
NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Monthly Board Meeting

December 9, 2021

Transcript of Video Recording
of Proceedings held at NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY, 181 Ellicott Street, Buffalo, New York,
stenographically transcribed by VALERIE A. ROSATI, Notary
Public.

1 MEMBERS IN THE BOARDROOM:

2 Sister Denise Roche (Chair)
3 Commissioner Adam Perry
4 Kimberley Minkel (Executive Director)
5 David State (General Counsel)
6 John Cox (Chief Financial Officer)
7 William Vanecek (Director, Aviation)
8 Tom George (Director, Public Transit)
9 Helen Tederous (Director, Public Affairs)
10 John Schaefer (Director, Engineering)
11 Karen Novo (Director, Human Resources)
12 Darren Kempner (Manager, Government Affairs)
13 Steven Duquette (Chief Information Officer)
14 Christopher Ruminski (Manager, Financial
15 Planning & Analysis)
16 Pat Dalton (Director, Internal Audit and Corp.
17 Compliance)
18 Athena Hutchins (Executive Director, NITTEC)

19 MEMBERS ON THE PHONE:

20 Commissioner LaVonne Ansari
21 Commissioner Anthony Baynes
22 Commissioner Rev. Mark Blue
23 Commissioner Michael Hughes
24 Commissioner Philip Wilcox
25 Rich Guarino (Acting Executive Director, GBNRTC)

26 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Welcome. I'm calling to order
27 the December, 2021 meeting of the Niagara
28 Frontier Transportation Authority and Niagara
29 Frontier Transit Metro system. And this is our
30 regular board meeting. And good afternoon.
31 Thank you to all of you who are joining us.

1 And we will begin right away. This is an
2 important meeting. Of course every one is, but
3 at this meeting we will discuss the adoption of
4 the full budget for 2022. And we have some other
5 resolutions that we want to get to, so let us
6 begin. And I would ask first if we could have a
7 roll call, please.

8 MR. STATE: Roll call for the commissioners. I'm
9 going to call the names of the commissioners who
10 I believe are present already.

11 Commissioner Ansari?

12 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: I'm here.

13 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?

14 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Present.

15 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?

16 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Here.

17 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?

18 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Present and accounted for.

19 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?

20 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Here.

21 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

22 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Present.

23 MR. STATE: Any other commissioners who are on the

1 call?

2 That does give us six. We do have a quorum.

3 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: We do have a quorum, so we will
4 begin our business. May I ask Kim, please, to
5 give us a report.

6 MS. MINKEL: Do you want approval of the minutes
7 first, Sister?

8 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Oh, yes. Sorry about that.

9 MS. MINKEL: No, that's okay.

10 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Let us approve the minutes of
11 our last meeting in November. May I have a
12 motion?

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.

14 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And a second?

15 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Second. Reverend Blue.

16 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. Is there any
17 discussion on the minutes?

18 MR. STATE: Sister, just for clarification, these are
19 the October minutes.

20 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Oh, because November was just a
21 discussion. Okay.

22 MS. MINKEL: Right. Right.

23 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Is there any discussion of the

1 minutes?

2 If not, all those in favor of accepting and
3 approving the minutes of October, 2021?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Aye.

5 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Any negatives or abstentions?

6 Thank you. Now we'll have your report.

7 MS. MINKEL: Great. Thank you, Sister. So it's
8 December, and at the end of the year, I always
9 like to recap some of the Authority's highlights
10 looking back throughout the year. You kind of
11 forget how long -- or, how much is done in a year
12 or how long a year lasts, especially in a
13 pandemic.

14 So as we enter year two of the pandemic, the
15 agency continued to provide critical services to
16 help address needs related to the pandemic. This
17 includes our sites -- using our sites as
18 vaccination sites, we provided free bus passes to
19 help get people vaccinated, and a number of our
20 operators continue to provide food delivery
21 services to those in need in the community.

22 Within our Metro operations, we ordered our
23 first set of battery electric buses and we broke

1 ground on a new electrical substation to power
2 these buses at our Cold Spring facility. We
3 rolled out our new bus network improvement plan
4 and we kicked off our bus stop balancing. And
5 both of these efforts included significant public
6 outreach and public hearings. Our team has also
7 been busy installing new fare boxes along with
8 new gates at the rail stations as part of our new
9 fare collection system.

10 We always partnered with Merchants Insurance
11 for a rehabilitated new station at Seneca Street,
12 and we look to start rehabilitation of the Erie
13 Canal Harbor Station. We worked on improving
14 public space by incorporating art on the DL and W
15 building, within the Niagara Falls transportation
16 center, and we are working with the community on
17 improvements to the Freedom Wall. With a focus
18 on improving public space, we advanced our DL
19 and W project to complete the track and catenary
20 portion of the project and to start the
21 construction of a new station.

22 We also invested in our existing rail
23 stations by completing escalator replacements and

1 other station improvements. We focused on
2 safety and the reliability of our system by
3 completing phase ten of our fastener and pad
4 replacement projects and completely replacing the
5 main control communication system for our
6 underground stations.

7 We continue to invest in technology,
8 upgrading life expired systems, improving
9 reliability and addressing security concerns. We
10 also invest in the environment by expanding the
11 de-icing wetland treatment system.

12 The airport is slowly rebounding and there's
13 reason for optimism. For November, we have
14 recovered back to almost seventy-seven percent of
15 the November, 2019 traffic, and more than three
16 hundred and thirty percent compared to November
17 of 2020 traffic. Evidence of this recovery has
18 been with the addition of new service. Southwest
19 is flying to San Juan, Puerto Rico; Frontier
20 Airlines added daily service to Fort Lauderdale
21 and new seasonal service to Myrtle Beach and
22 Cancun. We also will welcome a new airline with
23 Sun Country who will begin summer seasonal

1 service to Minneapolis. And we completed the
2 biggest upgrade in twenty years at the Buffalo
3 airport. The seventy million dollar terminal
4 enhancement project is rounding out completion
5 with the baggage claim up and running four months
6 ahead of schedule.

7 Our police continue to work towards
8 accreditation and have contracted to have
9 behavioral health crisis intervention services as
10 additional support for our police behavioral
11 team.

12 As a focus on safety and risk, our risk
13 department had the largest recovery in the
14 history of the organization that included two
15 million in Workers' Comp. and claims recovery,
16 and an additional two million in insurance claims
17 related to COVID, all because our director of
18 risk maintained a rare extension of coverage for
19 communicable diseases.

20 New York State gave us an A rating on our
21 MWBE program. We had over thirty-six percent
22 MWBE participation, including almost fifteen
23 million spent with sixty-three different MWBE

1 suppliers. We also settled seven labor
2 agreements, we hired a hundred and fifteen
3 employees, including forty-three new operators
4 and seventeen mechanics. Despite this, though,
5 staffing remains a challenge. But, our team of
6 operators, mechanics, engineers, managers,
7 supervisors, police, custodians are doing a
8 tremendous job working long hours as we continue
9 to try to staff up for the critical services we
10 provide.

11 And all that's been accomplished this year
12 is due to the support of our board and the
13 incredible work of our sixteen hundred employees
14 who always go above and beyond. So I'm very
15 proud to be part of this organization. I want to
16 take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to
17 our employees, especially my leadership team.
18 Transportation's always challenging, especially
19 during a pandemic, so thank you to everything
20 that you've done this past year, realizing our
21 mission and how important our work is to Western
22 New York.

23 And on behalf of all the staff, I wish to

1 thank the board for your support. I wish you all
2 a very happy holiday and a prosperous new year
3 and let's hope that things get back to normal
4 soon. Thank you.

5 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much, Kim. It's
6 extraordinary to think of how much has been
7 achieved in this past year, and that's in spite
8 of all of the things that come up regularly that
9 you have to deal with and you've done that so
10 well. So I would like to express our gratitude
11 as a board for the outstanding work that you have
12 done. So thank you all, all of you, for bringing
13 to completion so many of these wonderful projects
14 and getting new ones and getting the airport open
15 again and keeping the buses running and
16 everything. It's great. Thank you.

17 Let us move on now to our corporate report.
18 I was not present at the meeting this morning,
19 and Commissioner Perry chaired it. Is there
20 anything you would like to report from that
21 meeting?

22 COMMISSIONER PERRY: We went through all of the
23 committees, but I guess we can just take those as

1 we have resolutions. But nothing spectacular.

2 It was kind of boring.

3 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: The more boring, the better.

4 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes.

5 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: John, do you have anything?

6 MR. COX: Yes. Thank you, Sister. Good afternoon,
7 commissioners. I will be reporting on the month
8 of October since we didn't report on it at the
9 last meeting.

10 So for the month of October of 2021, we had
11 a positive variance to budget of approximately
12 two million dollars; and on a fiscal year-to-date
13 basis, a positive variance of approximately
14 eighteen and a half million dollars.

15 Total operating revenues and assistance were
16 above budget by approximately two point six
17 million or fifteen point two percent for October,
18 and fifteen point two million or eleven point
19 seven percent on a fiscal year-to-date basis. We
20 had higher than budget concessions and
21 commissions, which includes parking, ride share,
22 taxi and food and retail revenue, due to higher
23 than anticipated enplanements. Metro experienced

1 higher passenger fares due to higher ridership
2 than anticipated. State Transit Operating
3 Assistance, we refer to it as STOA, was above
4 budget. We had positive Erie County sales tax,
5 mortgage tax for both October and on a fiscal
6 year to date. And in addition, fiscal year to
7 date we have seen higher BNIA airport fees and
8 services which are from revenues from general
9 aviation and air cargo fees.

10 Total operating expenses were below budget
11 by approximately one point five million dollars
12 or eight percent in October, and nine point nine
13 million or seven point nine percent on a fiscal
14 year-to-date basis. And that was primarily due
15 to lower personnel service and maintenance and
16 repairs, which were generally offset by higher
17 utilities, insurance and injuries and various
18 other puts and gets.

19 Now, before I conclude this -- the
20 consolidated financial, I just want to point one
21 thing out. On the bottom of page nine. Just
22 when I mentioned, you know, the positive
23 variances you hear on a monthly basis, two

1 million or, you know, a positive variance of over
2 about eighteen and a half million on a
3 year-to-date basis -- if you look at the first
4 column there, that's our year-to-date budget.
5 And at the bottom, we originally, when we put
6 this budget together back in February or March
7 earlier this year, you know, we were in the midst
8 of the depths of COVID. So if you can look, we
9 were anticipating at that point in time having
10 actually a deficit of a little over about twelve
11 point two million dollars. And if you look at
12 our actuals, which is the next column over, we
13 actually are looking at a surplus of about six
14 point four million dollars.

15 And the point I'd like to make is, you know,
16 when you hear these numbers, you know, those are
17 significant numbers and significant variances,
18 but much of this, you know, positive variance
19 that we're seeing and the fact that we're not in
20 a deficit but we're in a surplus is because of
21 increased ridership, we're seeing increased
22 enplanements at the airport and not to forget
23 also all of the federal assistance that we've

1 received for COVID relief.

2 So that really is what -- you know, we're
3 certainly -- where we were and what we were
4 anticipating and where we are are, you know,
5 we're in a much better place, but we're still in
6 the process of recovery. And we're looking --
7 that's what we, you know, anticipate over the
8 next couple of years is a full recovery. But, I
9 just wanted to point that out because I thought
10 that that was important because of the numbers
11 I'm talking about being so high on the variances.

12 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And it's all the unexpected,
13 both the good news and the not so good news.

14 MR. COX: That's true. And we may have some more
15 bumps along the way, but we're certainly headed
16 in the right direction.

17 And unless there are any questions, that
18 concludes the consolidated financials.

19 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. And we will begin
20 now with the corporate resolutions. And I
21 suggest we take number one, which is the adoption
22 of the operating and capital budgets for next
23 year. And I'm going to turn this over to Kim.

1 MS. MINKEL: Thank you, Sister. On page fifteen is a
2 resolution for the board to consider adoption of
3 our fiscal year-ending '23 budget for the NFTA
4 and NFTA Transit Metro system.

5 The consolidated budget is the amount of two
6 hundred and eighty-eight million dollars. Some
7 of the highlights. As John had mentioned earlier
8 today, the budget assumes no fare increase. Ten
9 years without a fare increase. It assumes a STOA
10 increase of ten percent, two percent increase in
11 Erie County sales tax, one percent increase in
12 mortgage recording tax and federal operating
13 assistance increasing by fifteen million dollars
14 or twenty-three point three percent, recognizing
15 the federal assistance that we received.

16 Expecting enplanement levels close to
17 pre-pandemic levels at the Buffalo airport and
18 about sixty-five percent of pre-pandemic levels
19 for the Niagara Falls airport. We're assuming
20 bus ridership will be down by fifty percent and
21 sixty percent for rail, as compared to pre-COVID
22 numbers in this budget.

23 And increases in expenses of almost

1 twenty-two million, or ten and a half percent, as
2 we increase service back to pre-pandemic levels
3 going forward.

4 Just a couple of significant capital
5 projects that are included in this budget. The
6 5-23 runway improvements that Bill had mentioned
7 earlier, our DL and W terminal project, electric
8 buses, improvements to our facilities, investment
9 in IT including security upgrades, and the fare
10 collection project as we finish that up.

11 Capital improvements in our rail system
12 including track work, catenary work, escalators
13 and station rehab and continue with the
14 engineering and preliminary design for our rail
15 extension project.

16 I also want to mention as part of our
17 budget, you know, the losses that we've
18 experienced since the beginning of the pandemic
19 have been significant in terms of lost ridership,
20 passengers, operating assistance and revenue.
21 And this really would have been devastating on
22 our operations, but for the federal funding,
23 which has really allowed us to stabilize and take

1 the important critical steps to make our system
2 as safe as possible, so we are incredibly
3 appreciative of the Infrastructure Investment
4 Jobs Act and we thank Senators Schumer,
5 Gillibrand and Congressmen Higgins and Jacobs for
6 their support on the federal assistance. That's
7 really made the difference for this budget.

8 So that's that item, Sister.

9 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much. Let me
10 begin by taking a motion to accept the budget.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.

12 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And a second?

13 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Second. Reverend Blue.

14 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. Now, are there any
15 questions --

16 (Whereupon, Commissioner Baynes left the
17 proceedings.)

18 MS. MINKEL: Oh, no.

19 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Who is this?

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: He'll be back. It was Anthony.

21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Are there any questions?

22 We can -- we just lost one of the
23 commissioners and, therefore, we don't have a

1 quorum, so perhaps we could go through the other
2 resolutions and return to this one when we have
3 another commissioner or when Commissioner Baynes
4 comes back.

5 MR. STATE: Yes.

6 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay.

7 MS. MINKEL: Sure.

8 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Forgive the interruption, but we
9 want to wait until we have a quorum for this one.
10 Thank you.

11 So, Kim, if you would take us through number
12 two through eight, please.

13 MS. MINKEL: Sure. Happy to do so, Sister.

14 Oh, there he is.

15 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Anthony is back.

16 MS. MINKEL: So we had a motion and we have second.

17 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Good. And we have a second.

18 Are there any comments or questions in
19 regard to the budget?

20 (Whereupon, Commissioner Baynes returned to
21 the proceedings.)

22 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. Any questions?

23 If not, we'll have a roll call vote, please.

1 MR. STATE: So this is a vote on corporate --

2 (Whereupon, Commissioner Hughes joined the
3 proceedings.)

4 MR. STATE: So roll call vote on corporate item
5 number one. It's been firsted by Commissioner
6 Perry, seconded by Commissioner Blue. Roll call
7 vote.

8 Commissioner Ansari?

9 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.

10 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?

11 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.

12 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?

13 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Yes.

14 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hughes?

15 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.

16 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Aye.

18 MR. STATE: Sister?

19 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

20 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

21 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

22 MR. STATE: Item passes.

23 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much. Now we'll

1 take number two through eight.

2 MS. MINKEL: Okay. Thank you, Sister. On page
3 eighteen, staff is recommending an authorization
4 for agreement with ClearSky Consulting. This is
5 for our Infor support system that -- Infor is a
6 product that we use to support our human resource
7 department, payroll and other core functions
8 within the Authority. The term of the agreement
9 would be three years with the option of two
10 additional one-year periods at our discretion.
11 The annual contract cost will be a hundred and
12 forty-eight thousand eight hundred dollars, with
13 established hourly fees and rates for any
14 additional services.

15 We did issue an RFP in accordance with our
16 procurement guidelines, and we did receive three
17 responsive proposals. ClearSky was rated the
18 highest. Empire State Development has excluded
19 this procurement from MWBE requirements because
20 there are no New York State certified providers;
21 and, likewise, we have exempted SDVOB
22 requirements as well.

23 The third corporate resolution on page

1 twenty-one is an agreement with FirstLight. This
2 is for Internet connectivity. This would be a
3 three-year agreement in the amount of eleven
4 thousand seventy-six dollars. This is being
5 procured off of the New York State contract at a
6 monthly fee of nine hundred and twenty-three
7 dollars, and this will provide both diversity and
8 redundancy in terms of Internet connection for
9 the Authority going forward.

10 The fourth corporate resolution is a term
11 agreement with D.V. Brown and Associates. This
12 is for HVAC services. The initial term would be
13 for three years, which are renewed annually at
14 our discretion. The cost per year is estimated
15 to be about sixty-seven thousand five hundred.
16 This is for any unplanned issues that might occur
17 with our maintenance of the system. Any
18 replacements or larger-term items would be bid
19 out separately.

20 We did go out with an RFP. We received
21 three responsive proposals. D.V. Brown scored
22 the highest. The established MBE, WBE and SDVOB
23 goals are sixteen percent, fourteen percent and

1 six percent, respectively. D.V. Brown has
2 identified that they can meet these requirements.

3 The fifth corporate resolution on page
4 twenty-five is an agreement with Grove Roofing
5 for roof rehabilitation on our 485 Cayuga Road
6 property. It's for a fixed amount of two hundred
7 and forty-three thousand six hundred and fifty
8 dollars. This is to do the repairs on the
9 parapet wall to address leaks that we have over
10 some of the common-use spaces and tenant spaces.

11 We did go out with a request for proposal.
12 Three proposals were received, but only one of
13 them was deemed responsive, which was Grove
14 Roofing. The established MBE/WBE goals were ten
15 percent and eight percent, respectively; and
16 Grove Roofing has identified their MBE
17 participation as one percent, and seven point
18 three nine percent for WBE participation. They
19 have requested that ESD approve a partial waiver
20 of the MWBE goals because there are no certified
21 subcontractors -- or, excuse me. There's a
22 limited number of certified subcontractors, and
23 we have excluded this from the SDVOB goals as

1 well.

2 Corporate resolution number six is on page
3 twenty-eight. This is an authorization for
4 agreement with New York Power Authority. This is
5 to utilize their Web-based platform to manage our
6 semiannual reporting requirements. There's a
7 requirement that we have that is part of the New
8 York State Climate Leadership and Community
9 Protection Act. There's a directive that state
10 agencies will reduce energy consumption by
11 twenty-five percent by year 2026. So there are
12 annual reporting requirements that we have. This
13 agreement will allow us to put that information
14 into this Web-portal-based platform through NYPA
15 which will make reporting easier, given that we
16 have eighteen eligible buildings with
17 thirty-seven total utility accounts that all need
18 to be entered manually each month.

19 NYPA is utilizing a grant funding from
20 petroleum overcharge restitution fund to make
21 this service available to BuildSmart 2025
22 agencies, which we're one of them, at no cost.

23 The next resolution on page thirty is an

1 authorization for procurement through NYSERDA for
2 renewable energy credits and zero emission
3 credits through the NFTA. This would be for a
4 five-year term that would begin in January of
5 2022. We are required by New York State as a
6 load serving entity to purchase both renewable
7 energy credits and zero emission credits. This
8 requirement goes back to 2017. We purchase
9 electricity directly through NYISO, the wholesale
10 market, so the energy standard mandates apply to
11 all LSEs, which is our entity, in the State of
12 New York.

13 The amount of zero emission credits and
14 renewable energy credits needs percentage
15 increases up to 2030. There's a number of
16 targets. And this agreement allows NYSERDA to
17 make those changes and purchase those credits for
18 us.

19 In terms of approximate cost, in year 2022
20 we expect that the renewable energy credits will
21 be about seventy thousand in addition to our
22 current energy needs, and a hundred thousand in
23 2023. And the zero emission credits for both --

1 for '22 and '23 to be over two hundred thousand
2 in terms of the additional cost.

3 And corporate resolution number eight on
4 page thirty-three is a lease amendment with
5 Elettromar at our 485 Cayuga Road facility.
6 They've been a tenant since January of 2018.
7 They're looking for additional storage space of
8 seven hundred and twenty-nine square feet. The
9 rate would be four fifty a square foot starting
10 in January of next year, and the agreement would
11 end with their current lease which is set to
12 expire December 31st of 2022. That will add an
13 additional thirty-two eighty over the
14 twelve-month period in terms of rent revenue.

15 And those are the corporate resolutions two
16 through eight, Sister.

17 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much, Kim.

18 May I ask for a motion to approve corporate
19 resolutions two through eight, please?

20 Someone make a motion, please.

21 COMMISSIONER BLUE: I'll make a motion to approve the
22 resolutions. Reverend Blue.

23 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. And a second?

1 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: LaVonne. Second.

2 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much.

3 Are there any questions on any of these
4 resolutions? Any comments?

5 If not, I will ask David State to take a
6 roll call.

7 MR. STATE: Roll call vote.

8 Commissioner Ansari?

9 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.

10 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?

11 Commissioner Baynes once again?

12 Commissioner Blue?

13 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes for Baynes.

14 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Yes.

15 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes recorded as a yes.

16 Commissioner Blue recorded as a yes.

17 Commissioner Hughes?

18 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.

19 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Voting in the affirmative on all
21 but number four on which I'm abstaining. So
22 affirmative on everything except for an
23 abstention on four.

1 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?

2 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

3 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

4 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

5 MR. STATE: Items pass.

6 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much. And we
7 move on to aviation business group. And,
8 Commissioner Perry, do you have any comments for
9 us?

10 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes, I do. The aviation
11 committee met earlier today, and just some
12 highlights from the committee are that the four
13 carousels are now working in the new baggage
14 claim area. And we're going to do some
15 fine-tuning on the logistics as to where the
16 baggage service offices are so that the area
17 works more efficiently for travelers. But, it's
18 just a spectacular accomplishment ahead of
19 schedule. And now international service will
20 service through the regular baggage claim area
21 without any unusual routing.

22 Now, with the terminal enhancements
23 complete, there's significant statistics on air

1 service rebound. It's (inaudible) underway.
2 We're looking forward to getting back to
3 pre-pandemic numbers and planning for future air
4 travel. Mr. Vanecek covered various service
5 expansions and positive changes for Frontier, Sun
6 Country and Spirit at Niagara Falls International
7 Airport. And Spirit noted the April -- April
8 Myrtle Beach additions. One important feature of
9 the committee meeting was the fire truck parade
10 in Lancaster which our equipment participated in.
11 And those are the highlights.

12 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very, very much. And,
13 Bill, do you have anything to add?

14 MR. VANECEK: No. I think Mr. Perry summed it up
15 nicely.

16 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you so much. I'll turn it
17 over to Kim for the resolutions.

18 MS. MINKEL: Thank you, Sister. There are three
19 resolutions within aviation. The first starts on
20 page thirty-six. Staff is recommending an
21 agreement with Airport Lighting Corporation in
22 the lump sum amount of a hundred and twenty-seven
23 thousand nine hundred and sixty dollars forty-six

1 cents. This is to replace seventy-five metal
2 halide apron lights that are mounted on the
3 passenger terminal at the Buffalo airport. They
4 will be replaced with highly efficient LED lights
5 that -- the benefit of the LED lights, while
6 reducing energy consumption, it also provided
7 brighter lights, but it also reduces pilot glare,
8 so certainly this will be an improvement at the
9 airport.

10 Staff did go out with a request for
11 proposal. Three responsive proposals were
12 received. Airport Lighting Corporation scored
13 the highest and also has the lowest cost. Empire
14 State Development excluded this procurement from
15 MWBE requirements because there are no New York
16 State certified providers of these products. OGS
17 excluded procurement from SDVOB because there's
18 no certified providers as well.

19 The second resolution is with -- that staff
20 is recommending is for the perimeter boundary
21 fencing at the Niagara Falls airport with New
22 York State Fence Incorporated for a lump sum
23 amount of three hundred and ninety-nine thousand

1 seven hundred twelve dollars and fifty cents.
2 This is a project that Bill had mentioned earlier
3 today, enclosing the recently purchased property
4 on the west end of Niagara Falls airport. It
5 would add approximately eighty-eight hundred
6 linear feet of fence.

7 Now, this is an item that the board had
8 approved back in April with Bogner -- where the
9 agreement was with Bogner Construction. The
10 contractor was unable to execute the contract
11 terms at that time due to shortages and delivery
12 delays, so we rebid and New York State Fence is
13 the lowest bid. They are meeting the established
14 MBE, WBE and SDVOB goals for this project.

15 And the last item in aviation is an
16 authorization for a lease amendment with Truman
17 Arnold Companies, also known as TAC Air, for 485
18 Cayuga Road. So TAC Air came in and had signed a
19 consent to assignment and assumption of
20 obligations as it related to Prior who previously
21 operated as the FBO for aviation at the Buffalo
22 airport. TAC Air is requesting to amend their
23 current lease by adding additional space known as

1 bay five that's located next to Executive
2 Airshare at our 485 Cayuga Road facility.

3 So as part of this additional space, it will
4 include over twenty-six thousand square feet of
5 hangar space at a rate of five dollars and fifty
6 cents per square foot, just under three thousand
7 square feet of class C minus office space at a
8 rate of ten dollars per square foot, and just
9 over eighty-four thousand six hundred square feet
10 of associated ramp space that's shared at a rate
11 of point o one two five per square foot. The
12 terminal lease will be coterminous with the
13 existing lease that TAC had assumed of the Prior
14 lease that is expected to expire on December
15 31st, 2036. It will add additional revenue of
16 three million three hundred and ninety-eight
17 thousand seven dollars and ninety-one cents over
18 the term of the lease.

19 TAC Air has also committed to invest a
20 minimum of three quarters of a million dollars
21 into the facility, and these improvements will be
22 done no later than next December, a year from
23 now. The first three months of the lease will be

1 rent-free while this construction is taking
2 place, and then they will provide rent payments
3 going forward. So we think this is exciting.
4 It's great to see investment over at our 485
5 Cayuga Road facility. It's even more exciting to
6 see the hangar space being used for what it was
7 built for, for aviation activity.

8 So those are the three resolutions within
9 aviation.

10 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: That's exciting news. That's
11 very good. Very good.

12 We have three resolutions for aviation, and
13 we can take those as a group. May I have a
14 motion to accept the three resolutions?

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.

16 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And a second, please?

17 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Second. Reverend Blue.

18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. Is there any
19 question or comment on any of the three
20 resolutions?

21 Hearing none, we will turn to a roll call
22 vote, please.

23 MR. STATE: Commissioner Ansari?

1 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.

2 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?

3 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.

4 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?

5 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Yes.

6 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hughes?

7 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.

8 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?

9 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Affirmative.

10 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?

11 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

12 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

13 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

14 MR. STATE: Items carry.

15 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you all. That carries.

16 Now surface transportation business report,

17 and, Tom George, do you have anything you would

18 like to tell us?

19 MR. GEORGE: Yeah. We did have a surface

20 transportation committee meeting this morning.

21 We had a discussion item where we talked about

22 customer satisfaction surveys. We had an

23 interesting conversation about the demographic

1 participation in that and looking for
2 opportunities to have that demographic more
3 accurately reflect what our ridership is as a
4 challenge for us moving into next year. We did
5 identify the comparison with our peers as well as
6 ourselves over time and using those tools to
7 identify areas of focus for the next year moving
8 forward.

9 We did discuss our initiatives briefly. We
10 talked about Niagara Falls service and how that
11 has gone into actual service as of Sunday of --
12 last Sunday, December 8th, and is now operating.
13 We do have staff in the field and we are
14 monitoring that and meeting with our riders on a
15 regular basis as it rolls out to determine if
16 there's changes that we should be considering.

17 I talked a little bit about ridership and
18 indicated that our bus ridership is up four
19 percent over last year and our rail ridership is
20 up twenty-eight percent over last year, which
21 gets us approximately a little less than sixty
22 percent of pre-pandemic numbers. So we got into
23 that.

1 And then I also reported on both the
2 accessibility advisory committee and the citizens
3 advisory committee, and both of those committees'
4 next meeting is on January 27th of the new year.
5 And that's all for my report.

6 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much, Tom. We
7 have seven resolutions under surface
8 transportation, and I believe we can take those
9 as a group.

10 MS. MINKEL: Yes, that's right, Sister, there are six
11 starting on page forty-five. The first, staff is
12 recommending an award to Mark Cerrone and WSP.
13 And this is for the rehabilitation of our Erie
14 Canal Harbor Station. For the construction
15 contract, the lump sum total bid amount is two
16 million five hundred and sixty-seven thousand
17 seven hundred dollars; and to WSP for the design
18 support at a cost plus fixed fee not to exceed a
19 hundred and eighteen thousand a hundred and
20 seventy-three dollars. I believe it was at the
21 October meeting Tom had shown the board
22 renderings of what the new station would look
23 like.

1 We did go out and public advertise this
2 work. Three potential bidders responded. Mark
3 Cerrone was the lowest. The established MBE, WBE
4 and SDVOB goals were ten percent, twelve percent
5 and seven percent. Mark Cerrone has identified
6 their MBE participation as seven point two
7 percent and their WBE participation as nine point
8 nine percent and their SDVOB participation as two
9 point three percent.

10 The second resolution in surface is an
11 authorization for a change order with Scheidt and
12 Bachmann as part of our fare collection system
13 upgrade to increase the amount by three hundred
14 and eight thousand seven hundred and eleven
15 dollars and two cents. This is to add more
16 ticket vending machines. As we're building out a
17 new rail station at the DL and W, we need to
18 install four new ticket vending machines at the
19 three hundred and eight thousand seven hundred
20 dollar cost that I had mentioned. So this would
21 be an increase in the contract to provide for
22 those four additional ticket vending machines.

23 The third surface resolution on page

1 forty-nine is an authorization to procure
2 vehicles -- street supervisor vehicles from
3 DeLacy Ford under the OGS contract. The cost per
4 vehicle is thirty-four thousand four hundred and
5 forty dollars and forty-seven cents. This is to
6 replace three similar model year 2013 vehicles
7 that have exceeded their useful life. And I
8 asked Tom, how many miles do these vehicles have?
9 Two hundred and thirty-five thousand on one, a
10 hundred and seventy-nine thousand on the other
11 and a hundred and sixty-seven thousand. These
12 are well-used vehicles --

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: I guess so.

14 MS. MINKEL: -- that our street supervisors use out
15 there. The MWBE/SDVOB goals are not applicable
16 to purchases made under the OGS contract.

17 The fourth resolution under corporate is a
18 different approach that we haven't done before.
19 We have a new manager of procurement, Mark
20 Pereira, who is doing wonderful things for us and
21 has looked at the inventory of parts that we
22 maintain for our buses and any unique parts. And
23 they're normally sole source procurements. He's

1 identified all of those and put together this
2 strategic procurement that will provide thirty to
3 forty thousand dollars' worth of savings. Not a
4 huge amount, but I think the biggest thing is it
5 helps us to identify the parts, allocate the
6 parts for our suppliers. Especially with supply
7 chain issues becoming an issue, to flag these
8 parts in advance so that we don't suffer with
9 supply chain problems for the next year, or
10 hopefully we can minimize that.

11 The cost of this sole source procurement
12 from the manufacturers listed below, and there
13 are four manufacturers, Gillig, Prevost, March
14 Networks and Landi Renzo USA. The approximate
15 cost is six hundred and eighty-nine thousand six
16 hundred and eighty-six dollars for these unique
17 and proprietary parts from those vendors. And
18 this is excluded from the MWBE requirements
19 because there are no New York State certified
20 providers of these products.

21 The fifth resolution. Staff is recommending
22 that the board, for the benefit and solely in its
23 capacity as the administrative host agency of the

1 Niagara International Transportation Technology
2 Coalition, NITTEC, award a consultant contract
3 with Parsons Transportation Group in the lump sum
4 amount of five million six hundred and
5 thirty-nine thousand seven hundred and ninety
6 dollars. And that additionally consulting
7 support service be awarded to WSP in the lump sum
8 amount of six hundred and eighty-nine thousand
9 six hundred and sixty-nine dollars and twelve
10 cents.

11 And with us today is Athena Hutchins, the
12 executive director of NITTEC, to talk a little
13 bit about the project because I will not do it
14 justice. And it really is exciting for the
15 community, so I asked Athena to come and talk a
16 little bit about this project.

17 MS. HUTCHINS: Great. Thank you, Kim. So back in
18 2016, working with NFTA, we submitted for a grant
19 with Federal Highway Administration. It was the
20 first go-around of this new grant program. It's
21 called the Advanced Transportation and Congestion
22 Management Technologies Deployment Initiative.
23 So we have -- we were successful in winning seven

1 point eight million dollars for this region to
2 deploy technology to help us mitigate congestion
3 management. And really a lot of the focus was
4 around working with multiple agencies. There's
5 an aspect to working across borders to make sure
6 we're minimizing delays at the border as well.

7 So it's an exciting project for us. This is
8 phase two. We completed phase one just earlier
9 this year, so now we're into phase two which is
10 implementing the technology for this program. So
11 we will be deploying a multi-agency technology
12 enabled integrated regional mobility management
13 system. Really working with all the different
14 partner agencies, with NITTEC and NFTA included,
15 where we're going to be able to tie in
16 information and be able to share that information
17 on a regular basis. So it's a very exciting
18 program. We also have consulting services to
19 support us during this project. It's a two-year
20 project with a completion of December 2023. So
21 it is very exciting for this region all working
22 together to help mitigate congestion.

23 MS. MINKEL: Great. Thank you, Athena.

1 And then the final resolution of the day is
2 an authorization for agreement with GObike
3 Buffalo. This is for consulting services. And,
4 similarly, staff is recommending that the board,
5 for the benefit of and solely in its capacity as
6 the administrative host agency for the Greater
7 Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council,
8 or GBNRTC, authorize an agreement with GObike
9 Buffalo in the amount not to exceed two hundred
10 and eight thousand eight hundred dollars.

11 This is consulting services for a regional
12 bike plan. It would be a two-year contract.
13 Under NFTA procurement guidelines, they did
14 publicly advertise, received five responsive
15 proposals. GObike scored the highest.

16 Similarly, on the line I have Rich Guarino,
17 who is the executive director of GBNRTC in case
18 the board has any questions on this project.
19 But, for new board members, both NITTEC and
20 GBNRTC, the NFTA acts as the host agency for both
21 of these wonderful organizations. They do their
22 procurements through the NFTA. Their board and
23 funding is separate from the NFTA, but the

1 administrative approvals do come to the NFTA, so
2 that's why both the GBNRTC item and the NITTEC
3 item come before this board.

4 And, Rich, I don't know if you have anything
5 you want to say on this item.

6 MR. GUARINO: The only thing I just wanted to add was
7 that this wasn't for the study. The study was
8 completed last year. This is for the
9 implementation of the study, so it's an agreement
10 for support services to implement the regional
11 bike plan.

12 MS. MINKEL: Great. Thank you, Rich.

13 And, Sister, those are the resolutions.

14 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Some exciting things happening.

15 Unless there's an objection, we'll take all
16 seven of the -- or, six, excuse me, together.

17 And I would like to ask for a motion to accept
18 the six resolutions, please.

19 Motion for acceptance.

20 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: So moved. Anthony.

21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you, Anthony.

22 And a second?

23 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Second. Phil Wilcox.

1 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you, Phil.

2 Are there any questions, comments?

3 Hearing none, we will call for a roll call
4 vote.

5 MR. STATE: Roll call vote. Commissioner Ansari?

6 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.

7 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?

8 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.

9 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?

10 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Yes.

11 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hughes?

12 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.

13 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?

14 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I'm voting in the affirmative on
15 all except for numbers one and three on which I
16 am abstaining. Affirmative on all the rest.

17 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?

18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

19 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

20 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

21 MR. STATE: Items carry.

22 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much. All of
23 those passed, and it gives all of you a lot of

1 work to start out on again for the next month.

2 David, is there a general counsel report?

3 MR. STATE: Yes, Sister. I provided a general
4 counsel report for the commissioners who are
5 physically here, it's in the book, and we
6 e-mailed it separately to the other
7 commissioners. Just to advise the board of a
8 trial that's coming up in January. It's an
9 accident involving a bike and a Metro bus. And
10 we have bifurcated the trial, so it's capped
11 damages. So the jury will tell us who's at fault
12 and at what proportion they are at fault, and
13 then when we get that number, we will apply that
14 to the stipulated damage amount.

15 The jury is scheduled in front of Judge
16 Siwek. It's scheduled to be four days. And
17 Vicky is trying this case. Vicky is actually
18 picking a jury as we speak. So the judicial
19 system is very much back from the pandemic. We
20 had two trials scheduled for this month and we
21 have this particular trial scheduled for January.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you for supplying us with

1 that report.

2 Unless one of the commissioners suggests it,
3 we have no need for an executive session.

4 Is there anyone who would like an executive
5 session today?

6 If not, may I ask for a motion for
7 adjournment?

8 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.

9 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And a second?

10 I'm sure it's out there. We are adjourned
11 for today. I want to wish everybody happy
12 holidays and be careful as you do all your
13 business between now and January and watch the
14 snow.

15 MS. MINKEL: Thank you all.

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STATE OF NEW YORK)

SS:

COUNTY OF NIAGARA)

I, Valerie A. Rosati, a Notary Public in and for the State of New York, County of Niagara, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above transcript of a video recording was taken down by me in a verbatim manner by means of Machine Shorthand, and that the transcript was then reduced into writing under my direction.

I further CERTIFY that the above-described transcript constitutes a true and accurate and complete transcript of the video recording.



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