

NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

COMBINED COMMITTEE MEETINGS

JANUARY 27, 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 Mark Blue
4 Commissioner Adam Perry

5 OFFICERS IN THE BOARDROOM:

6 Kimberley Minkel, Executive Director
7 John Cox, Chief Financial Officer

8 STAFF IN THE BOARDROOM:

9 Vicky-Marie Brunette, Deputy General Counsel
10 Pascal Cohen, Sr. Mgr. Aviation Mktg./NFIA Operations
11 Steve Duquette, Chief Information Officer
12 Tom George, Director, Public Transit
13 Darren Kempner, Manager, Government Affairs and Grants
14 Karen Novo, Director, Human Resources
15 Mary Perla, Senior Counsel
16 John Schaefer, Director, Engineering
17 Helen Tederous, Director, Public Affairs
18 Bill Vanecek, Director, Aviation
19 Lee Weitz, Deputy Director of Aviation

20 MEMBERS ON THE PHONE:

21 Commissioner Joan Aul, Treasurer
22 Commissioner Anthony Baynes
23 Commissioner Margo Downey

24 OFFICERS ABSENT:

25 David State, General Counsel

26 CHAIR ROCHE:

27 Thank you for being on screen and on phone,
28 etc. We will now have the Combined Committee Meetings for the Niagara
29 Frontier Transportation Authority and Niagara Frontier Transit Metro
30 System for January, and you know it's January 2022. You just have to
31 look around. I think today we are wearing out masks more for warmth
32 than for safety.

33 [Laughter]

34 CHAIR ROCHE:

35 Kim?

36 MS. MINKEL:

37 Great. Thank you, Sister. Maybe at the
38 beginning of the meeting, even though no votes are being taken, for
39 attendance, I would ask the Deputy General Counsel Vicky Brunette to do
40 the roll call.

1 MS. BRUNETTE: Thank you, Kim. Good morning, Sister.

2 CHAIR ROCHE: Good morning.

3 MS. BRUNETTE: Take the roll call attendance. Commissioner
4 Ansari? Commissioner Aul?

5 COMMISSIONER AUL: Here.

6 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Baynes?

7 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Here.

8 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Blue?

9 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Here.

10 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Downey?

11 COMMISSIONER DOWNEY: Here.

12 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Hicks? Commissioner Hughes?
13 Commissioner Perry?

14 COMMISISONER PERRY: Here.

15 MS. BRUNETTE: Commissioner Persico? Commissioner Tucker?

16 COMMISSIONER TUCKER: Present.

17 MS. BRUNETTE: Chair, Sister Denise?

18 CHAIR ROCHE: Here.

19 MS. BRUNETTE: And Commissioner Wilcox? I'll call again for
20 Commissioner Hicks? Commissioner Persico? Commissioner Hughes?
21 Commissioner Wilcox? All set. OK.

22 CHAIR ROCHE: Thank you very much. And we're going to begin
23 with the financial performance, and I'll ask Christopher Ruminski to
24 lead us.

25 MR. RUMINKSI: Good morning. Thank you, Sister Denise. Good
26 morning, Commissioners. We'll start out with the December 2021
27 performance. For the month, we had an overall positive variance across
28 the Authority of \$783,000.00 dollars. This is the result of higher than

1 budgeted operating revenues and operating assistance of \$1.7 million
2 dollars. That was caused by Metro passenger fares being favorable to
3 budget by \$595,000.00 dollars. BNIA concessions and commissions
4 revenues \$700,000.00 dollars favorable to budget as enplanements were
5 about fifty-three percent (53%) higher than forecast for the month
6 December. Mortgage tax revenue was \$700,000.00 favorable to budget and
7 sales tax revenue was \$1 million dollars favorable to budget for the
8 month of December. We also had lower than budgeted operating expenses
9 for December which had a favorable variance of \$995,000.00 dollars.
10 This was driven by personnel being \$1 million dollars favorable to
11 budget, due to, mostly due to Metro service modifications and
12 vacancies. [clears throat] Excuse me. Maintenance and repairs had a
13 \$137,000.00 dollar favorable variance due to lower Metro vehicle
14 maintenance, lower Metro facility and rail contract costs. Utilities
15 were \$38,000.00 dollars unfavorable to budget, mostly due to higher
16 BNIA electric and gas billings than were budgeted for the month. And
17 insurance and injuries were \$125,000.00 dollars unfavorable for
18 December due to higher Metro claims loss reserve appropriations. And
19 non-operating and capital items were \$1.9 million unfavorable, excuse
20 me, to budget as we are using the better than anticipated Metro results
21 to fund the self-insurance fund at a faster pace than we originally
22 budgeted. Are there any questions on December performance?

23 We can move on to the year-to-date performance.
24 Through December, we are favorable to budget by \$17.8 million dollars
25 as operating revenues are favorable to budget for the year primarily
26 due to higher concession and commission revenue at the BNIA as
27 enplanement numbers recovered sooner than we had anticipated.
28 Additionally, operating assistance is favorable to budget due to

1 higher-than-expected mortgage and sales tax revenue and New York State
2 Transit Operating Assistance and lower than budgeted Metro operating
3 expenses. And then the business center analysis year-to-date and this
4 breaks down the overall performance by business center for the year.
5 And our overall favorable budget variance is driven mostly by BNIA and
6 Metro. BNIA is \$7.1 million dollars favorable to budget for the year.
7 Again, this is due to higher than anticipated enplanements. They're
8 sixty-four percent (64%) ahead of expected enplanements for the year
9 through December and that led to concessions and commission revenue to
10 be favorable to budget by approximately sixty percent (60%). And Metro
11 is \$10 million dollars favorable to budget for the year due to
12 favorable variances in fares, STOA and mortgage and sales tax revenue
13 as well as operating expenses being about nine percent (9%) below
14 budget. Are there any questions regarding the December year-to-date
15 performance?

16 Moving on to our quarterly reports, the quarterly
17 capital report. This report summarizes the total budgeted and actual
18 capital expenditures through the first three (3) quarters of the fiscal
19 year 2022. This is both the NFTA funded portions, equity funded
20 portions, and grant funded for these projects. As of December 31, 2021,
21 we were at about \$20 million dollars favorable to budget. This variance
22 is the result of projects, that when we originally set up this budget
23 well over a year ago, we thought we were going to be, we anticipated
24 they would begin and/or finish in the current fiscal year but due to
25 various things, they are probably going to move on into the next fiscal
26 year. And this is mostly in the Metro bus and rail section. We had a
27 favorable budget variance as expenditures on various projects including
28 the Metro facility building rehab project, public information and

1 scheduling display and Erie Canal Harbor Station rehab. These projects
2 were thought to be, we were going to do them this year, but based on
3 timing, they're going to be pushed off and they are included in out
4 2023 budgets, so that is causing a favorable variance in the current
5 fiscal year. And BNIA has an unfavorable budget variance for the year
6 mostly due to projects, including multi-task snow removal equipment
7 that was budgeted for last fiscal year that didn't actually get
8 delivered until the current fiscal year. So, these are just timings of
9 when these projects occurred, it's not an overall budget issue where
10 the project itself was over or under budget, it's just which year it's
11 slotted into based on the original plan.

12 This next chart is actually the progress of the
13 project from start to finish and how well it performed based on the
14 original budget of the project. This analysis is of projects that
15 closed out in the 2020, 2021 and 2022 fiscal years. During the third
16 (3rd) quarter, there was one (1) project that met the criteria of
17 closing out and being greater than \$500,000.00 and that was twenty-
18 three (23) CNG buses. These were actually delivered in a prior fiscal
19 year, but all the paperwork and the finalization of the project wasn't
20 done until the third (3rd) quarter of this year. And as shown, the
21 budget, the budget, and final closeout of the project actual
22 expenditures were basically on budget, I think there is a \$2,000.00
23 dollar variance, so it finished on budget. Are there any questions
24 regarding the quarterly capital report?

25 Then we can move on to my final two (2) reports.
26 Start with the cash management report. Total cash at the end of
27 December was \$216 million dollars which is \$49 million dollars ahead of
28 budget. Actual is ahead of budget due to Federal COVID relief funds

1 that we have received but have not yet recognized into revenue, higher
2 BNIA concessions and commissions revenue, higher STOA revenue than
3 budgeted and mortgage and sales tax revenue being higher than budgeted,
4 along with operating expenses being lower Authority-wide.

5 And finally, the quarterly investment analysis. CDs
6 make up approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of our investments.
7 These are short-term, three to six (3-6) month CDs, with paltry
8 interest rates currently of .13 and .14 percent. The diversification
9 percentages of the institutions which hold these funds are
10 approximately the same that they've been for the past several quarters.
11 Are there any questions on cash management or on the investment
12 analysis? Thank you.

13 CHAIR ROCHE: Great report, Chris. Thank you. And Risk
14 Management. Christine?

15 MS. D'ALOISE: Good morning, Sister. Good morning,
16 Commissioners. I will begin with the self-insurance liability and
17 funding analysis report. This report measures the relationship between
18 the claims and the funding balance. Overall, it distinguishes between
19 Metro and NFTA as well as general liability claims and workers'
20 compensation claims. Within the detail of this report, well, if you
21 take a look at the bottom of the top box, you'll see that we went up
22 approximately \$1.8 million since the beginning of the fiscal year. And
23 looking into that, what we see is that within the detail of the report,
24 we see that it is a shift from work comp case reserve to our incurred
25 but not reported reserve. Overall over the last few years, this has
26 tended to be a favorable trend because at the end of the year when we
27 have our actuarial report, what we find is that then there's a decrease
28 in our overall liabilities when they shore everything up. So last year,

1 we had a \$4.4 million dollar favorable adjustment. I don't think we'll
2 have that type of adjustment this year, but we did have a 12/31 update,
3 and the actuary thinks our estimate of ultimate retained losses for
4 accidents have decreased since the beginning of this financial, since
5 the beginning of this year, so we think that again we will have a
6 positive variance and the end of the year. So, that is good. Moving
7 down to the funded, funding perspective of the report. At the bottom,
8 you will see we are eighty-point-nine percent (80.9%) funded for all of
9 our claims and IBNR. Of our known case reserves, we're actually 100%
10 funded, but when you include the incurred but not reported, which again
11 is additional case reserve to bring our actuarial estimate to ultimate,
12 we don't have that fully funded, but we are in a strong funded
13 position. If there are no questions, I can move on to our workers'
14 compensation report?

15 CHAIR ROCHE: Any questions?

16 MS. MINKEL: You know, just a comment. We haven't been in
17 this position for years and really this is happening for two (2)
18 reasons. Christine will next talk about how the number of claims are
19 coming down, but we have incredible focus on safety. So, all operations
20 are firing on all cylinders, really trying to keep accidents down and
21 that affects the bottom line. That gives us more money that we can put
22 towards funding. But the other thing that really helped was the Federal
23 Assistance. That was really a game changer because previously we were
24 really paying as you go and that's not prudent for an organization. So,
25 this is an excellent report and I'm so glad we are finally in this
26 position.

27 COMMISSIONER AUL: Kim, it's Joan. Just a general comment, too.

28 You can see the trend certainly heading in the right direction. I would

1 have to think, you know, that we're kind of at the top part of our
2 class here, you know, do you how we compare? I mean, it's not really a
3 question that needs to be answered, but I think we have to be fairly
4 close to best in class on this, I mean this is, these are excellent
5 numbers and results and dedication to really, the risk management of
6 the organization.

7 MS. MINKEL: Yeah. No. Thank you for that comment, Joan.

8 It's difficult because we don't really have a peer organization. There
9 are other transit agencies across the state, but they don't have
10 police, they don't have fire, they don't have airports.

11 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yeah.

12 MS. MINKEL: So we do do something in our safety report
13 where we create a virtual peer, based on the NAICS numbers so that we
14 can roll in police, fire, airport and Metro operations. And when we do
15 the analysis that way, you're right, we do stack up among the best. So
16 that's something that's really important not only to our agency but to
17 the public and I'm so proud that the team has done an excellent job in
18 this area.

19 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yup. Thank you. Thank you to the team. These
20 are wonderful numbers.

21 MS. D'ALOISE: OK. When we take a look at the second report
22 which is the total number of workers' compensation claims versus the
23 average incurred per claim cost, we take a look at this, it's over a
24 long span of time, it's over thirty (30) years but it really gives you
25 a focus on where we were when we started, the high level of claims we
26 were having, over 400 claims per year in the initial decade of self-
27 insurance that came down. And in the last decade, we've really pushed
28 those numbers down even greater. But what you see going the other way

1 is the cost of claims, claims coming on the books versus the claims
2 going off. There's such a difference there. So, that's why it's so
3 important that we continue the focus to keep claims down. If we were
4 staying at those high numbers where we were at the top of the green
5 line, we'd have had tens of million more dollars in reserve costs in
6 this last decade. So, it's extremely important that we're focusing on
7 that. I think this report is a nice way to keep us all focused on that.
8 If there are any questions, I just have one (1) additional update?

9 I wanted to give an update on our communicable
10 disease claims that we had related to the Coronavirus pandemic. Just to
11 recap, in April 2020, we determined that we did have communicable
12 disease coverage on our property insurance policy. We had a limit of \$1
13 million dollars for that exposure. We had it on our property policy
14 that ended in 2020 and our policy that ended in 2021. In that respect,
15 we were fortunate because the pandemic really got up and going in March
16 of '20, and we were in the binding process for 4/1 of '21, so our
17 policy condition didn't change. Had we been off a couple of months, our
18 coverage would have been greatly reduced or non-existent. But the
19 carriers couldn't react quick enough for our date, so we had that
20 coverage and we... And I should step back and say communicable disease,
21 what that coverage is on our property policy, is coverage to clean up,
22 remove and dispose of any communicable disease from our location as
23 well as any business interruption and extra expense if the location had
24 that exposure. So, again, we were very fortunate that we had coverage
25 and we worked with National Fire Adjusters (NFA), we, the Board
26 approved the use of them in April of 2000, I'm sorry, in April of 2020.
27 And when they actually took a look at our policies, I want to mention
28 that they indicated that only of reviewing hundreds and hundreds of

1 policies, only five percent (5%) of the policies had this extension of
2 coverage. So, we were very fortunate. We worked with NFA and we
3 presented two (2) \$1 million dollar communicable disease claims to our
4 property carrier, FM Global, and we're happy to report at this point in
5 time, that we have received both million dollar settlements. We
6 received the first million dollars on 10/29 of '21 and that was for a
7 claim made for Metro specifically. And for the 2021 year, we made a
8 claim for the Buffalo Airport, and we received those monies in on 12/1
9 of 2021. So, we got all we could out of both of our policies related to
10 the coronavirus.

11 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Question? What exactly, we made a claim, what
12 exactly did the claim entail?

13 MS. D'ALOISE: It was for any cleaning expenses, extra
14 expenses. Our claim totals were much more than the million dollars so
15 we really put everything we could possibly put into the claim into it,
16 and the carrier just wrote us a check. So...

17 MS. MINKEL: So, I want to recognize Christine because, for
18 a couple of reasons. She had the foresight, based on what was happening
19 in Toronto with the SARS virus, if everyone recalls going back a decade
20 or more, to make certain that we had coverage for communicable diseases
21 in our insurance policy. She mentioned less than five percent (5%) of
22 people who have coverage had that specific language. That was
23 intentional, so I just want to recognize Christine for that. I also
24 want to recognize her creative nature, and indicating that there were
25 two (2) years that this fell under. That was really her idea and that
26 was the difference between \$1 million and \$2 million. So, it's great to
27 see, we're always paying out to the insurance companies so it's always
28 nice to see when we can get a recovery back. So, thank you Christine...

1 MS. D'ALOISE: Thank you.

2 MS. MINKEL: ...for that good work.

3 MS. D'ALOISE: Thank you.

4 CHAIR ROCHE: Thank you so much for your report, Christine.

5 And Government Affairs, we call upon Darren.

6 MR. KEMPNER: Good morning. I have two (2) slides for you

7 today on page fifteen (15) and sixteen (16) in your packet. Governor

8 Kathy Hochul introduced her Executive Budget last Tuesday, January 18th.

9 This first slide reviews the transit appropriations proposed in the

10 Executive Budget. And as you can see, State Transit Operating

11 Assistance (STOA) certainly, a critical piece to our operations was

12 proposed to increase thirteen percent (13%) to \$66.9 million dollars in

13 the current year. So, we're very thankful for that proposal, that

14 proposed increase and now, obviously, the next steps, this goes to the

15 Legislature for negotiation and finalization by March 31st. The other

16 items listed here are key capital programs for Metro. The Accelerated

17 Transit Capital, the Statewide Transit Modernization and Enhancement

18 Program, both those fund state of good repair for bus and rail

19 operations. The Modernization and Enhancement Program is divvied up

20 amongst non-MTA Transit programs so we expect to receive a portion of

21 that approximately \$6.9 million. The last two (2) here for bus

22 electrification and specifically for Metro rail capital, the Metro rail

23 capital piece is the fourth year of a five-year program as agreed to

24 previously. And then the electrification capital, we have yet to see

25 that appropriated or allocated throughout the state, but we look

26 forward to that third round of \$100 million dollar, five (5) year

27 program being allocated. As I noted at the bottom, the Executive Budget

28 proposed a thirteen percent (13%) increase for NFTA and other upstate

1 transit authorities. It also proposed a thirty-six percent (36%)
2 increase in State Transit Operating Assistance for downstate non-MTA
3 systems which have funded out of a separate dedicated source of revenue
4 in the State Budget, hence the resulting proposal disparity there. Next
5 slide... The Executive Budget...

6 COMMISSIONER AUL: Hey Darren? It's Joan.

7 MR. KEMPNER: Yes?

8 COMMISSIONER AUL: I'm sorry. It's Joan. So, could you give me an
9 example of a non-MTA transit system? I just want to make sure I
10 understand what that is.

11 MR. KEMPNER: Sure. Non-MTA, across the State, everybody but
12 Metro North and bus and rail operations in the city, we often break
13 those down into upstate and downstate. Upstate would be NFTA here in
14 Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Albany and then downstate would be
15 within the metropolitan commuter district, which is really Long Island
16 and Westchester South I believe, it would be those systems.

17 COMMISSIONER AUL: OK. Thank you.

18 MR. KEMPNER: OK. On the Aviation front, the Executive Budget
19 proposed \$150 million dollars for the Upstate Airport Economic
20 Development and Revitalization Competition. This is a great opportunity
21 that we applied to for Buffalo and Niagara Falls this past year. The
22 total at that time was listed as \$250 million. This is the
23 appropriation that would bring the program to a fully funded \$250
24 million dollar program. We expect awards some time in this calendar
25 year.

26 And then the last item I would note - the Governor
27 also proposed a five-year NYS DOT capital plan which is to replace a
28 five-year capital plan a few years back. This is a plan that funds

1 road, bridge, transit and other transportation projects across the
2 State and very critical to projects, transportation projects across the
3 State. We will continue to advocate with the Legislature for funding
4 from that program specific to NFTA projects, in particular Metro
5 Transit Expansion is a project that could benefit from that five-year
6 plan. We will also continue our advocacy on funding for DL&W
7 Development. The total ask for those two (2) projects is \$210 million,
8 \$30 million for DL&W Development and \$180 million for Metro Transit
9 Expansion. And I look forward to sharing our advocacy materials with
10 you at our next meeting. That concludes my report.

11 CHAIR ROCHE: That's good. Thank you very much Darren.

12 MR. KEMPNER: OK.

13 CHAIR ROCHE: And Human Resources. Karen Novo.

14 MS. NOVO: Thank you, Sister. Good morning, Commissioners.

15 CHAIR ROCHE: Do we have all our drivers?

16 MS. NOVO: I'm sorry. What was that?

17 CHAIR ROCHE: Do we have all our drivers?

18 MS. NOVO: [Laughter] Well, that's what I am about to show
19 you.

20 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

21 MS. NOVO: So, the HR Report. Just a couple of slides as
22 well, page eighteen (18) and nineteen (19). Just keeping the Board up
23 to see our challenges are continuing. And they continue to continue to
24 continue and it's definitely keeping us up at night. So, this is where
25 we are today, as of today, and we do have the sixty-one (61) operators,
26 just one (1) little piece of hope here is we did have thirteen (13)
27 that did start on January 10th. So, they're still in the class and you
28 know, being qualified to drive, so they're actually not on the road yet

1 but they're in training right now.

2 CHAIR ROCHE: Right.

3 MS. NOVO: As of today, they are all still with us, all
4 thirteen (13) of them. So, this is a snapshot of where we are today.
5 So, on the second page, it just continues to show different things that
6 we are trying to do. This is just a quick snapshot of different things
7 that the recruiting team is working on. I do like to acknowledge, you
8 know, Tom's Team, Rachel Maloney and John Dembik and all of them on the
9 mechanical side, Helen's Team and even my Team, Holly Carpenter who is
10 our Manager of Recruitment, Nick Kurtz, Amy Hughes and Sue Reinke,
11 everyone's putting every effort into this. I mean, I could go on with
12 names, but I just wanted to recognize a few of them right now. We just
13 had an Open House last Saturday. So, speaking of the cold, all right,
14 so we were a little worried, you know, we got everything out, we got
15 advertisement out with the help of Helen's Team, and again, like I said
16 Tom's Team and my Team, and we had twenty-eight (28) that actually came
17 through. So, being a Saturday morning, cold out, we were very happy
18 with the turn-out and we actually have right now four (4) that are
19 going through the process of hiring for mechanics. So, and we are
20 checking, we are in the process now of checking licenses and all the
21 things we have to do for pre-employment. So, overall, we're all very
22 happy with the turn-out of the Open House. You know, if we get five to
23 seven (5-7) out of that, that's definitely worth it, you know, going
24 forward. So, things, you know, look bright that way so I think we're
25 doing everything we can and we're all in the same boat. Everywhere you
26 go, again, "help wanted". All the Transit Authorities are in the same,
27 same boat too as well. We're actually now, we've been in high schools
28 as well. We went to Burgard and John Dembik and Holly Carpenter, they

1 actually presented to Seniors. They actually gave them the auditorium.
2 They talked about mechanical, mechanical jobs, the operating jobs, so
3 we're getting out there, and then we're actually going to bring them, I
4 think they're working on getting, coming here to look and see, you
5 know, our facilities as well and do a little bit of a tour with that.
6 We're getting the training bus out there. We're getting with John's
7 Team. We're just getting our name everywhere so we're making phone
8 calls, we're calling people, you know, from last year that maybe
9 applied, and maybe haven't touched base with us. So, every effort's out
10 there. As I say, "we're all recruiters". [Laughter]

11 CHAIR ROCHE: Laughter.

12 MS. NOVO: So, we're doing the best we can to bring these
13 numbers down. But I just appreciate all the help that everyone has
14 given us. And I know we've had referrals and Commissioners have called
15 and I really appreciate everything that we can get so it's helpful. And
16 to the Operators out there and Mechanics and all the Staff on the
17 Aviation side, they're doing a tremendous job, I mean we've got these
18 vacancies, we got the COVID that we're working against, I mean
19 everything, it's just been tough [laughter]. But I think it's kudos to
20 everybody out there for getting everything done and getting service on
21 the road so... That will conclude my report. Just wanted to give an
22 update to where we stand today. Any questions? Yes?

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, especially in regards to mechanics but
24 other positions, we're in the same boat as a lot of places that need
25 mechanics.

26 MS. NOVO: Absolutely, yes. Yep.

27 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Is there something that we are doing different
28 or better than all of those other people who are competing for the

1 same...

2 MS. NOVO: Well...

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: ...labor pool?

4 MS. NOVO: Yeah, so I think, we always look at coming to
5 the NFTA as a career. So, we always, you know, recruit that way as a
6 career, the benefits that they have here, the longevity that we've had
7 of employees working here. We even bring retirements back to talk about
8 their success here, how some employees started here as operators and
9 moved up. Being out there every day, getting the word, making phone
10 calls, we're looking at everything. We're evaluating the testing right
11 now, we're just, I feel we're doing everything we can. What others are
12 doing, I really can't speak to what they're doing. But I think we're
13 good.

14 MS. MINKEL: One other thing we're doing, we're working with
15 the Governor's office. The Governor had recently announced that there
16 will be public hearings regarding testing sites, and we petitioned to
17 be included as one (1) of the testing sites that can streamline the
18 process much quicker and easier. Because we are, there's in a war on
19 talent everywhere, from operators to engineers to you name it, it's
20 hard to find people and so in the hiring process, if we can streamline
21 it as much as possible, make it easier, you know, our hopes are that we
22 can grab people as quickly as possible.

23 We're also doing a salary study to make certain that
24 our wages are competitive, not only wages but, you know, how we operate
25 in terms of benefits and paid time off. So, we're open to any other
26 ideas that any Board Member might have, but that's how we're trying to
27 compete. And I think Tom wants to add something...

28 MR. GEORGE: And thank you for your question, I think one of

1 the things that's intriguing about working for the NFTA is we're out
2 with, Karen mentioned our community bus, we have a very modern fleet in
3 technology. So, we're out to the schools showing them our electric bus
4 program, our CNG bus program, and trying to compete on that level
5 because we really have some very interesting unique technologies and
6 some very challenging environments for young people to come into. Many
7 of our competitors don't have that. If we're competing against a
8 Cummins or a traditional diesel manufacturer, or a diesel product, we
9 really have some great opportunities here with our new technologies.

10 COMMISSIONER BLUE: So, these are the numbers that we need to
11 bring up? or these are the numbers that we currently have?

12 MS. NOVO: So, these are the vacancies, it's a snapshot,
13 because it does change, you know, it's a moving target. This is
14 currently a snapshot of where we are.

15 COMMISSIONER AUL: Hey Karen? It's Joan.

16 MS. NOVO: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER AUL: Just a quick question. I think is February
18 usually the month where we see the retirements? And if so, do we expect
19 that we'll see these numbers jump when we look at them next month at
20 this time?

21 MS. NOVO: So, yeah, so right now, just looking at it,
22 just to give you a number for ATU, for operators and mechanics, we have
23 a total of ten (10) that are retiring for February. So, normally our
24 numbers over the past few years have been much higher, so we're seeing
25 a little, we're seeing a curb but it's such a moving number that we may
26 hit a little bit of a lull but then it's going to go back up so... I was
27 going to work on something to show, like a graph, especially for our HR
28 Committee coming up, to give more detail as to where we've been, and

1 where we are now and where we're forecasting out. Because it's...

2 COMMISSIONER AUL: OK.

3 MR. GEORGE: Just one...

4 MS. NOVO: Yup.

5 MR. GEORGE: One comment I'd like to add on to that. If you

6 go to our Annual Performance Report, and you can't necessarily do this

7 but five (5) years ago, if you show the segregation of our workforce by

8 seniority...

9 MS. NOVO: Yup.

10 MR. GEORGE: ...we had a much more senior workforce five (5)

11 years ago than we do now relative to years of experience. So, you know,

12 we've got a much less tenured experienced workforce today which alludes

13 to the fact that you may not see the rate of retirements that we have

14 seen over the last five (5) years. It should start to flatten a little

15 bit with that tenure.

16 MS. NOVO: Right. Right. That's OK.

17 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. That's a good point. It

18 had to plateau, you would think, at some point. So, that makes logical

19 sense. Thanks Tom. Thanks Karen.

20 CHAIR ROCHE: Any other questions? Well, good work. It's a

21 day-by-day routine now. [Laughter]

22 MS. NOVO: [Laughter] Yup. Thank you.

23 CHAIR ROCHE: And Capital Report now. John Schaefer.

24 MR. SCHAEFER: Good morning, Commissioners.

25 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Good morning.

26 MR. SCHAEFER: Good morning, Sister. So, typically just have a

27 written report. We've decided to put some photos together to highlight

28 some of the projects. So, if you go to the list, Lara? Some of the ones

1 we'll highlight: BNIA Deice Aircraft Deicing Expansion Project, this
2 one's also known as the Subsurface Engineered Wetlands Expansion or
3 Phase II, BNIA Baggage Claim Expansion Project, also known as the
4 Terminal Enhancement Project, DL&W Station Site Work, and the Humboldt
5 Station Emergency Repair are the ones that we have photos to show. Go
6 ahead. So, what you are looking at is an arial view of the Buffalo
7 Airport. The red circles show the areas, the work sites that we had for
8 our Deicing Project. Just as a reminder or maybe it's new information
9 for some, deicing fluids that's used to deice the aircraft contains
10 glycol that ends up in our storm water and we, in about 2008, we
11 installed a subsurface wetlands project to treat that storm water
12 before it exited to public waters. That area is over by, between, if
13 you're looking from online, between areas one (1) and two (2), between
14 there are called subsurface wetlands. There's a few of them there,
15 about the size of a football field, that treat the storm water and
16 eliminate or mitigate any amount of glycol. So, fast forward to this
17 project, this project expands and has addressed peak deicing times.
18 Obviously, like a day like today would be peak deicing time. If you
19 could flip to the next one? I'll show you how we've done that.

20 MS. SENIW: Sorry.

21 MR. SCHAEFER: Oop. Back one more. Thank you. So, a big
22 component of this project, what you're looking at is a lagoon. It's
23 five (5) million gallons. It's a, it does have a cover which the next
24 picture will show in just a minute. So, the first thing you hear, of a
25 lagoon, you're thinking exposed water, waterfall, and all of the
26 wildlife which is a detriment to the airfield. It is a covered lagoon
27 almost like a balloon if you will, and I will show you a picture on the
28 next one in a minute of how that works but this gives you an

1 appreciation. Again, just a little bigger than a football field is the
2 size of it. It is on the airfield just north of our old ARFF, to give
3 you perspective. It was item one (1) I believe on the previous screen.
4 Can you flip to the next one? The next photo is a... You can forward it.

5 MS. SENIW: Sorry.

6 MR. SCHAEFER: The next photo is another one of the lagoon, a
7 little more close up and it has water in it. What you're looking at are
8 panels that float. They are made of Styrofoam and it's HDPE. What that
9 stands for is high density polyethylene. So that's Styrofoam inside
10 these. You can see little break lines of these panels that allows it to
11 float sort of like a bladder if you will although there is no pressure
12 pushing back down on it. It just allows it to expand or contract as the
13 water fills. Again reinforcing the fact no exposed large amounts of
14 water to not attract water fowl which of course does not fare well for
15 jets. Go on to the next one.

16 What you're looking at here, this is a pump and valve
17 pit. It's located in the southwest corner of the airfield. Thought I
18 would just include it just so you would get an appreciation of some of
19 the large bore pipe. The larger ones on the left-hand side are fourteen
20 (14) inch diameter. Just further left of that you can get a glimpse of
21 some of the pumps. This one (1) in the foreground is an eighteen (18),
22 an eight (8) inch pipe. Sorry, the larger ones are the four (4)
23 [fourteen], these are the eight (8) inch. You can go on to the next
24 one. So, this is an additive storage tank. It's used for in the wetland
25 cells. The additive, for those that are interested, is nitrogen
26 phosphorous. What does that all mean? Inside the cells, you are trying
27 to create an environment that these varied microbials consume the
28 glycol. So, things like oxygen, things like these nutrients try to set

1 up this atmosphere that enables that to occur. So, this is just one (1)
2 of the ones we installed here as part of the project.

3 What remains on the project, commissioning and
4 training is in progress followed by close-out. So, it's being used now.
5 It's been being used for a few months. The automation came online here
6 in the past few weeks. Now it's getting closer to close-out and things
7 like as-builts and manuals are being transferred over, finishing up
8 commissioning. We can go on to the next project.

9 So, this one was really tolerated for a number of
10 years, and we're getting close to the end. So, it's the baggage claim
11 expansion project, also known as Terminal Enhancement. Selected this
12 photo, to give you kind of a, you can cover a couple of things with
13 this photo: the timeline of how things came online, and it really was
14 the start of the project, and a lot of things came onboard as part of
15 this project. So, if you recall the old airport or the old terminal,
16 baggage claim of the airport had three (3) carousels at much less
17 capacity. We now have four (4). The first carousel, carousel one (1)
18 was brought on in November of 2020, four (4) months ahead of schedule.
19 The second carousel, number two (2), brought on in April of 2021, one
20 (1) month ahead of schedule. And carousels three (3) and four (4) came
21 on, this just before the Thanksgiving holiday. That also was four (4)
22 months ahead of schedule. I do want to give our Team a lot of credit on
23 all of the project, particularly three (3) and four (4), we made it a
24 point, there was a need by Operations to, to get the other two (2)
25 online. They were experiencing issues with one (1) and two (2) because
26 three (3) and four (4) weren't online and we started ramping up flights
27 in and out of Buffalo so that'd be Pike, AECOM, and Jacobs as well as
28 the NFTA Staff. Really did a nice job of focusing staff on getting

1 three (3) and four (4) up in time for one of our holiday rushes. If we
2 can skip to the next one (1), please?

3 This one (1) here, this photo is between carousels
4 two (2) and three (3) is a water, call it our feature wall and it
5 resembles a waterfall, an abstract if you will, a waterfall with wood
6 slats and LED lighting. The wood by the way, both in that feature wall
7 and in the ceiling is real wood, and it's cherry wood for those
8 interested. So, it was selected not only for its looks but cherry wood
9 is a common, common tree in this area, indigenous to Western New York.
10 Can you go on to the next one?

11 So, a handrail. Why include a handrail? So, what's so
12 big about a handrail? There's some neat features of the handrail that's
13 worth pointing out, a little hometown flavor. The buffalo, it's a
14 frosted in glass buffalo, course our logo, and you'll see some cutouts
15 in the next photo of a buffalo, a buffalo here on the corner piece. So,
16 this is stainless steel half inch thick with a cutout of the buffalo,
17 technically a bison as we all know in this area. So, it's a little
18 detail we wanted to point out. Handrail, people think what's the big
19 deal, why bother? But there was extra care to put in the hometown
20 flavor and we felt it was necessary to show that and we're just
21 finishing that up now. Go to the next one (1).

22 So solar panels, yes, these solar panels are out on
23 the West, this is the new expansion on the West side. This is the roof,
24 and on the roof, we have solar panels. This is still in progress. One
25 (1) of the side effects if you will of focusing resources on the
26 carousels, for example, some things have a tendency to give. That would
27 have been sorting out the solar panels. To the naked eye, it looks like
28 it's ready to go. There needs to be some panels reallocated or

1 relocated to set up some maintenance accessibility. We have all that
2 straightened out, but of course the weather is here, and we do not want
3 to send folks up on the roof at this time, so that will carry over to
4 the spring. So, in comparison to the whole project, it's very small but
5 it is a reasonable effort to set up some of these panels that will be
6 relocated further down to give some better access to, for maintaining
7 the solar panels. Just to get a feel, you know, sometimes there is not
8 an appreciation for solar panels. So, it looks like quite a few solar
9 panels. It's nice for making use of the roof space. Nominally speaking
10 it is 45 kilowatts of power, OK? So, what does that mean to get an
11 appreciation for that? That runs two (2) twenty-five (25) horsepower
12 motors, about 60 amps. So, you're not going to run the airport on
13 these, but it does, as you hear the expression "slows the meter". We're
14 not back feeding into the grid, make sure that is understood, but it
15 quote "slows the meter". So, what do those two (2) twenty-five (25)
16 horse powers give you? One (1) of our rooftop units and one (1) supply
17 fan, that's about twenty-five (25) horsepower and maybe one (1) of the
18 refrigerator compressors used for cooling the building. We have several
19 of these throughout the roof so it's a piece, but it is a piece that
20 we're collecting our own energy here, just making use of the roof
21 space. So, what's left on the project, the solar panels, if you can
22 just back up one (1) more...

23 MS. SENIW: Sorry.

24 MR. SCHAEFER: Solar panels, as-builts, you may have heard me
25 mention in previous Board Meetings about as-builts. That's a, if you
26 have a design package, sometimes things are learned as you're going
27 through the building that weren't discovered during design and you make
28 adjustments to the drawings. You know, it's 750 drawings plus or minus

1 that are about twenty-five percent (25%) complete of going through the
2 as-builts and verifying and then updating our computer model. So, that
3 will take us through to about the end of March. We're in the progress
4 [process] of getting all of our manuals and some minor punch list
5 items. Punch list is if you check out an item, we may have started and
6 may have started using things like elevators, escalators. Punch list
7 items takes a closer look at items that may have not, whether it's a
8 workmanship issue or something that wasn't quite completed during the
9 bulk of the design, we're making sure it doesn't get missed before we
10 send them on their way. Next one.

11 This is a rendering. Many of you may remember this. I
12 was just trying to give a view of what DL&W looks like. This is DL&W
13 Station and we're just in to, just to the closing part of the track
14 work phase, or what we call the site work phase. And this is of course,
15 you'd be, if you had the lake to your back and the river's to your
16 right and the arena is to your left and of course DL&W is in the
17 foreground. Can you click to the next one?

18 So now we're looking the other way. You can see the,
19 for reference, you can see the naval yard in the background. On the
20 left part of this photo, it's worth mentioning because you may have
21 heard us talk about the city's project, maybe even seen it happen
22 physically, there's a crossover, that this will be for revenue service,
23 will be on your left. And track, non-revenue maintenance operations
24 will happen on the right. So, there's a crossover that was talked a lot
25 about as part of the city's project that has recently been removed.
26 That was located on Main Street of course near Tim Hortons, near the
27 Marriott. Quite a bit of coordination took place to allow that to be
28 removed because our operations had to make accommodations and it took a

1 lot of synching in of what's happening in the yard and what tracks are
2 here and not here, as you can see, some are gone or were just being
3 installed. So, again this is the crossover that you may have heard the
4 city talk of intermittently of what they needed to have removed and
5 quote unquote "we're waiting on the NFTA to have completed". Well, it's
6 physically in place trackwork-wise. If you could click to the next one?

7 This is a more current version of it, of course it's
8 snow-ridden but some things that remain on the crossover are the
9 catenary which is of course the power lines and the tension lines that
10 hold up the power lines above and some train control. So that is the
11 crossover that we'll, for what we call revenue service. It will queue
12 the trains' comings and goings as it comes into behind us, if you will,
13 in this photo, will be the station itself. Can you go on to the next
14 one?

15 So, this was included just to show a little bit
16 about, this was back in the summer, what this person is doing is
17 compacting the sub-base. It gives you a little insight of what's
18 happening and why it's taking a bit of time to do trackwork. It's more
19 than just laying track, you've got to start four (4) or five (5) foot
20 deep, maybe even six (6) foot, put your stone, which is your sub-base,
21 and compact it. In this particular area is where we're transitioning
22 from. The foreground which you can just see the pre-cast panels which
23 is embedded rail. OK? And then in this area, you have a concrete pad is
24 where that should transition, the transition tracks place, transition
25 to a stone ballast. So, it goes stone ballast from here on into the
26 DL&W. Change Order, there was a Change Order that the Board approved,
27 Change Order Seven (7), where you may recall we had added a crosswalk,
28 a pedestrian crosswalk and track infill, so what was initially was

1 going to be stone-based, the Charge Order will not have the stone base
2 filled with asphalt and then have a concrete pedestrian walk in this
3 area. So, all the exposed surfaces, it will take away all of the
4 exposed surfaces, it will have some kind of walkable surface with
5 encouragement to go to the crosswalk to cross the tracks to get to the
6 river or vice versa. Can you go on to the next one?

7 So, this is inside what was formerly called the train
8 shed, is now our station. Let's start with something that may not be so
9 obvious. The foreground that runs the whole length of the picture, if
10 you will, or if you are looking into the picture, you'll see these kind
11 of green nubs sticking out, that's coated rebar. That was part of this
12 project. That's the base of what's going to be the platform. It's going
13 to be a center platform and to the right is where track will be laid.
14 The cutout, pretty significant work that took place, there's actually
15 three (3) cutouts. That concrete is two (2) foot thick predominately,
16 but I will add, if you take a closer look at the existing columns,
17 these are the ones, the concrete ones that taper out, it actually adds
18 another foot of concrete so it's three (3) foot of concrete in every
19 one of the columns. That was cutout so we can provide access to the
20 second floor. In doing so, it weakens the floor, so that's why you'll
21 see these galvanized steel, rectangular tube steel to make up for the
22 loss of strength by making the cutout. The red lines are fire
23 protection lines. Go on to the next one. Oh, incidentally, if you can
24 just back up one second, you may have looked, somebody noticed "what's
25 all that dark stuff on there?". That's soot from yester year. That's
26 nothing new from part of the project, and you'll see that on the second
27 floor too. You may have known how this was used for locomotives on the
28 first and second floor which explains why it's two (2) foot thick

1 concrete and even three (3) at the columns. Just to give you an
2 understanding of what everyone's looking at here. That is not new soot
3 from us. [Laughter]

4 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

5 MS. MINKEL: It's a beautiful patina.

6 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

7 MR. SCHAEFER: So, now we're on the second floor. This is a
8 great perspective for a few things. So, you hear a lot about the second
9 floor and a lot of initiative to try and make use of that second floor
10 in this station and the hopes to drive that. So, what you're looking at
11 are three (3) cutouts. The foreground has one (1), and then there's one
12 (1) in the middle and the one (1) in the background. They are, in no
13 particular order, for the stairs, an escalator and the elevator. The
14 elevator, if it wasn't obvious to you, would be the steel structure.
15 That's where we're going to come in in the second phase to have the
16 elevator come up. So, there were three (3) of these and again as you
17 look through the hole cutout, you can get an appreciation of how thick
18 it was and some of the extra structural steel that had to be added to
19 make sure the floor didn't cave in. The escalator, back it up one (1)
20 more time for me, just to give, round out the pictures, so all of this
21 work has been part of the first phase, we'll call it. I like to refer
22 to it as the trackwork phase, because it gives a little more practical,
23 people understanding it. It's actually called the sitework phase. The
24 next phase, the Board approved back in the fall, back in October to
25 Cerrone, that will do technically called the MEP (mechanical,
26 electrical, plumbing), what I like to refer to as the station proper,
27 or the station work. That's where it's going to start looking more like
28 a station. Things like the platform I described, escalators, stairs,

1 elevators, it starts to resemble an actual station. So, the anticipated
2 start date of that is in March, with a completion of that phase, the
3 station proper, in 2023. The sitework should be done by the spring.
4 That's all I have on this one (1). Keep going.

5 So, I thought I would take the opportunity, and I
6 know it wasn't a program project, but thanks to a lot of cooperation
7 from Board Members, we were able to get an emergency procurement for
8 Humboldt Station Tile Repair. This, you may recall, was for tile that
9 was found falling from quite aways up periodically and landing on the
10 floor. So, it creates a hazard. That was about \$265,000.00 dollars, not
11 to exceed, that the Board approved back in September. So, here's what
12 you bought. A lot of it is things just to set up a safe work
13 environment and what you're looking at is a web, if you will, of
14 scaffolding. So that allows us to get to the various areas. As you
15 know, it's a multilevel station. So, it allows us to get to various
16 levels of the station. The photos are kind of incurrent to prequels if
17 you will. What you're looking at now on the left are walls that have
18 had the tiles removed. New tiles expected either today or tomorrow with
19 install starting soon after. If you'd like to click to the next one?
20 So, what it looked like before then, you can see the old tile, and why
21 I chose this photo and the next photo, some of the things that weren't
22 so obvious when you approved the emergency expenditure, is first the
23 vastness, so to give you the appreciation of some of these things. This
24 scaffolding goes over an escalator, so it's not so simple as just
25 dropping scaffolding, you have to get a licensed professional engineer
26 in to layout how the scaffolding is, how to lay it out on the stairs
27 and to shore it up and there's a piece of artwork in the background
28 that was vintage to the original installation of the station. And you

1 can click to the next one. So, this was removed and it's still located
2 on the premises, and we have a [an] art conservator cleaning it and
3 tidying it up, if you will, so we can reestablish it or reattach it so,
4 interesting piece. You know maybe it wasn't so obvious. Again, the tile
5 was a big part. You can see from this photo, if you look a little bit,
6 you can see some of the spots that are missing tile. That will give you
7 an example. There's one (1) in here, there's a few in here, that's what
8 prompted this whole project and the concern. So, again, I thought we'd
9 include it just to say what you bought and what's involved with it.
10 It's very labor-intensive. At the end, there'll be new tile and back to
11 business and that's expected here by April. And that concludes my
12 presentation unless there are any questions on any of those projects or
13 any others for that matter?

14 CHAIR ROCHE: Any questions? That's a lot of work.

15 MS. MINKEL: You know, what I will say, and you know, kudos
16 to John and his Team, he just went over about \$160 million dollars'
17 worth of projects. He has a small team. We've had a number of
18 retirements - Engineers from the Engineering Department. With the war
19 on talent, we're struggling to get Engineers, but you can see the
20 extent of what they manage and still a lot of work to be done. On top
21 of this, he did not talk about projects that are in the pipe, that
22 major work on the 5-23 runway...

23 MR. SCHAEFER: Yup.

24 MS. MINKEL: ...at the airport so some significant capital
25 projects but John and his Team really have done an outstanding job of
26 staying on top, managing the contractors, keeping costs under control
27 and the projects really on schedule and in some cases, ahead of
28 schedule. So, thank you John.

1 MR. SCHAEFER: Yeah, thanks Kim. You mentioned 5-23. It's not
2 a secret, inflation is here for a while and it's now just starting to,
3 I'm going to say we're fortunate on bids we got for DL&W's because in
4 my opinion, this is solely on my opinion, on this second phase of DL&W
5 the numbers came in, right in. I'm kind of giving a warm-up to what 5-
6 23 came in. We just got the bids and it's looking more like almost ten
7 percent (10%), just under ten percent (10%) higher than what we, that
8 our estimate came for [to]. So, we're having to make decisions on what
9 to do. Right? Re-bid? Not re-bid? Is it worth re-bidding? So, a lot of
10 that came from, in that particular case, it's a lot of asphalt at 5-23
11 so oil prices drive that significantly so, that's just, I use that as
12 an example. The Team's done a really nice job just trying to keep up
13 with the latest shortages whether it's people having opinions on what's
14 causing the inflation, or what's causing the shortages. And there's a
15 whole bunch of them and there's probably a little bit of everything.
16 But it seems to stop surprising us, but every given time, it seems to
17 be something new. One time it was doors, another time it happened to be
18 just steel pipe, things that were never assumed long lead items, you
19 have to definitively ask and go look and see where it stands as far as
20 the latest. So, thanks for pointing that out, Kim. That is, that is
21 something that on this project that started to weigh in on some of the
22 change orders that we were able to navigate through. We're starting to
23 see it more on new projects.

24 CHAIR ROCHE: This is a long project too, one you'll have
25 going on for months...

26 MR. SCHAEFER: Yeah, it has, and, you know, Operations has
27 been real good about this. You know, yeah, pandemic's been awful for a
28 number of things but one (1) little piece that was good is that it

1 didn't impact a lot of operations mostly so we were able to take
2 advantage of that. Any questions?

3 CHAIR ROCHE: Good work.

4 MR. SCHAEFER: Hearing none. Thanks.

5 MS. MINKEL: Thanks John.

6 CHAIR ROCHE: OK. Surface Transportation Committee. Tom
7 George?

8 MR. GEORGE: Good morning, Commissioners.

9 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Good morning.

10 MR. GEORGE: On our agenda this morning, we have two (2)
11 discussion items. What I'd like to do is start with our Transit
12 Development Plan. We annually review and update our Transit Development
13 Plan. This is our strategic initiative to look at our agency and look
14 at the services we provide as well as the facilities we provide and
15 chart our path for the future. We do this and we put this on our
16 website so that the community can see this as well, but also it's
17 important to just note that we get in front of you so that you see what
18 these things are and it's the opportunity or the encouragement to you
19 to weigh in on these and to provide us with input. Are there things on
20 here that you question why we have those? Or are these things that are
21 not on here and you question why we don't have those? So that's really
22 the primary focus of us getting in front of you and then so that we can
23 share a collective vision for the agency with our customers and with
24 our community. So, with that being said, I want to introduce Rob Jones,
25 who is our Manager of Planning, and is essentially the owner of this
26 plan and he's going to walk you through it and do a presentation.

27 MR. JONES: Yeah, great. Thanks, Tom, for the introduction
28 and good morning, Commissioners. Tom mentioned it is something we do

1 every year in terms of our Transit Development Plan but the last time
2 we were here talking to the Board was in 2019 because the pandemic
3 happened so our priorities changed. So, it is something we update
4 internally. It is intended to be a living document so that when
5 projects are completed, when they're moved, when things change, we kind
6 of move those pieces. So, I think it's a good place to start with the
7 current year. The intent of this, Tom covered already is, you know, to
8 align our priorities, to have it out there with community input and the
9 Board of Commissioners and it really helps to have this discussion
10 amongst all of the Metro members as well. While Service Planning kind
11 of owns the document and helps put it together, we need input from all
12 over the Authority. All of the Managers in Metro, as well, have their
13 input in there. So, it helps people think about their priorities over
14 the next year, the next three (3) years, the next ten (10) years as we
15 go. So, I'll start there, well we've completed a lot of items that we
16 talked about since the last time we were up here in 2019 that we're
17 really proud of. So, if you look at this list, these items all, this
18 was in the document that was sent out as part of the appendix, so we
19 wanted to try and keep them in there, we put the completed date, a lot
20 of those items are things that are parts or phases. John talked about
21 DL&W, so we have two (2) things that happened under there, one (1) of
22 those was DL&W design, one (1) was the construction beginning. So, as
23 John mentioned, there's still construction to be done on phase two (2).
24 So, a lot of the projects are broken up into various phases of those
25 same projects so we can help see where those are kind of on a longer
26 timeline. Other items that we are really excited about that were
27 completed kind of in that two (2), two and a half (2.5) year time frame
28 were a mobile ticketing pilot, the community bus, Karen brought up the

1 community bus or our training bus, and the Bailey Avenue study which
2 we've talked about in the past as well as our electric bus battery
3 integration program which is now also kicked off.

4 So, the first set of projects is the emerging
5 projects and initiatives. These are things that we are trying to do, at
6 least to kick off in 2022, or complete in 2022. So, it's a pretty
7 ambitious list, as you see. Some of these projects have been started
8 already, the one towards the top like the shelter expansion program. I
9 just wanted to go through kind of quickly and highlight some of the new
10 projects that weren't a member of the previous document and give really
11 brief overviews of those and why we might be particularly excited. We
12 can always go to the TEP document to read more detail. So, one (1) of
13 those is our new timetable and map process and printing moving forward.
14 We're working with Helen's Team, and across Planning, also with IT to
15 come up with a new way of kind of really doing that process. We've had
16 the same timetables, I am going to say, for about the last thirty-five
17 (35) years plus and they've always looked the same. We haven't really
18 changed them as we change things, well it's time for a new change. To
19 stay within our branding and do something exciting, we're changing a
20 lot about the system recently. It's really important to have that
21 branding messaging, kind of tie into that, and really do something
22 exciting. So, here's some examples that the Graphics Team kind of came
23 up with. What would it look like in color? What if we used more
24 representative maps? And those types of things. So, that project has
25 kicked off and we hope to have them to the public sometime within the
26 year 2022.

27 A new Park-and-Ride analysis. So, one (1) thing we've
28 noticed through the last eighteen (18) months to two (2) years that has

1 happened, is that work is changing. We're all here today but you know,
2 people at M&T maybe aren't in the office every day. A lot of people
3 have flexible schedules. Well, what are the needs of our community? Are
4 our Park-and-Rides located at the right locations? Are our partnerships
5 with other communities still viable in those locations? And how do we
6 serve those, right? So, with the changing nature of work, we need to
7 rethink how we're providing our Park-and-Rides as well.

8 Our bench expansion program ties kind of into our
9 shelter expansion program but we've never really had a bench program.
10 So, you all know we have shelters in the system. We have a process for
11 those. The bench program, we've been talking with municipalities about
12 for a while. So, there will be hurdles there because every municipality
13 wants us to do things a little bit different. Some of them want us to
14 talk to the neighbor/property owner, others want us to come together
15 with a public rollout plan. So, it takes a lot of legwork and
16 coordination with the municipalities but we're really excited to start
17 expanding our reach into areas where there may not be enough right-of-
18 way. Maybe the street is narrow like on Grant Street where we really
19 can't fit a shelter and meet ADA requirements but a bench will be
20 helpful for individuals and how to partner with the municipalities to
21 be able to provide that for the riding public.

22 Another one (1) is University Loop operational
23 enhancements. So, this is an area where this property where we control,
24 we can control how many benches we put in these locations very easily.
25 What these amenities are for our passengers, as well as control a
26 little bit of the operational environment in the loop to make it easier
27 on our passengers but also on our operators to be able to provide
28 efficient service to that location.

1 And lastly, under the kind of emerging initiatives,
2 one that I will highlight is a PAL service evaluation. So, our
3 paratransit service as you know is basically exactly at today where we
4 were at two (2) years ago before the pandemic. It's not like the fixed
5 route system where demand has waned over time, the demand for PAL, it's
6 back where it was and it keeps growing, right? So, the PAL service
7 evaluation will kind of look at all of the end-to-end improvements
8 we've made over the last ten (10) years including the IBR and dynamic
9 scheduling and help teach us about where we can be more efficient,
10 where we can be more strategic with our resources. We've basically been
11 on the same bus count for the last ten (10) years. Seventy-four (74)
12 big buses. Do we need to increase that? Do we need to add more
13 resources there? Are there opportunities to be more efficient on the
14 scheduling side and the service delivery side? So, a comprehensive
15 analysis of that will be very important for the Authority moving
16 forward and ensuring that we can provide that service for our
17 paratransit clients.

18 So, I have these short-range initiatives that we're
19 looking at two to three (2-3) years out, so 2023, 2024 and how those
20 align. As John mentioned one (1) of the projects, the DL&W Station
21 opening to the public and how that fits within that short-range
22 projects and initiatives. So, just highlighting a couple of these
23 projects, again these are all detailed within our actual plan that was
24 sent around. I was looking at Bailey BRT design completion. So, we were
25 up talking to the Board exactly one (1) year ago about the Bailey
26 project and our coordination with the city and the NPOs in the region
27 and looking at what those kind of first steps are to get to, you know,
28 having enhanced transit along that corridor. And we anticipate putting

1 out an RFP that moves through planning and part of the engineering
2 phases during this year and being able to start that project and kick
3 that off in terms of a full design phase that will happen within that
4 two to three (2-3) time, two to three (2-3) year timeframe.

5 North Division bus street canopy is another one (1)
6 in full design. We've already gone through the DRR process through
7 John's group, Dennis Lupp, the Manager of Design, leading that process,
8 that stemmed from a planning study to move along that path. We're still
9 working on identifying full funding sources for that project, but we
10 anticipate having a full, full design for that and being able to move
11 that into a shovel ready project over that timeframe which is really
12 exciting, because we've been here through this process of planning up
13 to DRR and up through full design.

14 The rapid transit network evaluation study is also
15 something that is, I think, really critical for the overall direction
16 of the Authority. What this study would do is really look at our
17 overall region, not just where our buses currently go, not where the
18 rail currently goes. Where are the corridors that we are prioritizing?
19 Where are the areas of growth in the system? And say "OK, what are the
20 strategies that we can take to, you know, really map out where our
21 investment should be in the future?", whether those are from a rapid
22 transit in terms of a bus sign, whether those are a light rail
23 expansion, or even potentially street cars through those processes and
24 say "where are we going to align in the future?" We did this about
25 twelve (12) years ago. That's how we kind of how we got to the end
26 first corridor. It's been a while since we did a comprehensive
27 analysis. You see a lot more capital projects happening on the Metro
28 side, in terms of DL&W, and Bailey Ave. This is another opportunity to

1 start saying "well, where do we go from there? Where do we go in the
2 future?"

3 So mid-range, you'll see there's a lot more boxes on
4 the bottom. It's a more broad period that we're talking about three (3)
5 to eight (8) years out. So, there's a little bit more uncertainty in
6 terms of what the funding will be like, where our direction is overall.
7 These things change all the time, but they start about three (3) years
8 out from now and I think there is some potentially really exciting
9 projects within there. One (1) of those is rail station joint
10 development construction so Darren and I have worked together the last
11 four (4) or five (5) years heavily on a lot a TOD work along with the
12 NPO and some of our regional partners, and one of the goals of a lot of
13 that work is to get to an area where we have some joint development of
14 some of our projects, specifically around some of our light rail
15 stations that exist and hopefully the ones that will exist in the
16 future as well. So, hopefully that's well-moving within that timeframe.

17 Another project I'd like to highlight there is
18 service delivery evaluation. So, honestly, in my department, we
19 evaluate our service on an ongoing basis all the time. But we think
20 that really scheduling in these pauses every five (5) years to have
21 someone else potentially come in and take a look at our overall service
22 network, tell us where we can be more efficient. Verry similar to the
23 PAL service evaluation. Look at where emerging demand is, tell us where
24 we should be allocating our resources, where we should put more, where
25 should we take away from, where we should invest in other capital
26 resources as well.

27 And another exciting project in that is the
28 electrification of Cold Spring so we put in here "Cold Spring garage

1 fully electrified" obviously we are moving toward electrification of
2 the first bus delivery very shortly. However, if we look at what that
3 process looks like to electrify a full garage, we're probably talking
4 about five (5) years out from this time frame right now.

5 And lastly the 2030 and beyond, you'll see there's
6 only one (1) project listed on there right now, we're talking eight (8)
7 years out, and that's for Metro Transit Expansion in the Tonawanda
8 Amherst corridor too. And with that, I will turn it over to ask if
9 anyone has any questions on the TDP. I would be more than glad to
10 answer. As I mentioned, it is on the website for public review and
11 comment. It will be talked about with our Citizens Advisory Committee
12 Meeting this afternoon. It is a living document so although we plan on
13 presenting it every January, it will change in the interim as well as
14 we complete projects and add new projects on.

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Do we have wi-fi on the trains?

16 MR. GEORGE: We do not.

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Why?

18 MR. GEORGE: We don't have the capability to communicate
19 within the tunnels at this point in time.

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, no cell service, of course, there.

21 MR. GEORGE: That is correct.

22 COMMISSIONER PERRY: That I knew but, of course, when you are above
23 ground, you have your cell service.

24 MR. GEORGE: That's right.

25 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, what's the issue with wi-fi on trains?

26 MR. GEORGE: We have done some preliminary analysis to see
27 what it would take to do that. We've talked about not only on the train
28 but in the stations.

1 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yeah.

2 MR. GEORGE: One of the things we've looked at specifically
3 is when the fare collection project goes into effect, when we will have
4 barriers in the stations and targeting that as a point to introduce wi-
5 fi in the stations where we have segregated access. Essentially those
6 are our customers versus the community. And then we have also looked
7 with our IT Department of upgrades in the communications systems along
8 the tunnel and we can piggyback wi-fi on to that. So, those are
9 projects that are on our radar but not on the Transit Development Plan.
10 It probably should be. So, thank you. That's a great comment.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Amazing. So, are there, as far as cell service
12 underground, is that something that exists in other systems, I mean
13 that use a similar technological infrastructure as U.S. cellular
14 systems?

15 MR. GEORGE: I believe it does and those systems are ones
16 with significantly higher ridership than NFTA Metro. So be it a MATA or
17 a New York City or even a CTA, the Chicago Transit Authority, those
18 types of systems. The revenue that is generated for the cellular
19 companies is a good return on investment for the use relative to what
20 it costs to actually build those infrastructures out. And we don't have
21 that type of ROI based on our ridership numbers in our system.

22 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, for the plan, so how does, how does
23 somebody go about adding that as one (1) of the considerations for the
24 plan?

25 MR. GEORGE: Adding it...?

26 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Not, not actually doing it, but having an
27 analysis or a consideration of wi-fi and cell service? Because I
28 understand the investment part of it, but I don't know whether that's a

1 million dollars or \$100 million dollars, so how do we, like, find out
2 what the problem is? Or define the problem and then say, not enough
3 ridership to do it? Or wow?

4 MR. GEORGE: Well as a Commissioner of the NFTA, if you
5 bring it up at the Board Meeting when we talk about the Transit
6 Development Plan, it's a great start.

7 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

8 MR. GEORGE: We will put it on our agenda, and we will look
9 at that because...

10 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Insidious.

11 MR. GEORGE: ...it's relative to our project.

12 COMMISSIONER PERRY: OK, yeah, those two (2) things, especially the
13 wi-fi, especially the wi-fi in stations and in the train so most people
14 can maintain a very high level of connectivity. They can work
15 continuously without any interruption. The cell service is just
16 something I am interested in but the wi-fi, that's like a big, big...

17 MR. GEORGE: Just, I'll take this opportunity just to
18 recognize that we do have wi-fi on our bus network.

19 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes, yeah, and that's one (1) of the reasons I
20 asked the question, because then I wonder why, you know why wouldn't
21 you?

22 MR. GEORGE: Yeah.

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yeah.

24 MR. GEORGE: So, thank you for that comment. We will be
25 including it in our plan.

26 COMMISSIONER PERRY: We do have, like, you know, two-way radio and
27 stuff on our trains, don't we? So...

28 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

1 MR. GEORGE: Absolutely.

2 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So, we're not like sending smoke signals..

3 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

4 CHAIR ROCHE: Smoke signals.

5 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

6 COMMISSIONER BLUE: We do not want smoke signals.

7 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

8 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Especially not smoke signals. Drums? Drums?

9 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

10 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Sorry. Thank you.

11 MR. GEORGE: Thank you.

12 CHAIR ROCHE: Thank you. Learned a lot.

13 MR. GEROGE: OK. Segue if I may. That was a very strategic

14 initiative we talked about. What I want to do now is transition into a

15 more tactical discussion. We've been talking to the Board for quite

16 some time about our labor challenges. We had a discussion earlier in

17 Human Resources about labor challenges. Karen was kind enough to

18 highlight the fact that we have sixty (60) operator openings in the

19 operations division which is a challenge for us to operate. It is

20 further exasperated by the fact that we have challenges with COVID

21 which has taken even though we are down sixty (60) positions, those

22 employees who are currently employed by us, are even more challenged to

23 fulfill their commitment to the agency. So, in the month of December we

24 experienced some of our most challenging operational conditions we've

25 ever had here at Metro. We had times of weeks where we had significant

26 service cuts in the system and all of those are almost exclusively

27 related to the lack of available operators to operate the system. And

28 so, our reliability, the commitment we made to the community to show up

1 at the bus stops that we put on our schedule we'll be there, has been
2 challenged. The numbers, when we talk about numbers, we're still in the
3 high ninety percents delivering our service, but when you start talking
4 about, well we deliver 2,300 trips a day here at Metro. So, if you
5 start talking a percent or two (2), that becomes significant numbers in
6 our community. And those become rather troublesome for us as an agency
7 but even more so for our riders who may be at a bus stop, especially in
8 the winter, especially if they are on their way to work. So, we've
9 taken a hard look at our system, and we're looking for advancing some
10 reductions in service on a temporary basis to try to get through this
11 period of time. So, what we've done is we've asked Service Planning to
12 take a look and we've introduced a number of changes in the system that
13 we want to move forward with effective on February 13th. We've worked
14 closely with the ATU, our operator union, to do what we refer to as an
15 emergency pick. This is where we develop that service and actually get
16 it deployed through our workforce. The service we are looking to reduce
17 is across the board. We started working with the Buffalo Board of
18 Education, we provide them with specials, over 100 specials on a daily
19 basis. We took a very close look at the ridership of those specials and
20 we identified areas where we thought we could reduce some of those
21 specials. We collaborated with the Board of Education. We came to an
22 agreement that we would reduce some service there. That provided us
23 with some relief. We took a look at our express service. We break our
24 express service into two (2) categories, this is commuter express
25 essentially. The two (2) categories are those express services that
26 have underlying bus service. So, if you're in a community that has bus
27 service, we also may run an express run into the city through that
28 community. But if that express service would no longer exist, you'd

1 still be served by NFTA Metro, you'd still be able to get a ride on the
2 system and get to where you need to go. And then there's those express
3 services that do not have underlying service, and if that express were
4 to be pulled in that area, they would essentially be abandoned relative
5 to their ability to gain access. So, we focused our attention on those
6 areas where there is underlying service and we are proposing to suspend
7 those express routes in those areas and the areas where there is not
8 underlying service, we are reducing the express service, but we will
9 remain in those communities and providing service. And then the other
10 thing that we've looked at is we've looked at our later nights and our
11 weekends and we've expanded our headways and what that means is
12 generally you will see a bus coming every twenty (20) minutes, in some
13 cases, we will expand the headways to come every thirty (30) minutes.
14 So, by doing these exercises and creating the emergency pick with the
15 union, we're freeing up enough individuals to reliability provide
16 service, to make the commitment to the community so the new schedules
17 that are coming out reduce the need for operators enough that we
18 believe we can get back to one hundred percent (100%). I say one
19 hundred percent (100%). There's always going to be a bus breakdown or
20 something that occurs, but if we see bus cuts in the order of magnitude
21 of twenty (20) or thirty (30) a day, that's simply unacceptable. If we
22 see a bus cut of two (2) or three (3) a day, we understand these things
23 happen and we can communicate them to our customers. But we have to
24 become and remain reliable so that the community can count on us. So,
25 this is a painful time. It's very challenging. The other thing I'd just
26 like to add is the Staff of NFTA Metro has been beyond incredible, from
27 the Operator, to the Clerk, to the Supervisors, to the Managers, every
28 single day over the last two (2) months, they've come to work with an

1 empty tool box. They've come to work without enough Operators, with
2 what we refer to as open runs in the morning. So, you come in normally,
3 on a normal day when we operate the way we're designed, you come in and
4 your runs are filled, and you've got what we refer to as an extra
5 board. So, we have employees that come to work, and they're assigned to
6 an extra board so if someone calls in sick or something happens during
7 the day, we have staff to maintain that service. We've been operating
8 without an extra board for a number of months and that's created
9 tremendous pressure on our Operators, on our Clerks, on everybody who
10 manages this. So, every day has essentially been a fire drill for our
11 Staff and meanwhile, we're doing this fire drill, but we're still not
12 making our commitment to the community. So, this has become really
13 critical to us, and we've decided to move forward with this temporary
14 suspension of some service, and temporary reductions of some service.
15 We're very hopeful that the recruiting efforts will continue. We're
16 very hopeful that COVID will go by the wayside, and a lot of the
17 related illness that we've experienced will rebound. We have a very
18 dedicated workforce that has just proven to be exceptional during this
19 period. At the same point in time, there's only so much we can expect
20 from them. So, very painful, difficult decision but I wanted to go
21 through that with the Board today and see if there's any questions I
22 can answer or anything you want me to expand upon as we do this.

23 COMMISSIONER BLUE: How many operators will we need to bring
24 services back to a regular routine, I would say?

25 MR. GEORGE: So, what the numbers, so there's a couple
26 things here... The numbers are. It's a moving target. What we targeted
27 was forty (40). That was a number that we used in this process to
28 define how many we needed, how many positions we needed to create to

1 maintain stability. We're hopeful that, and you've heard me say it
2 before, hope is not a strategy, but we're hopeful that as people come
3 back in, we can start to put some service back into some places. So,
4 we're not necessarily looking at a trigger point, we get to this, we
5 put it all back, we want to be able to be flexible and nimble enough so
6 that if we start to see a rebounding in our staff, we can reintroduce
7 some of the service. Maybe in those areas, those express routes that
8 aren't services, maybe half of those, bring that back to full or some
9 of the other critical areas we can start to define and look at that. We
10 look at our service quarterly. So, normally our pick would be in March
11 and then the next one (1) would be in June. So, every quarter, we
12 adjust service based on ridership, headways, customer complaints, any
13 information we get, and so we'll be going through that process, but we
14 may actually do things in between that as well. So, the number is a
15 moving target. A lot of it depends on, you know, what the illnesses
16 are, recruitment. The other point I'd just like to make is when I look
17 at the operator numbers and how many we have lost, and I use the word
18 lost, they go for retirements, there's another category in there. Our
19 Operator pool is also the pool of our organization. It is the backbone
20 of this organization so every Clerk in our organization used to be an
21 Operator. All of our Supervisors used to be Operators. Our Controllers
22 used to be operators. So, that's part of the feeding and the nurturing
23 of our organization is the Operators moving up and that's a challenge
24 as well. So, there's so many moving target things in here, we still
25 need all of those positions filled as well. And we're always happy when
26 that happens, right? But now it's the yin and yang, it's the pull of
27 it. So, we need to fill a Supervisor position, but do I want to pull
28 more Operators out of Operations? So, we're constantly struggling with

1 that balance as well. And retirements are real, but I think that we've
2 really seen a certain amount of stability in our Operations staff, but
3 the challenges have been with recruiting. It's really been with
4 recruiting and that's really where we're trying to put most of our,
5 where we're putting most of our resources into recruiting right now.
6 So, I would just encourage everyone if they can, if you know somebody
7 out there who knows somebody else who's looking for a position, please
8 send them our way. It's a great place to work and it's really a
9 rewarding job. And the Mechanics are just as important as well but
10 right now the focus is solely on Operations. So that, those are the
11 numbers that we are looking at, yup.

12 OK, well thank you very much for your patience and
13 your understanding as we try to work through it. My Staff has just been
14 wholly focused on this for the better part of probably six (6) months
15 and it's just gotten worse, and worse and worse. And unfortunately, or
16 fortunately, depending on how you look at it, we're not alone. This is
17 very common throughout the industry, we're seeing it across the
18 industry, we're seeing it in transit agencies across the U.S. doing the
19 same type of thing, some introducing a Saturday service. We looked at a
20 number of different options, but our focus was solely on what had the
21 least amount of impact on our customer base and what provides us with
22 the best ability to become reliable. So, this is the solution we've
23 come up with after many, many hours and a number of different scenarios
24 that we're looked at.

25 MS. MINKEL: And I just want to recognize Tom and his Team
26 because the past couple of years have been incredibly stressful. And
27 the focus has always been on the customer. But internally staff-wise,
28 it's taken a toll. You know, Tom talked about COVID, we've all heard

1 about, you know, the health effects but we have many operators who rely
2 on childcare and other things that have disrupted their lives and
3 impacted their ability to come to work. So, I think this is a sound
4 approach. It provides a more reliable service for our customer base,
5 but it also gives time for Staff to take the necessary steps to get
6 their life, their house, their health in order so that we can come back
7 strong over the course of the year which we all hope will be sooner
8 rather than later. So, Tom, I think it's good you recognize your Staff
9 and building a resilient Team going forward. So, thank you for that.

10 MR. GEORGE:

Okay. If that's all on that, I just have a few
11 due diligence items that I'd like to cover. On our Metro Initiatives
12 Status Report, we talked about the service improvements and the service
13 challenges. I do want to just make one last point about service and
14 that is the fact that we had gone through a painstaking process last
15 year of identifying service changes and it went through public hearings
16 and the Board authorized us to move forward with those. As we're
17 rolling out this emergency service, we're also implementing some of
18 those challenges, which is also positive for the community. So, even
19 though there's some challenges that have been introduced with this,
20 there's areas we're going with our new service. We've adjusted some
21 routes to service them better. Some better generators and some better
22 opportunities for people. So, we are pleased with that. We're doing
23 some streamlining in downtown Buffalo. So, we are still moving forward
24 with some of those things. We still want to grasp and advance those
25 things that we identified as positive improvements.

26 The other item, if I could, would be the Light Rail
27 Extension Project. We have a Board Action coming to you in the Board
28 Meeting today to advance our consultant into, the furthering the NYPA

1 process for the environmental clearance. We recently received some
2 long-due funding clearances from the State of New York which was
3 dedicated to that project. So, we're now able to continue and advance
4 that a bit further so I wanted to talk a little bit about that. We are
5 actively engaged with the Federal Transit Administration through the
6 review of the NEPA document. We are actively advancing that draft
7 environmental impact statement as we speak. They have chapters on that
8 that are being developed by a consultant and our internal Team. So
9 those are being reviewed, but this next step will allow us to carry
10 that through the completion of the final environmental impact statement
11 and potentially a record of decision on that project.

12 And then, last but not least, of course, you know I
13 always talk about our Advisory Committees. I really don't have a report
14 today, but I would say that we have two (2) Committee Meetings today.
15 We have our Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting today at 2PM.
16 That's virtual. And we also have our Citizens Advisory Committee
17 tonight at 5:30PM. That, as well, is virtual. And again, I always like
18 to encourage, if any of the Board Members want to sit in on any one (1)
19 of these, they are more than welcome. Now in the virtual environment,
20 it's just that much easier. Those are available. And that's all I have
21 for my report today.

22 CHAIR ROCHE: Good report. Adam?

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: How do people get on any one of those
24 Committees if they really wanted to? Like how do they find out how to
25 do that?

26 MR. GEORGE: The Accessibility Advisory Committee is
27 basically open to anybody. That's basically an open invitation. You can
28 contact our EEO office on that and they'll provide you with the

1 information on how to access that. Our Citizens Advisory Committee, the
2 governance on that establishes the membership is twenty-five (25)
3 individuals and there are both organizations and individual riders that
4 are part of that. We have six (6) individual riders, and the rest are
5 made up of local organizations. Those are three (3) year terms that's,
6 as I said, limited to twenty-five (25) by the governance on that. And
7 those, so those are three (3) year terms, but they cycle so every year,
8 a third of the Committee comes up for renewal. When that occurs, we
9 basically go through their attendance, their participation, and take
10 that back to the Committee. And at that point in time, annually,
11 generally in the fall, November timeframe, we look for new members
12 because we like to cycle people through. And there is an application
13 process on our website under the Citizens Advisory Committee. There is
14 an application right in there. We encourage people to go through that
15 application and get that to us, generally in the, later in the year. We
16 just introduced our new Committee Members, we're actually introducing
17 them tonight. We've gotten them up to speed and given them all of the
18 materials they need. So, again, that cycle will begin in the fall, and
19 then we'll introduce new members again next January, as a third of
20 those... And generally, they don't all cycle off. Generally, we have a
21 few folks that leave for organizations that don't participate. Well,
22 that's our opportunity to get the changes made in the Committee.

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Any openings right now?

24 MR. GEORGE: Actually, we're full right now because we just
25 went through the process, and we like to make sure we have the full
26 contingent.

27 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thank you.

28 MR. GEORGE: Yup.

1 CHAIR ROCHE: Good. Well, thank you very much Tom.

2 MR. GEORGE: Thank you very much.

3 CHIAR ROCHE: And Aviation Committee. Bill?

4 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thank you, Sister. And I turn it over to Mr.

5 Vanecek.

6 MS. MINKEL: We've got time. We're OK.

7 MR. VANECEK: Well, hello everybody, and welcome to snowy

8 January.

9 CHAIR ROCHE: Laughter.

10 MR. VANECEK: We'll quickly go through some of the statistics

11 that we want to talk about and one (1) is the December historical

12 enplanements, December '21 versus '20. We had a 106% increase in

13 flights and 134% increase in seats year over year. So, we're getting

14 healthier. We're not quite back to where we need to be but it's really

15 showing signs that people are willing to travel. They feel it's safe to

16 travel and we're very excited about that, particularly because we also

17 have some new service that is going to be starting up very soon. On

18 February 18th, Frontier will start flying Cancun service three (3) times

19 a week and that will run through, I believe, it's a total of 27

20 flights. So, we'll see how that works and if successful, we should be

21 able to keep it in the schedule going forward. If you recall, we had

22 some conversations with a, about our FIS operations. We've been in

23 contact with Customs and Border Control, and we've been able to get

24 them to agree that they will provide the service for us and not at

25 exorbitant rates, so, we're happy to see that. Hopefully, we can, you

26 know, make some changes down the road, that makes it a little easier to

27 do rather than have to call them every time we have an international

28 flight go out and worry about things like funding.

1 Also, let's see, we've got, in January, fast
2 forwarding to this month in January, we've actually have 1,681 flights
3 scheduled, with almost 194,000 seats going out, so we're getting
4 healthy and hopefully that will continue. And along those lines, our
5 enplanement numbers, we're high, we were at 104% enplanement numbers
6 year over year for the calendar year 2021. So now is the time to start
7 thinking about getting back to things that we've put on the shelf this
8 past year, i.e., our concessions. We've had conversations with Delaware
9 North, as you know, the food court really hasn't been operating other
10 than the Tim Hortons that is in there. They have now put up the
11 construction wall to start the build out of the two (2) offerings that
12 we had shelved, which was BurgerFi, which was a higher-end hamburger
13 type operation and then also Bocce Pizza. So, they are underway, and
14 they're hoping to get it down by June/July time frame. We'd like to be
15 able to hit spring break but just with the delays, I don't think we'll
16 be able to get that out there. But, nonetheless, that's going to happen
17 so we're very happy about the start of this and hope the project gets
18 done very quickly.

19 Looking at the December numbers here, as you can see,
20 we are unchanged year to date at Niagara Falls. Obviously, Spirit is
21 still not flying. However, we do have good news on this: Spirit is
22 going to start flying to Myrtle Beach starting April 20th and they will
23 fly through September 5th, so that's 160 flights that they'll be doing
24 out of Niagara Falls. So, we're very happy that they're getting back
25 into the game and hopefully, they will be successful.

26 Next are our parking operations. A couple of comments
27 here... You can see how dramatically the change is year over year when
28 looking at the colored bars on this end over here. And I looked a

1 little deeper and I said, "well what does this mean?". So, we really
2 had an \$8.4 million dollar increase in parking revenues year over year.
3 That's 400% in parking revenues which is crazy. Now that's through,
4 just through this period here where you're looking at the end of
5 December. This is on a fiscal year, so those are great numbers to see
6 and we're seeing some pretty good make-up. We're surprisingly, I took a
7 look, to see what the Canadian traffic looked like in our parking lots.
8 On a daily basis in the parking garage, we're getting about eleven
9 percent (11%) of our folks coming down from Canada, which surprised me,
10 you know, because given the conditions of the borders right now, I was
11 pretty happy to see those numbers. In our preferred lots, we had four
12 percent (4%) Canadian parkers and in the long term, we had six percent
13 (6%) of our Canadian traffic. We did have a period in December where we
14 had quite a bit of cars that had to use the overflow in the long-term
15 lot, which is good news. So, we were kind of thinking, you know, should
16 we start shoveling the snow in the economy lot? But it subsided enough
17 now that we don't really have to do that. But we'll keep a close look
18 at that once we get back to good health.

19 Looking at the throughput, this is our, we show this
20 every time we have the meeting, and you can see above it, all of the
21 airports in the United States combined, you can see its tracking. And
22 right below, we're right there, I mean, we're right at the same type of
23 pattern that's happening throughout the United States. So, encouraging
24 news that, you know, we're not falling behind the curve. We may not be
25 exceeding it, but we're still tracking just like everybody else in the
26 United States.

27 But the big news for our end of the world this year,
28 we had a couple of major events with snow and our airfield team, I will

1 tell you right now and I will believe it until the day I die, they are
2 the best in the country, without a doubt in my mind. These men and
3 women that are out there, keeping our airport safe during inclement
4 weather is just incredible. And to look at what happened and get hit by
5 a record snowfall on January 6th. 17.8 inches. I am here to tell you that
6 is a lot of snow, and you know, they did a great job. At times they
7 were overwhelmed by it because of blowing winds, etc. but they stuck at
8 it, and they did a phenomenal job on the airfield, so we were very,
9 very happy. We did, you know, we obviously had cancellations, but they
10 helped keep that airport open pretty much full time. There was a brief
11 period when visibility was just zero and we couldn't keep it open, but
12 it was back up quickly and operating. And then comes January 17th and
13 they almost topped the January 7th amount. We had 17.6 inches of snow on
14 that date. So, with those two (2) combined had over thirty-five (35)
15 inches of snowfall at the airport in a very, very brief period of time.
16 You're talking less than a 24-hour drop, and that was absolutely
17 incredible. And to put it in perspective, if you look at the next
18 slide, you are going to see some telling stats about what we have for
19 snow. If you can flip over, Lara?

20 So, if you look at the big snow areas, you know you
21 have Marquette which is way up there in Michigan and so it's hard to
22 compare with them, but when you look at what's happened in Buffalo,
23 we're 49.2, 52.8 inches, and that's the average through 1/17. And look
24 how far below everybody else is. So, this really tells you we've
25 getting picked on by Mother Nature. But we looked at Mother Nature and
26 said we'll beat you and we did. So, really big kudos to all of those
27 folks, you know, they put many hours of overtime in, and we were able
28 to get our airports up and operating quickly, safely, so that planes

1 could land, and you know, kudos to them.

2 And then lastly, I just wanted to, we have a little
3 video I wanted to show you. We have these multi-task vehicles which
4 helped us in our efforts with the snow removal at Buffalo tremendously.
5 And it's almost like a ballet when you go out there. You know when I
6 first saw it when I came here to the airport, that's what I looked at,
7 when I saw my first snowstorm and how coordinated the efforts were with
8 our airfield staff and how good they are. So, if you can run this
9 [video noise of multi-task vehicles in the background], you'll see
10 these are on our main runways. And these vehicles that we have are
11 multi-use vehicles and they were a lot of money, but they've saved us a
12 lot of time and allowed us to run a much better operation and a safer
13 operation for our folks. So, look at these vehicles. You've got a plow,
14 you've got a broom, you've got a blower, all in one that takes one
15 driver. So, you're not in three (3) separate vehicles doing that same
16 thing. And look how coordinated this effort is. Right. They don't miss
17 a beat. You don't see anybody getting out of line. They're staggered so
18 they can get the snow off to where it needs to be. And I've got to tell
19 you, they were thrilled when we told them we were getting these. When
20 we got the first one (1), you know, right away they wanted more. And
21 absolutely, it saves us money, it saves the airlines money. And they
22 just do a tremendous job out there. And when you think about the
23 blowing snow, etc., it's, you know, they have to rely on the person in
24 front of them. So, the lead driver has the most important job of making
25 sure he is having everyone in line and they're all...Look how close they
26 are. It's almost like you're marching in the military. And those
27 vehicles are just priceless to us when it comes to our snow removal
28 efforts. So, very, very thrilled.

1 MR. WEITZ: With five (5) of them now, we can do the entire
2 width of the runway in one pass.

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Nice.

4 MR. VANECEK: Yup.

5 MR. WEITZ: Which saves us a lot of time.

6 MR. VANECEK: Absolutely and that was key. It was key on the
7 other day...

8 MR. WEITZ: Yup.

9 MR. VANECEK: ...you know...

10 MR. WEITZ: Yup.

11 MR. VANECEK: ...when we had to keep the runway open, we had a
12 lot of difficulty keeping the ramps open because we had to dedicate the
13 equipment to the main runways. But the airlines gave us great kudos
14 for, how, what a great job we did at getting the flights in for the
15 folks that could get in. And again, you know, once again, again, I
16 think they are number one (1), if not in the United States, certainly
17 in the United States, but I would probably argue worldwide that they
18 are the best operation that you'll ever see. So...

19 COMMISSIONER PERRY: We actually are award-winning...

20 MR. VANECEK: We are.

21 MS. MINKEL: Yes, we are.

22 COMMISSIONER PERRY: This is not just braggadocio.

23 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

24 MR. VANECEK: That's right. You got that one exactly right.
25 So, yeah, so that is, that, I am fairly brief on it today but I wanted
26 you to see what really happens on the airfield and you know, any time
27 anybody wants to jump in a snowplow with some of these guys, I can
28 arrange that for you.

1 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

2 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Ahhhh...

3 MR. VANECEK: I've done it before and it's very enlightening

4 and you know, you'll have a very much higher appreciation...

5 [Two sneezes and multiple "bless you's"]

6 MR. VANECEK: ...for the great job that these guys do. Bless

7 you. And anyway, that ends my discussion for today. If there are any

8 questions or other topics you'd like to address, I am very happy to

9 give you my incites if you need any.

10 CHAIR ROCHE: Are these specially trained drivers?

11 MR. VANECEK: Yeah.

12 CHAIR ROCHE: And is that what they do?

13 MR. VANECEK: There are. Yeah. Yeah. So, they're...

14 MR. WEITZ: Yeah. They go through a six (6) week training

15 period...

16 MR. VANECEK: Yeah.

17 MR. WEITZ: ...before they even go out on the runway with the

18 team.

19 CHAIR ROCHE: Such huge machines.

20 MR. VANECEK: Yeah.

21 MR. WEITZ: Yeah.

22 MR. VANECEK: Any time we get a new driver, even though they

23 all have their CDLs, just to operate a lot of the equipment that we

24 have out there, but they always do a buddy system. You get them in with

25 somebody else that is an experienced driver and before they are behind

26 the wheel, they are doing a significant amount of time observing what

27 that driver is doing. And then they'll flip seats and that will allow

28 the newcomer to come in and take advice from the veteran that is in

1 there, so that we know they are qualified. We won't let a driver who
2 doesn't pass all of the qualifications, they will not be in a vehicle
3 by themselves. So, we're very, very cautious about that.

4 MS. MINKEL: So, this is, you know, an incredible amount of
5 work, obviously, for the field personnel. Bill showed the plowing of
6 the runways but on top of this they have snow removal, they have snow
7 melters, so it's not as simple as one (1) pass, snow is gone. They can
8 take a break. Then they have to go back and remove all of the snow
9 after that. You know, they're working early morning while most of us
10 are sleeping and late at night and they really do an incredible job.

11 MR. VANECEK: And they were very grateful for the snowmelt
12 machines that we have as well. It looks like a big swimming pool on
13 wheels, and it's heated by propane. And what it does is they get the
14 snow pushed into an area where we get these big mountains of snow. And
15 then they got loaders to dump it into the hot water which then goes
16 into the sanitary lines which then gets pumped into our wetlands area
17 and gets cleaned for glycol, etc. So, that is a big time saver. It's a
18 money saver because we normally would have outside contractors putting,
19 having a loader going into a dump truck and driving all the way around
20 the airfield to get over to the snowmelt pad, which is now the
21 subsurface wetlands so that's no longer needed and that was a, we'll be
22 looking at acquiring at least one more of those to help the operation
23 along. They're expensive, but they are worth it.

24 MS. PERLA: Now you need to find a new garage.

25 MR. VANECEK: Yes. Yes.

26 MULTIPLE COMMISSIONERS: Laughter.

27 MR. WEITZ: A smaller version.

28 MR. VANECEK: So, if there are any other questions or

1 comments? If not, thank you very much.

2 COMMISISONER PERRY: Thank you.

3 MS. MINKEL: Thanks, Bill.

4 CHAIR ROCHE: And that concludes our meetings for this
5 morning. We will take a break and return at 12:30PM for the full Board
6 Meeting.

7 MR. VANECEK: Can I have one mulligan? I just want to reach
8 out and talk and make sure everybody understands the 5G issue.

9 CHAIR ROCHE: Oh, yeah.

10 MR. VANECEK: So, just quickly, you know, we want to make
11 sure that, you know, all of the flights that we have flying out of the
12 airport are on aircraft that can land on airports with 5G, which is the
13 5G issue surrounding that. And I am happy to report that every single
14 aircraft that we have can land and we don't have to worry about the 5G
15 issue at our airport. We went through all of them, all of the Boeing
16 Aircraft are certified, even the Embraers like JetBlue and other flyers
17 are all certified. All the Delta planes, they're all certified for
18 other airports. So, there's no worries about having to deal with some
19 sort of interference as they are coming to our airport. Thank you.

20 CHAIR ROCHE: Good. Thank you.

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