changes that we implemented in February 13<sup>th</sup>.  
25 Just a note on those, kind of an aside, so on February 13<sup>th</sup>, we did some  
26 reductions in service to reflect the challenges we were having with the  
27 lack of workforce. Those have been in place since February 13<sup>th</sup>, and I  
28 am pleased to report to the Board that we've been able to deliver

1 nearly 100% of our service during that period so... The challenge we were  
2 having with missed trips, late service and the challenges we were  
3 representing in the community are no longer in place. We're able to  
4 deliver the service. We've rightsized relative to our workforce. I know  
5 there's a Human Resource Meeting after this one where we'll talk about  
6 that, but we're pleased to say that the work that we've done has at  
7 least got us to the point where if you've got a schedule that says a  
8 bus will be there, a bus will be there. So, we're pleased about that.

9 We did talk about the bus operator recruitment with  
10 the AAC. We talked about our website design update and continue to work  
11 with the AAC Committee to gather feedback through the different phases.  
12 Obviously, this group's input on that is very important. We talked  
13 about our IBR system and the redundancy of that and how to redirect  
14 telephone calls. We did give an update on the MetGo system and the fare  
15 collection. We've developed a "no strand" policy. So, we worked over  
16 the language on the "no strand" policy with the AAC. "No strand" means  
17 that essentially if you are dropped off at a location and even if you  
18 are, if there's challenges or issues which occur with you getting  
19 picked back up, we've got a policy in place that no matter what  
20 happens, we will not strand you. We will come back and get you,  
21 regardless of the situation. So, there's some parameters that have been  
22 developed. We're working with that Committee to get those, to get some  
23 consensus with the Committee on how that works. We did develop a work  
24 plan for the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the year and that,  
25 that has been advanced. And we talked a little bit about the cause of  
26 the recent decline in PAL trips provided because of weather and things  
27 like that. They were just looking at our data. And then they're also  
28 experiencing longer trips and they wanted to look at the data behind

1 that. And that's primarily, again, due to the shortage of operators  
2 we're having, and it is extending that trip time a little bit for our  
3 customers. And then the last thing I just wanted to mention, is they  
4 suggest that the Metro post on each vehicle the contact phone numbers  
5 for customer service, reservations and feedback, which we have done.  
6 So, each one of those customers if they're on the bus, and feels that  
7 there's something they'd like to talk to us about, they have all that  
8 contact information readily available. And that's the end of my report,  
9 pending the police report.

10 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any questions for Tom? Thanks, Tom.

11 MR. GEORGE: Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Chief Patterson? Public Safety Report?

13 CHIEF PATTERSON: Yes. Good morning. I gotta tell you this is  
14 the, today was the first time I actually put on my Transit Police  
15 uniform. So yes... The gravity of the moment is here.

16 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

17 CHIEF PATTERSON: No. It's really a pleasure and I've enjoyed  
18 onboarding. In terms of the Public Safety Report, we really have hit  
19 the ground running, or at least I have in terms of understanding what  
20 our mission is. And I've, for the last thirty (30) days, I have been on  
21 what I call a listening and learning tour both internally and  
22 externally. Meeting with, internally meeting with the Management Team,  
23 who have been gracious and generous and really are subject matter  
24 experts and I've learned quite a bit in terms of what Transit Police  
25 can and should be doing to make sure we run smoothly. Externally, I  
26 have spent quite a bit of time meeting with community stakeholders,  
27 something I did in my last position as Police Chief of the Buffalo  
28 Police Department for all of the obvious reasons, you know we must be

1 in synch with the community, what they're feeling and understanding. So  
2 I've spent quite a bit of time meeting with stakeholders and schools  
3 and others that have skin in the game.

4 So in terms of our administrative approach, for many  
5 of the Commissioners may or may not know, we are undertaking a 110  
6 standard accreditation review process. This is the New York State  
7 Department of Criminal Justice Services driven standard. It's really  
8 the best practices in policing that other departments should undertake  
9 to improve the quality of their work. So, we have a subject matter  
10 expert, our Deputy Commissioner [Chief], Patrick Weidel, has been  
11 brought on board, who really is, who really knows the ins and outs of  
12 this, so we have spent quite a bit of time overhauling our standards.

13 Operationally, one of the things you want to do when  
14 you are coming in as a police leader in a jurisdiction is to really  
15 understand the crime personality of where you work, or what's going on  
16 around you, and I have done that for our Aviation and Metro Divisions.  
17 On the Aviation side, and Commissioners, you can, you'll see this  
18 graphic representation of the crimes on page thirty-six (36) and  
19 thirty-seven (37) respectively. But I've taken a look, I took a look at  
20 Aviation, and as expected you see the more prominent crimes are  
21 larcenies and property issues. On the Metro side, some of the expected  
22 crimes are assaults and also larcenies. So monthly as I report out this  
23 crime data, you will see hopefully I will be repeating myself in terms  
24 of "hey, this is what you can expect in these jurisdictions". But, with  
25 all environments, there are outliers and in the last three (3) days we  
26 had some crime outliers, most notably the homicide at the Utica  
27 Station. The good news of that is our Detectives were just like a dog  
28 on a bone, they were on top of it, and we apprehended and made an



1           arrest within five (5) days of that crime. That homicide taught us  
2           quite a bit. We're using and we're learning from that in terms of our  
3           police presence, and I won't give up all of our strategies here at this  
4           meeting, we're using that to really become more strategic using all of  
5           our resources to make sure that we minimize that type of occurrence.  
6           The other outlier on the Aviation side was the removal of a JetBlue  
7           pilot, who our Officers removed from the cockpit as he was under the  
8           influence of alcohol. Now that investigation is being controlled right  
9           now by the FAA. But it should be noted Transit Police Officers were on  
10          the job and were available in real time to make sure that nothing  
11          tragic occurred. And I think that's it. The last part of it is  
12          community and I kind of led with that but I kind of just want to  
13          reemphasize that we want to be in the business as a department, we want  
14          to know the people who ride and use our services. So every month I will  
15          be report back to you what have I done in the community, who have I met  
16          with and why did we meet. So, I think that completes my Transit Police  
17          Report.

18   COMMISSIONER HUGHES:                Questions for Chief Patterson?

19   CHIEF PATTERSON:                    Thank you.

20   COMMISSIONER HUGHES:                No? No items to go through in terms of approval  
21          so, that concludes the report.

22   CHAIR ROCHE:                         Thank you very much and that concludes our  
23          Surface Transportation Committee Report for the month and then we'll  
24          take a brief break and then we'll do Human Resources.

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26   CHAIR ROCHE:                         And welcome to the Human Resources Committee  
27          Meeting of the NFTA on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and I'm going to ask  
28          Commissioner Perry to please take us through it.

1 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes. Thank you, Sister. For our Human Resources  
2 Committee Meeting today, the material is mostly presented by Human  
3 Resource Director Karen Novo, and we'll start with her expeditiously...

4 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

5 MS. NOVO: Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER PERRY: ...with the Human Resources Mission Statement and  
7 the rest of the material. Thank you.

8 MS. NOVO: Thank you. Thank you, Commissioners. Good  
9 morning, Everyone. So, the Mission Statement... So, the HR Committee, I'm  
10 reporting usually every month, but this is just an overview, we do a  
11 yearly overview of the HR Committee and take all of the data and just  
12 kind of put it all together and hoping it makes sense at the end of the  
13 day but we're here for questions.

14 CHAIR ROCHE: Laughter.

15 MS. NOVO: So, on the Mission Statement, I'd just like to  
16 review it, it is on page three (3) in the booklet, just what we are  
17 responsible for. Of course, we always look at all of the programs for  
18 the employees, cost effective benefits, effective and diversified  
19 staffing, compensation programs. You've heard me talk about, we're  
20 currently in a salary study right now. That was, that started back in  
21 January. We don't see it. It's probably going to be completed towards  
22 the end of April. So, I really, I don't have much information, I won't  
23 have any information on that today, but I will update the Board as soon  
24 as we have that completed. We provide our services for labor relations,  
25 negotiating, grievances, arbitrations and so forth, labor, in the labor  
26 world. We administer all the programs under Federal Regulations, under  
27 the DOT, the drug and alcohol testing which applies to all employees,  
28 and of course our hiring and so forth.

1                   So on page four (4), the objectives, it just gives a  
2                   little more detail of what our Mission Statement is. So, I won't read  
3                   everything, but we continue to implement our programs we initiate, we  
4                   always look for cost effective benefits, and working with labor of  
5                   course, as they are going through their negotiations. We develop our  
6                   positive union management relationships that encourage mutual respect  
7                   and approaches to labor and business issues, so we're constantly  
8                   working with the unions, partnering up with them. And of course, we  
9                   develop and work with all of the managers and directors and we look at  
10                  staffing needs and we understand the jobs and try to understand what we  
11                  are recruiting for. So we're consistently, Staff is consistently  
12                  working with all of the departments.

13                   So we'll move on to page five (5) of the report. So  
14                  we've had a lot of talk about hiring [laughter], recruiting. So we  
15                  always talk about our starting rate and where... Commissioner?

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY:                I just want to...

17 MS. NOVO:                            Yup.

18 COMMISSIONER PERRY:                Something I should have added in the beginning,  
19                  but I want to add now as we go over this material.

20 MS. NOVO:                            Sure.

21 COMMISSIONER PERRY:                So... So for the Human Resources Committee, as  
22                  some of you know, we always try to include material that has come up as  
23                  questions from Commissioners at the table, or that go to Karen or  
24                  anybody else. So we try to include material covering those questions or  
25                  comments. As frequently as I can, I invite Commissioners to ask  
26                  questions, request material, or subjects to be included. I also urge  
27                  every Commissioner to ask questions now on any subject they want to  
28                  cover and also if you want to have additional meetings, or additional

1 subjects covered at additional times, we can always do that. So I just  
2 want to make sure I am making that very clear that this is the Board's  
3 Human Resources Committee in operation, and we want to encourage you to  
4 participate, be involved, in trying to cover materials that come up on  
5 various matters over time. And sorry to interrupt. Please continue.

6 MS. NOVO:

Thank you, Commissioner. So, to the  
7 Commissioner's point, so full pay, operator full pay compensation. This  
8 has come up about how we recruit out there. We always hear starting  
9 pay, but we don't really see the full picture of compensation in total  
10 pay. So, this has come up, I know Commissioner, you know, Blue and  
11 others had asked for this. So this is just an example. We just took the  
12 basic twenty (20) hour, I'm sorry, the 2080 per annual per year of a  
13 starting operator rate and a full-time or a top rate operator. So, this  
14 shows where their base pay would start, and then of course, included in  
15 all of their benefits at the fringe benefit rate that is included which  
16 is about eighty-eight percent (88%) for their total package. So it  
17 shows the health insurance that we offer, the vision, the dental, life,  
18 it just breaks everything down. So, with the help of Budget, Chris  
19 Ruminski, John's Team, Nick Kurtz from my staff, and others, we were  
20 able to put something, and I think this probably be something that will  
21 be a good recruiting tool. And, you know, this has come up from the  
22 Commissioners and I think it's a great tool to use going forward. So, I  
23 wanted to show, again this is just an example, and it's just based on  
24 the base, somebody working forty (40) hours. Where we have overtime, we  
25 have extra boards. We have many opportunities to make additional wages  
26 throughout the year. I know we've done reports we have operators making  
27 well over \$60,000.00 a year. Some making over \$100,000.00 a year. More  
28 than half are making, fifty percent (50%) of them are making in those

1 areas of wages over the last couple of few years when we looked back  
2 at.

3 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Just so everybody knows, the time it  
4 takes you to get from new hire to top rate?

5 MS. NOVO: It's sixty (60) months. OK?

6 MS. MINKEL: But it's important to note there are step  
7 increases along the way.

8 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yup.

9 MS. NOVO: Yup. Yes. Quite regularly. Ok, if there  
10 are no other questions, I will move on to page six (6). So this is  
11 where and again, I think you heard me say several times, our numbers  
12 are always a moving target. We have people coming in, coming out,  
13 retiring, terminations, you know, unfortunately it seems to be  
14 happening for a variety of different reasons people are leaving. So we  
15 just did a breakout of what we had in 2021. And mind you, 2021 was  
16 still a COVID year, heavily COVID year, so it was a tough year too, for  
17 some employees, or candidates or new hires too. The job maybe wasn't  
18 for them, or they had other, working with the public may not have been  
19 for them or other things but it involved, there's many variables,  
20 variables why people are leaving and/or... Maybe there's, you know, other  
21 job opportunities, some could be, we've heard they're on the State  
22 Trooper Police exam, or something. It has come up during those times.  
23 So these are just various different reasons.

24 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Do you exit interview everybody before they go  
25 to get that...?

26 MS. NOVO: As many as we can that will give us that  
27 information. We try to between Tom's Team, I know they talk to somebody  
28 and ask questions why someone is leaving. I try to note everything I

1 can. Some just don't want to say anything. We do as best we can, yes.

2 So if there are no further questions, on page seven  
3 (7), so this is from 2021 up through current as of March 8<sup>th</sup> when we did  
4 these numbers for retention rates. We talk a lot about retention,  
5 morale. Keeping our operators here. So I just did a breakdown, again I  
6 just used examples of operators and mechanics since that's been the  
7 most challenging for the recruiting. And you'll see, so for example in  
8 '21, we hired seventy-one (71) and we've got a seventy-two percent  
9 (72%) retention rate on that. So we're doing fairly, fairly well on  
10 that. So, I just broke it down a little bit to reasoning again. And the  
11 mechanics on the same sides. We have ninety-five percent (95%)  
12 retention on that. And I do see where we are, Tom won't look at me, but  
13 we are trending in the right direction. I do see, you know, an uptick  
14 in candidates coming through, interest, more interest. And I think that  
15 has a lot to do with, we were talking this morning, last couple of  
16 years were a lot of virtual. Now, we're back out there. We're doing  
17 face-to-face, we're doing the Open Houses, we're taking the training  
18 bus around, we're doing the CDL classes. You know Tom's group has been  
19 one hundred percent (100%) devoted, our group, Helen's group, with all  
20 the social media and things like that, so we're starting to see, I'll  
21 say, an uptick in the applications coming through, so interest.

22 COMMISSIONER BLUE: How many people are we down now as far as  
23 operators?

24 MS. NOVO: Yup, so that is on...

25 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Oh, if you're coming to it, I'll wait.

26 MS. NOVO: OK.

27 COMMISSIONER BLUE: I'll wait.

28 MS. NOVO: Sure. OK. No problem. OK. So we'll move on to

1 page eight (8). So this is the operational staffing level needs. Again,  
2 I used mechanics and operators. So rail mechanics, of course, is  
3 separate from the bus. We're at eighteen percent (18%) on the rail,  
4 sixteen percent (16%) for the level of needs on the bus mechanics. And  
5 then the operator, I do want to mention, it says it' eight percent  
6 (8%), however this data can be a little misleading just due to the fact  
7 that we have a lot of operators that are out. They could be out sick  
8 indefinite. They could be out, you know, we have fifty (50) to seventy  
9 (70) operators that are out indefinite, sick indefinite. So they could  
10 be out on disability, they could be out on Workers' Comp, they could be  
11 out on FMLA, they could be out, there's obviously many various reasons  
12 why they're out. So we just, yeah, we're sometimes at fifty (50) to  
13 sixty (60) operators that are out just for those reasons, but they're  
14 still considered, they're employed, and they still have to be counted  
15 in the data. But we're, so that data can be a little misleading if you  
16 looks at it that way.

17 COMMISSIONER AUL: Hey Karen, it's Joan Aul. How many total  
18 operators are there?

19 MS. NOVO: We have a total of, where are we at?

20 MS. MINKEL: 574.

21 MS. NOVO: 574.

22 MS. MINKEL: I think.

23 COMMISSIONER AUL: Thank you.

24 MS. NOVO: OK.

25 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Is that number of those that are out hover  
26 around ten percent (10%), is that a standard and is that usually around  
27 ten percent (10%) bus operators? It's not spiked during COVID?

28 MS. NOVO: No. No. No.

1 MS. MINKEL: It was in January though.

2 MS. NOVO: Yes, this past month, yeah, this past year.

3 MS. MINKEL: And in January Authority-wide, we had 127  
4 people come down with COVID which was significant.

5 MS. NOVO: Right. Right. Right. And then on our page nine  
6 (9), if no one has any questions, it's just pretty much, review of our  
7 retention rates, our turnover rates, and I broke it down and I know we  
8 talked a little bit about, we mentioned ninety-three percent (93%) but  
9 this now, this includes retirements as well so we're about eighty-six  
10 percent (86%), which is pretty high if you look at the average of other  
11 employers. OK. And then on page ten (10) we'll come to our openings.  
12 So, right now we're at, as you see, every month, I do a report on this.  
13 So, our operators right now, we're at forty-eight-ish (48ish). Again  
14 that is a moving target because they're in and out so you know it could  
15 change tomorrow. It could, you know, go up or down. But we do have, and  
16 it's not included in the forty-eight (48), fifteen potential pre-  
17 employment going through the process right now.

18 CHAIR ROCHE: Oh.

19 MS. NOVO: That would be for our May 2<sup>nd</sup> class, which would  
20 be coming up, our next class. We have operators in a class right now.  
21 So, we're hopeful for the fifteen (15), and I'll say fifteen (15) plus  
22 cause we're still plugging every day. So, that's where we are on the  
23 operators. And then on the mechanics, it's, the vacancies are on the  
24 twenty-four (24) for the mechanic on the bus side, and thirteen (13) on  
25 the rail, and then we have one (1) at BNIA still. I do want to note, I  
26 know we sometimes leave their report out, but we don't talk so much  
27 about it, but we do have, we are full capacity now for our custodial  
28 staff. We were actually having some challenges with that over the COVID



1 and we just filled all of our positions for our custodian staff and  
2 they do a tremendous job. I mean during COVID, they were asked to do a  
3 lot more than what they...

4 MR. WEITZ: Well, Karen, on my staff, has done a  
5 outstanding job recruiting.

6 MS. NOVO: Yeah, we were, we're full staffing right now.  
7 We actually have some that still want to come in if we have positions  
8 open so, we're doing well in that area. They do a tremendous job.

9 MS. MINKEL: So, Karen, before you leave this slide, one of  
10 the reasons why, you know, there's been a lot of discussions related to  
11 operator shortage at the NFTA. And this is really a driver shortage is  
12 a national crisis across the board, whether it's bus operators, school  
13 bus drivers or the trucking business. By way of comparison, we did  
14 reach out to our sister agencies - Rochester and Syracuse. You know, we  
15 have about 570 operators and we have forty-eight (48) vacancies.  
16 Rochester has about 455 operators, They have 70+ vacancies. Syracuse,  
17 they have 283 operators. They have over fifty (50) vacancies. So, this  
18 is a problem, you know, nationwide, statewide. There was an article  
19 that I'll send out to the Board. Across the nation, what they are  
20 noticing, and what I had mentioned last month, the average age, of even  
21 the drivers you are able to recruit, tend to be much older. The younger  
22 generation wants flexibility in work life and sadly flexibility and  
23 transportation is something that we can't provide. We operate on a  
24 schedule. You know, we need you in, to start work at whatever time it  
25 is, to deliver that, that service. And work lifestyle is something that  
26 is important to the younger generation so that will be a struggle going  
27 forward. We're also seeing new and different competition that didn't  
28 exist five (5) years ago. Whether it's the transportation network

1 companies, Uber, Lyft, or the Amazon phenomenon. So we're all competing  
2 for talent. So it's something we're paying close attention to. I'm  
3 happy to report that we are, we have been able to open the contract  
4 with ATU. We're currently in negotiations. We had our first session on  
5 the seventeenth (17<sup>th</sup>), luck of the Irish, right? And we have subsequent  
6 negotiations scheduled so it's a national problem, not just an NFTA  
7 problem. But it's something that's important to us. It's important to  
8 the community. We want people to get back to work, because unless we're  
9 working, it's harder for the community to work. And we certainly  
10 recognize that.

11 MS. NOVO: And then also to note on the openings, I know  
12 Commissioner Perry, we've talked about the high schools, like for  
13 example, Burgard, we actually have twelve (12) students coming through  
14 at our Cold Springs Garage today going through an Open House.

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Excellent. Outstanding.

16 MS. NOVO: We have been at Lackawanna High School, I'm  
17 sorry, Niagara Falls High School. And we are, John Dembik and Holly  
18 Carpenter, my Manager of Recruitment, who I wanted here today but she's  
19 out recruiting, they met with 400 students. I mean, of course they're  
20 talking to the school but we're getting out there and talking and  
21 they're putting us in an assembly room and talking to the students so...  
22 They, you know, some have interest, some they don't, but some may say,  
23 "hey, at graduation, can you come back?". So we're going to repeatedly  
24 keep continually to go back. So we're trying to hit all of the schools.  
25 So that is just an example of a couple of the schools. Any questions?

26 So, an then on page eleven (11) again, just an  
27 overview of our recruiting. You hear me talk about monthly. Again, I  
28 think coming back to in-person has definitely helped more so. We were

1 doing the, you know, the virtual interviews and all that which was a  
2 little tougher. But, you know, our training bus has been great. We take  
3 that to all of our Open Houses. People like to see, they like to touch.  
4 They like to be able to see, "Oh, this is what it's like. This is what  
5 it's all about". So that has been great. The QR code on the business  
6 cards from Helen's team has helped tremendously with that. Social  
7 media, all of the social media. The employee referral program, which I  
8 know Commissioner, you also asked about family members. So, we really  
9 don't have metrics on family members. But we do have, just off the top,  
10 unless we go through, we'd have to really go through, but we have over,  
11 probably just off the top, we have probably fifty (50), fifty-ish  
12 (50ish) employees, I'm just talking on the Metro side, that have, you  
13 know, third generation, nieces, nephews, you know. We just don't have  
14 metrics to say. We'd have to go through some individual files and so  
15 forth. So, and some family members, we just don't. But that's as far as  
16 that, I know you've talked a little bit about that, but we are, and  
17 hopefully with the referral program. We've seen a few come through, but  
18 we'll have to see what the numbers are for that, and we'll update the  
19 Board down the road on that.

20 Page twelve (12) is our EEO Department and Dejuan  
21 Hardy who is our manager of EEO. I will turn it over to him to  
22 summarize what we've been doing and...

23 MR. HARDY: Good morning, Commissioners. So, recently we've  
24 partnered with the Buffalo Niagara Partnership which is a company  
25 downtown that has various businesses across Western New York that their  
26 initiatives and goals include diversity and equity inclusion across  
27 Western New York. So from there we get different training exercises and  
28 new initiatives and guidance that can be used here at the NFTA as well.

1 We have also started to chair our own Diversity Inclusion Committee  
2 within our own organization. And some of our initiatives is engaging  
3 co-workers in the conversations and training, working with Metro to  
4 develop training for our drivers to create promotion opportunities  
5 within our organization as well, and now we're soliciting for  
6 volunteers to help out with the various culture committees that we have  
7 internally. We did develop a training program for our supervisors as  
8 well. And that's one of the things that I am highlighting next. Are  
9 there are questions?

10 So our supervisor training that we've done this year  
11 [gotta get to the next page] consisted of four different courses and  
12 all are based on Diversity and Inclusion. It was Exploring Our  
13 Identities, Addressing Our Biases and Understanding Our Impact and  
14 Managing our different Bias. Based on the information in the training,  
15 we have had an improvement in complaints between employees versus  
16 supervisors. And the plan is to distribute a smaller type of course to  
17 target our employees as well, so that we can lower the amount of  
18 employee versus employee complaints that happen.

19 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Question.

20 MR. HARDY: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Is there a survey that's being taken after they  
22 complete this training? and is the training a mandatory training? Or a  
23 voluntary training?

24 MR. HARDY: All of the training is mandatory for all of our  
25 Supervisors and there is a survey that they take after they complete  
26 the course to collect feedback on it.

27 COMMISSIONER BLUE: So will that be a continued survey?

28 MR. HARDY: Yes.

1 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Semi-annually or something of that nature?

2 MR. HARDY: It will be an annual training that they will  
3 have to do every year and the coursework will, of course, update as  
4 materials come out as well. So, we still participate in the DBE Program  
5 here as well. Our department works on behalf of New York State and  
6 we're still certifying DBEs as well. And with ADA, we make sure we are  
7 still compliant with all of our Metro and Airport facilities and  
8 they're compliant with ADA as well. Any other questions?

9 MS. MINKEL: Just a comment though. I know Dejuan went over  
10 it very quickly, the DBE Certification, but we are the only agency west  
11 of Albany that does it for the region. So it's quite a bit of work that  
12 Dejuan and his department take care of.

13 MR. HARDY: Yeah, we also travel out to Rochester and do  
14 different outreach programs to get those DBEs certified as well for  
15 small businesses. And now that COVID has slowed down, Buff State also  
16 hosts them as well.

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, Rochester doesn't do that?

18 MR. HARDY: No, we do it.

19 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Well, what do you know?

20 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Prior to this initiative, have there been a lot  
21 of EEO complaints within the organization?

22 MR. HARDY: Within the organization, yeah, I'll say, since  
23 the complaint process, we haven't had any this year. But in the past  
24 three (3) years, we've had eighteen (18) complaints across the  
25 organization. But in the past year since we did this training, we've  
26 had zero (0).

27 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Great. Great.

28 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So we drive out to Rochester. They don't do it.

1           We do it for them, essentially.

2 MR. HARDY:                           Well, there's no, there's no DBE Certification.

3           They don't do any DBE Certifications at all.

4 COMMISSIONER PERRY:                That's great.

5 CHAIR ROCHE:                        They don't?

6 MR. HARDY:                        They don't. No.

7 COMMISSIONER PERRY:                Just another thing we do better than Rochester.

8 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS:            Laughter.

9 COMMISSIONER PERRY:                Thanks.

10 CHAIR ROCHE:                        Better than Rochester [laughter].

11 MR. HARDY:                        Any other questions? Thank you.

12 MS. NOVO:                         Thanks, Dejuan.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY:                Thank you.

14 MS. NOVO:                        OK. So on the last slide, page fifteen (15),

15           I'm sorry, hold on, on slide fifteen (15) is our contract status. So,

16           we have thirteen (13) contracts and Matt [Van Vessem] is a very, very

17           busy person. [Laughter]. So four (4) out of those thirteen (13) though

18           we are presently in or are scheduled to negotiate. So, we're on, we're

19           actually everything is on time as far as negotiations is concerned. So,

20           that's just a breakdown of the number of employees. Give a little bit

21           more of a detail to where we are.

22                                        Last page, page sixteen (16), this is an overview of

23           our Medical Department. Just stats, shows a little bit of everything

24           that we have, some of the moving parts to our medical department. We

25           have a of course a nurse on staff, an administrative assistant and of

26           course our PA and doctor is on staff as well for all of our 19A

27           physicals for drug testing, medical clearances and so forth. This is

28           just an overview of a lot of ins and outs for medical. Lot of employees

1 coming in and out. So, if there are no further questions, that will  
2 conclude my report.

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Um, just a few questions...

4 MS. NOVO: Sure.

5 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, some years ago, Rochester, or least Monroe  
6 County operations, Rochester City operations, they shrank their service  
7 footprint, did they not?

8 MR. GEORGE: They've gone through some radical changes in  
9 Rochester where they've moved to a flex service and eliminated a lot of  
10 fixed routes.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yeah. I'm just... I just want to point out that  
12 they're not providing service to a big, huge metro area that hadn't  
13 changed at all. They had a big change, cutting routes, changing their  
14 service some years ago. So, I just want to make that comparison first  
15 when people are talking about Rochester. The other thing is that, you  
16 know, we're not negotiating at this table, but a selecting of strategy  
17 for whether a labor organization is going to focus on benefits or pay,  
18 that's really up to the union and management but the union initiates  
19 that. Some, some, some units in different regions choose to focus on  
20 pay as opposed to benefits. Some unions here may choose to do the  
21 opposite thing and that's subject to bargaining between labor and  
22 management. But I noticed from some of the material that you had that  
23 there are really stark differences in the amount of our health  
24 contribution as opposed to Rochester's, the amount of the pension  
25 contribution we make as opposed to Rochester's. Could you just give a  
26 couple of quick statistics on those two (2) things? And then anything  
27 else that you think is particularly remarkable that we offer that's  
28 dramatically better than what is in Rochester's contract for its

1 drivers?

2 MS. NOVO: Sure. So I can give, like for example, the  
3 healthcare that you just mentioned, I can give you an example of the  
4 weekly contributions for employees.

5 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yeah. How about that one?

6 MS. NOVO: OK. Sure. So I'll use a Family because a  
7 majority of everyone is using the Family. That's what the majority uses  
8 we use when talking with other HRs as well.

9 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Go.

10 MS. NOVO: So for example, our medical contribution for an  
11 employee under the NFTA, \$55, I'm sorry \$52.99.

12 COMMISSIONER PERRY: How, per?

13 MS. NOVO: Per week. I'm sorry.

14 COMMISSIONER PERRY: \$52.99 a week.

15 MS. NOVO: And in Rochester, they pay \$170.00 a week.

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I'm sorry. What did you say?

17 MS. NOVO: \$170.00.

18 COMMISSIONER PERRY: \$130.00 dollars more a week, that their  
19 operators pay?

20 MS. NOVO: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Every week?

22 MS. NOVO: Every week.

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: For their health insurance that our drivers  
24 pay?

25 MS. MINKEL: That equates to \$4.25 an hour.

26 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Wow. That's what I would call a whopper. OK. So  
27 that's health insurance.

28 MS. NOVO: OK.



1 COMMISSIONER PERRY: They pay this huge amount.

2 MS. NOVO: Yes.

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: And then we pay a very... We pay an industry  
4 beneficial standard, you know, compared to other...

5 MS. NOVO: Yes.

6 COMMISSIONER PERRY: ...systems.

7 MS. NOVO: Yup. In other, yes. So on a pension, you  
8 mentioned a pension, so we're paying as an employer, we're paying  
9 eleven percent (11%), the employees [are] paying five (5) for NFTA. At  
10 Rochester, the employer is paying 3.09% and the employee's paying 4.6.  
11 So on the pension, of course, you look at the employer's side. Eleven  
12 percent (11%) we are paying.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Un-hum.

14 MS. NOVO: Yeah. And they're paying, and at Rochester, the  
15 employer's paying 3.09.

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Wow. Any other, any other big, I mean those are  
17 the ones that jumped out at me.

18 MS. NOVO: Yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Just the big, big..

20 MS. NOVO: Yes. I would look at retiree healthcare.

21 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes.

22 MS. NOVO: We offer healthcare...

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Ah!

24 MS. NOVO: We offer healthcare, it was 100% up until the  
25 last contract. Now they pay whatever the contribution would be for the  
26 new hires coming through. But we pay, we were paying 100% up until the  
27 last contract. Now they would only have to pay, say they retired, they  
28 would only have to pay eleven percent (11%) for the new hires though.

1 For the new, yeah... and Rochester has no retiree healthcare after 2015.

2 They took away their retiree healthcare. To me, that, that's huge..

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: That's huge. Amazing and compare the vacancies.

4 I mean, there was a suggestion somewhere that the, you know, the reason

5 that they are so great and they cover all these routes and all that is

6 because they pay so much. So they must have no vacancies at all in

7 their driver positions, right?

8 MS. NOVO: No. They have seventy (70). [Laughter].

9 COMMISSIONER PERRY: How many do we have?

10 MS. NOVO: We have forty-eight (48).

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So they have more vacancies than us?

12 MS. MINKEL: That's drivers.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I mean these drivers must know something. And

14 so, with the, the only point that I was trying to make is with

15 listening to those facts, for the Commissioners here, for all of us, we

16 need to be advocates for our community. But more than anything else,

17 advocates for people who are unemployed or underemployed who absolutely

18 have the aptitude, like these high school kids, at Burgard, Niagara

19 Falls High School, who have the aptitude and the ability to do these

20 jobs, which are excellent industry jobs, with excellent. It's a job for

21 life that will carry them for the rest of their life with retiree

22 health and all these other benefits where there is a very high level of

23 satisfaction. And all I would ask, I know everybody at this table knows

24 that and we do it, but I would ask some of our elected officials who

25 are constantly saying that Rochester is better, and all those things,

26 would speak to their constituents and tell them that these are great

27 jobs with great benefits for life and that they should be encouraging

28 to say that this a good place to work, a good job and good benefits and

1           they shouldn't say these are bad jobs and Rochester is better. It's  
2           not. And that's all I got to say.

3 COMMISSIONER BAYNES:           Well put.

4 COMMISSIONER BLUE:           Well, they're not comparing apple to apple.

5 MS. MINKEL:                   Right.

6 COMMISSIONER PERRY:           That's right.

7 COMMISSIONER BLUE:           So, you're going to have that demographic of  
8           people encouraging their legislator or political affiliate to ask for  
9           more wages but that's why we ask for a break down.

10 CHAIR ROCHE:                   Yeah.

11 COMMISSIONER BLUE:           Which this I think will help..

12 CHAIR ROCHE:                   Yeah.

13 COMMISSIONER BLUE:           ...in the understanding of having something in  
14           black and white where they can compare for that. But you're right, they  
15           don't know the full story. They are only going on half of it.

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY:           [Laughter.] And any other... Thank you Reverend  
17           Blue. Any other questions or comments for Karen on the HR Committee  
18           Agenda? Hearing none. That concludes our material.

19 CHAIR ROCHE:                   Great job.

20 MS. NOVO:                      Everyone's, everyone's hungry.

21 CHAIR ROCHE:                   [Laughter.] Thank you all. That concludes our  
22           meeting of the Human Resources. Thank you very much. We will take a  
23           break now and return at 12:30 for the Board.

24 MS. MINKEL:                   Thanks everyone.

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