
NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY Monthly Board Meeting December 10, 2020

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.

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MEMBERS IN THE BOARDROOM:
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        Commissioner Michael Hughes
        Commissioner Adam Perry
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        Kimberley Minkel (Executive Director)
        David State (General Counsel)
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        John Cox (Chief Financial Officer)
        William Vanecek (Director, Aviation)
5
        Tom George (Director, Public Transit)
        Darren Kempner (Manager, Government Affairs)
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        Helen Tederous (Director, Public Affairs)
        Lara Seniw (Assistant to Executive Director)
        Patrick Dalton (Director, Internal Audit &
          Corporate Compliance)
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        MEMBERS ON THE PHONE:
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        Commissioner LaVonne Ansari
        Commissioner Joan Aul
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        Commissioner Anthony Baynes
        Commissioner Margo Downey
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        Commissioner Jennifer Persico
        Chair Sister Denise Roche
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        Commissioner Philip Wilcox
        Vicky-Marie Brunette (Deputy General Counsel)
14
        Steven Duquette (Chief Information Officer)
        Karen Novo (Director, Human Resources)
15
        John Schaefer (Director, Engineering)
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                Commissioners, it's Dave State.
   MR. STATE:
                                                   We'll do
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        a roll call attendance. Looking for our quorum
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       number of six.
             Commissioner Ansari?
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    COMMISSIONER ANSARI:
                          Here.
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   MR. STATE:
                Commissioner Aul?
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    COMMISSIONER AUL:
                       Here.
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- 1 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?
- 2 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Here.
- 3 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?
- 4 MR. MINKEL: He's going to be absent, David.
- 5 MR. STATE: Commissioner Downey?
- 6 COMMISSIONER DOWNEY: Here.
- 7 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hicks?
- 8 Commissioner Hughes?
- 9 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Here.
- 10 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?
- 11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Present.
- 12 MR. STATE: Commissioner Persico?
- 13 COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Here.
- 14 MR. STATE: Commissioner Tucker?
- 15 MS. MINKEL: He's going to be late.
- 16 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?
- 17 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Here.
- 18 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?
- 19 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Present.
- 20 MR. STATE: Yes, we have a quorum, Mr. Chair.
- 21 | COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Great. So with a quorum
- 22 accounted for here, I'd like to call the meeting
- of December 10th, 2020 to order. With the chair,

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Sister Denise, calling in remotely, I'm asking
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       for a unanimous consent to serve as chairman
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       pro tem in my role as vice chair of the board.
            So looking for consent to serve as chairman
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       for today's meeting.
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    UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONERS:
                                 Yes.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Do we need to do a vote or not?
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   MR. STATE: Unless there's an objection.
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   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Hearing no objections, I will
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       serve as chairman pro tem for today's meeting of
       December 10, 2020.
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            With that, can I have a motion to approve
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       the minutes from the October meeting?
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   COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.
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   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Do I have a second?
   COMMISSIONER PERSICO: This is Jen.
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                                          Second.
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   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Motion by Commissioner Perry.
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       Second by -- who was it?
    COMMISSIONER PERRY: Jen Persico.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes. Second by Commissioner
       Persico.
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            All in favor?
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    UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONERS:
                                 Aye.
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1 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Do we need to take a roll on that?

MR. STATE: For the minutes, we have been just doing a verbal. We do need roll call votes for the voted-on items, however.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Any other discussion on the minutes? If not, we can move on to Kim's report, the executive director report.

MS. MINKEL: Great. Thank you, Commissioner.

So it's the end of the year, and normally at the end of the year, I like to provide highlights at the December meeting, looking back over the past year.

So this year it's been a challenge. The year started with a water main break that flooded our Delavan Station shutting down our light rail service for days. It took over four days of pumping the water around the clock and tremendous work from our rail team to restore the service. At the February board meeting, I indicated that this was the worst disaster that Metro had to respond to in their history. Those were my words in February. That was until the pandemic.

In mid March we immediately established a COVID-19 response and business continuity plan that included enhanced cleaning, administrative controls and engineering controls. We required the use of personal protective equipment. Our communication team was constantly working on messaging and keeping the public informed of the numerous protocols. It was critical that we do everything we can to protect our employees and the public we serve.

The financial effects of the pandemic were evident, and we worked with our vendors and our tenants reviewing bankruptcy protection and flexibility to sustain all of us during this difficult time. We established a forty-five million dollar line of credit to help with cash flow challenges and we renegotiated procurements to save money.

Despite the pandemic, there's been tremendous advancements on key projects. We opened three new Fisher-Price play areas at the Buffalo airport. We modernized the elevators and parking garage area in Buffalo. We signed a new

fixed-space operator at the Buffalo airport and opened flight schools at both airports. A new food concession, The Market on Elmwood, opened in the Buffalo terminal and we topped off the west end expansion at the Buffalo airport and completed the first baggage carousel five months ahead of schedule.

In our Metro operations, the board approved the draft environmental impact statement as we advanced our light rail extension project through the NEPA process. Today, we have twenty-six out of twenty-seven railcars that have been rebuilt and are in service. We advanced the track and catenary work at the DL and W terminal and started the design of a new station in this facility. Working with the Albright-Knox, we started a two-year public art campaign that appears on the DL and W terminal wall.

Building on our blueprint for the future, we advanced several key green initiatives. We started expansion of our subsurface engineered wetland use to treat spent de-icing fluid. We also advanced our electric bus program supporting

the governor's initiatives for electric buses by completing specifications for the charging infrastructure within our Cold Spring facility and issuing an RFP for electric buses.

New York State gave us an A plus rating on our MWBE programs. We had over thirty-percent MWBE participation, including almost ten million dollars spent with fifty-eight different MWBE suppliers. We created our diversity and inclusion council and the board approved a naming tribute to Robert T. Coles at our Utica Station.

Our employees have done an incredible job as it relates to safety. We completed our public transportation agency safety plan five months ahead of the Federal Transit Administration deadline, and we are on track to have one of the best safety records ever. Our vehicle incidents are down along with reportable accidents and days away from work. And because of this work, we had almost a six million dollar favorable Workers' Compensation adjustment.

During this year, we settled two labor agreements, we hired forty new operators and

twelve mechanics and we trained them in our new Metro bus training and instruction facility. We set up a process to work towards accreditation for our police. We upgraded body cameras and we reduced police overtime by twenty-four percent. And, sadly, our first responders responded to three suicide attempts, one homicide, a parental kidnapping and one accidental death in our system this year.

Our employees are recognized among the best. Our airport field employees received first place honors for the Balchen/Post Award for outstanding achievement in snow and ice control at both our airports, the FAA airfield inspection was the highest rating we've received in seven years and our communications team received three APTA AdWheel Gold Awards and our light rail was recognized with the coveted Safety Gold Award from APTA.

We've provided thousands of N95 respirators to health care workers and we continue to transport thousands of meals to those in need through various community food programs and

through the Buffalo Board of Education.

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All that's been accomplished this year is due to the support of our board and the incredible work of our sixteen hundred employees who always go above and beyond. I'm so very proud to be a part of this organization, and I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to our employees, especially my leadership team. Transportation has always been a dangerous job. Our employees are exposed to all sorts of hazards that have been made even more challenging with the coronavirus. Nevertheless, these employees realize the importance of the work they do and why our service is so essential. So on behalf of all staff, I wish to thank the board for your continual support and I wish you all a very happy holiday and a prosperous New Year and a much better 2021, so thank you. COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Well said. I think challenging year is a bit of an understatement. But it is

good to hear some great news, despite all the

hurdles that you guys have faced this past year.

So on behalf of the board, we say thank you to you, the team here and the sixteen hundred strong that, you know, so adequately and well represent the NFTA.

Any questions for Kim? Any other comments on Kim's report?

Hearing none, we can move into the governance and finance committee, John Cox, the financials.

MR. COX: Yes. Thank you, Commissioner. And good afternoon, commissioners. If you can refer to the financials that are starting on page six.

For the month of October, 2020, we had a negative variance to budget of nine hundred and eighty-four thousand dollars, and a negative variance to budget of nine hundred and thirty thousand on a year-to-date basis.

Total operating revenues and assistance were below budget by two point one million or nine point nine percent for October, and ten million or seven percent year to date. Our revenue shortfalls were primarily due to Metro passenger fares which had a negative variance to budget of

one point eight million or fifty-four percent for the month of October, and fourteen point six million or seventy-two percent on a year-to-date basis. And that's due to the decreased ridership both from the general public and also from the Buffalo Schools this year of course because of the pandemic.

We did see a twenty-seven and a half percent reduction in STOA versus budget, which for the month October is approximately one point four million dollars; and on a year-to-date basis, it's nine point eight million dollars.

BNIA revenues were down two million versus budget or thirty-three point six percent for the month of October, and thirteen point nine or thirty-four and a half percent below budget on a year-to-date basis.

NFIA revenues were a hundred thousand or forty-five point four percent below budget for October, and six hundred and eighty-six thousand or forty-one point eight percent below budget on a year-to-date basis.

These revenue shortfalls have been offset by

CARES Act funding from both FTA and FAA, and for the month of October that funding was approximately three point five million dollars; and on a year-to-date basis, thirty point six million dollars.

Our total operating expenses were below budget by two point one million or eleven and a half percent for the month of October, and eleven point seven million or nine point four percent year to date. And that's primarily being driven by lower expenses across the board due to reductions in costs via delayed purchases, vendor discounts and various other cost controls. Of course the exception being any operationally critical or safety-sensitive expenditures. Those still are all occurring. And a continued favorable pricing for commodities such as diesel, gasoline, natural gas and electricity.

Our transit fuel/power for the month of October was a hundred and thirty-seven thousand or thirty-three and a half percent below budget; and on a year-to-date basis, we're nine hundred and thirty-four thousand or thirty-four percent

1 below budget on a year-to-date basis.

Now, I know I've said this before, but I think it's always important to remember just how important the CARES Act has been to both Metro and the two airports. It's been a financial lifeline to us. And just to put it in perspective, without it we would have recognized a four and a half million dollar negative variance to budget and a two point eight million dollar deficit for the month of October. And on a year-to-date basis, we would have seen a thirty-one and a half million dollar negative variance to budget and a twenty-three point seven million dollar deficit on a year-to-date basis.

So unless there are any questions, that concludes the consolidated financials for the month of October.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any questions for John?

Okay. Hearing none, I know there's a number of corporate resolutions, so, Kim, do you want to walk to us through them?

22 MS. MINKEL: Yes.

23 MR. STATE: Mr. Chair, just before we leave the

exciting topic of the minutes, I just want to make sure that the record is clear. The minutes included not only the October meeting, but we had the November budget meeting as well. So just so the record is clear, both packets were included as part of the vote.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Got it. Okay. Thank you.

MS. MINKEL: Thanks. I'm going to have John talk about the budget.

MR. COX: Sure. With the first resolution for your consideration this month, I'm going to provide you -- it has to do with our annual budget for fiscal year ending 2022, so I'm going to provide a budget summary and give you some of the highlights of that budget that is for your consideration this month.

So of course this budget contains a lot of assumptions and estimations, and probably more than we've ever had in any budget before just given the current situation we're in. So we do have cost control measures and various projects, technology improvements and some operational impacts included in there from the COVID-19

pandemic.

The overall budget is two hundred forty-eight and a half million dollars, and that is an increase of one point seven percent or four point one million dollars from fiscal year ending 2021. Of course it's a balanced budget as required by New York State, and we also have to submit this budget to New York State by December 31st of this year.

And -- oh. Let me -- I left out that this starts on page fourteen, excuse me for that, in your packet, the summary starts.

Now, if you'll turn to page fifteen, I'll touch on some of the key highlights and assumptions that we have in this budget.

Our Metro base fare is remaining at two dollars, and that is nine years that we haven't increased the Metro base fares. We have New York State operating assistance remaining flat at approximately sixty-one million dollars. And also included in there is total federal operating assistance, we have an increase of approximately forty-five million dollars. And that would be

dependent, of course, on additional funding from the state -- I mean -- excuse me. From the federal government and also a portion of some of the FAA CARES Act funds that we received in the initial CARES Act.

Erie County sales tax, we're anticipating about a decrease of one point six million dollars or seven percent, and that's based on Erie County projections and recent trends. Mortgage tax we see remaining flat. BNIA and NFIA are assuming significantly decreased enplanements, and of course that's caused by the ongoing impact of the pandemic and that also ends up in lower concessions and commissions revenue.

I'd like to point out that there are also no new additional budgeted positions in this budget. It does include any contractual or step increases as a result of our labor agreements. Our Metro fringe rate is at -- and that's our benefit rate. That's at eighty-eight point two percent, and the NFTA fringe rate is at fifty-seven percent.

We have our health insurance increasing approximately five percent, and that's been

consistent with our forecast for last year's budget and recent trends. Workers' Comp. increasing five percent. We do have a decrease of approximately one point eight million dollars in our maintenance and repair costs, and also the Metro transit fuel/power is decreasing by a little over a million dollars or twenty-one point nine percent, and that's because we've seen decreased pricing in our energy prices and also we will have lower usage is anticipated during the course of the year, so those two factors. And, also, general business is decreasing and that's due to lower expenses at the airport, some lower advertising expenses, and also lower costs at NFIA parking lot operations. And that's just due to anticipated decrease of operations at both of the airports.

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Now, if we can turn to page sixteen which is the aviation section of the summary. This fiscal year '22 budget assumes -- I had mentioned earlier about decreases. We are assuming a fifty-seven percent decrease in enplanements from the fiscal year '21 budget, and of course that's

being caused by the pandemic. This will result in lower concessions and commissions of about thirteen point six million dollars. And we have, to offset that, increased operating assistance of approximately thirteen point five million dollars. And that will be a portion of the current FAA CARES Act and some additional federal assistance that's -- it's still in the works at this point.

Now, some key capital projects that are, that are in this budget is the continuation of the terminal enhancement project, aircraft de-icing containment facility expansions and the rehab of runway 5/23, which includes not just improvements to the runway but also the lighting and various other signage on that.

If we turn to page seventeen, we have

Niagara Falls, and there we expect a decrease in

revenue of approximately two million dollars,

which is sixty-nine point nine percent. And

enplanements are expected to decrease by

seventy-one percent. And, again, the key to

balancing this budget for NFIA is the assumption

of almost -- approximately four million dollars in additional federal COVID relief funds.

Now, if we can turn to page eighteen.

Actually, it's best if we turn to page nineteen.

So this is the Metro consolidated budget. Metro has no increases in the base fare, as I mentioned before, for the ninth year. Revenues are decreasing by about fifteen point four million, and that's due to of course anticipated decreased ridership. We have in there, again, assumptions of additional federal assistance to offset that loss in revenues, and, also, as I mentioned before, decreased diesel fuel's budget an average cost of one dollar and ninety-two cents.

And some of the key capital projects that we have in the budget for Metro is continuation of the DL and W design and construction. We'll be purchasing new buses which will be a combination of clean diesel and maybe some -- and a few natural gas buses. We'll be upgrading our infrastructure for electric buses, and we'll be doing various other projects to improve the light rail system which will include escalators and

various other items such as the fare collection system which will affect the whole system.

And then if we can turn to page twenty.

Property development. Here we anticipate a revenue increase of about a hundred and twenty-five thousand. That's due to of course the escalators that we have in our rent. So we anticipate some increase there in the revenues.

Some of the key capital projects there are of course various elevator and roof replacements and various other enhancements to those properties.

And, finally, we have on page twenty-one, central admin. And we have increases in our operational expenses, and that's due to, you know, standard typically higher contractual salaries, higher fringe rates, just those things that you typically see increase on a year-to-year basis such as health insurance, Workers' Comp. And also in there are some additional investments in our, our MIS. That includes some upgrades to some of our systems, our payroll and some of our general financial operating systems. And also there's some vehicles in there to replace some

older vehicles for the police.

So unless there are any questions, that concludes the budget summary for the resolution that you're about to consider.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any questions for John? I know there's a lot of variables and a lot of uncertainty and you guys do what you can to try and provide some of that certainty to probably a very unusual budget process for you guys, but -- and I know we talked about a lot of this in November.

Any other questions for John at this point or anybody on the team?

MR. COX: If I could, too, I left one thing out.

Certainly, this is the December budget. I don't want to leave this out. The -- of course right now there is some, you know, some negotiations happening at the federal level, so we don't know at this point what additional federal assistance we'll get. I think that will also -- one of the things you're seeing is this -- that will also -- we don't know how that negotiation will affect, will affect state -- potentially state and local

assistance, but at this point -- and based on that, we also have the executive budget which typically comes out the second or third week of January.

So once all of those things come -- once those things come out, I think we'll have a better idea of where we're at and we'll take another look at this budget and of course adjust accordingly before the beginning of our new fiscal year which start -- we would bring that back to you at the March meeting with adjustments, and that would be before the beginning of our new fiscal year which starts on April 1st.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Commissioner Perry, you have a question?

COMMISSIONER PERRY: This anticipated increase in rents. Have we had any delinquencies based on pandemic related inability to pay and do we have any reason to anticipate any defaults or bankruptcies from any of our tenants which would affect this assumption?

MS. MINKEL: Yeah, we have. But we've -- my property

group has done surprisingly well. Only three 1 point six percent, which is incredible. 3 a couple of amended leases that we're bringing to the board to consider to work with our tenants 4 5 going forward because, because of that issue. 6 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Sure. I quess I was just -- the only -- I think we're talking about a hundred and twenty-three thousand dollars in increased rent. 8 9 I just wondered whether there was a, you know, a partial or complete offset of that based on these 10 11 other factors, just so we can look at it in 12 context. 13 MR. COX: And, also, this year, one of the things --14 and that's another factor that's also dependent 15 on what happens at the federal level. Because 16 one of the things we found this year which was 17 helpful were the PPP loans and various things of 18 that nature that actually allowed our tenants to 19 continue to pay their rent. 20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thank you. COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any other questions for John or 21 22 the team on the budget? 23 Okay. Hearing none, Kim, I don't know if

you need to give any other highlights on this or 1 we should go right to a vote.

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MS. MINKEL: You know, I think we should take it No. The only other thing that I as a separate item. want to echo what John had said is we're asking for a fair amount of federal assistance in this We're asking for almost fifty million in federal assistance. Without that, it will have an absolutely devastating impact on our We're not alone. Other transit operation. systems and airports in the nation, without additional COVID relief funds, will find themselves in a similar position. And without this assistance, it will have a significant impact on our community considering the tremendous economic impact that the airports provide and the critical service that Metro provides to Western New York. So we will continue to lobby and advocate for future funding in the CARES Act and support this increase for the state as well.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Great. Thank you. So with that, we're looking for a motion for the

- 1 2021-2022 operating capital budgets.
- 2 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: So moved. Sister Denise.
- 3 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Sister Denise.
- 4 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Second.
- 5 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Second by Commissioner Perry.
- 6 You want to do the roll call, Dave?
- 7 MR. STATE: So a roll call vote.
- 8 Commissioner Ansari?
- 9 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.
- 10 MR. STATE: Commissioner Aul?
- 11 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes.
- 12 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?
- 13 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.
- 14 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?
- 15 Commissioner Hicks?
- 16 Commissioner Hughes?
- 17 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.
- 18 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?
- 19 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Aye.
- 20 MR. STATE: Commissioner Persico?
- 21 COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Yes.
- 22 MR. STATE: Commissioner Tucker?
- 23 Sister Denise?

1 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

2 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

3 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

4 | COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Motion is approved.

Kim, I know there's a number of other corporate resolutions here. Do you want to walk through these?

MS. MINKEL: Yes. Starting on page twenty-six of your packet is corporate resolution number two. Staff is looking for a one-year agreement with ClearSky for technical support of our Infor Lawson application. We use this Authority-wide. This supports many of our HR functions and other enterprise systems.

The support will be provided at a rate of twelve thousand four hundred per month for a total cost of a hundred and forty-eight thousand. And this would be a one-year term that will take us through the end of 2021.

ClearSky is the vendor who is performing the upgrade to our current Lawson system, and so during this upgrade, ClearSky is considered a sole-source provider because of the technical

support services that will be needed throughout this process. So we consider them sole source as part of this procurement.

The next resolution on page twenty-seven is an authorization for a settlement with Richard Schlueter in the amount of a hundred and ninety thousand dollars. This goes back to a motor vehicle accident that occurred three years ago when both vehicles actually proceeded through a solid red traffic light. There was a gap where one party ran through a red light and the other party jumped the red light on the other side and collided. It was estimated, based on reconstruction, that the light was red for one point four seconds when this occurred.

The damage to the bus and to the car was relatively minor in the amount of six thousand and sixty-four hundred between the two different vehicles. The plaintiff indicated that there were cervical and shoulder surgeries that were needed. They had an initial demand of five hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. We engaged in mediation, and we were able to come to

an agreement of a hundred and ninety thousand to resolve this, subject to board approval.

The next resolution following that, on page twenty-nine, is also a settlement in the amount of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This was for an event that occurred in September of 2016. Our bus made contact while turning onto the Galleria Mall property. It did minor damage to the vehicle, but the Plaintiff days after the event did seek treatment with a spine surgeon who provided cervical decompression and fusion in early of 2017. Fortunately, she made a decent recovery.

The initial settlement demand was for nine hundred and fifty thousand dollars. We were able to negotiate favorable parameters with -- for arbitration with a zero for a low, two hundred and fifty thousand for a high. The arbitrator issued a three hundred thousand dollar award requiring the defendant, us, to issue payment for the agreed high parameter of two hundred and fifty thousand and so staff is recommending that settlement.

The fifth resolution on page thirty-one is for a term agreement. This is with Grove Roofing. And this is for emergency repairs throughout the Authority. The initial term of the agreement would be one year with the option of four additional one-year renewals at our discretion. Typically, the average amount of work is around three thousand dollars; and on an annual basis, we don't spend much above sixty thousand. Historically, our emergency roof repairs have ranged, however, anywhere between three thousand to a hundred and eighty thousand per event. For larger roofing projects, we would continue to go out and bid those separately as we have in the past.

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We did issue an RFP. We received two proposals. Staff is recommending Grove Roofing. We have experience with both and have done very well with both of these vendors. The MBE/WBE/SDVOB goals were set at seventeen percent, thirteen percent and zero percent, respectively. And they indicated that they would establish percentages for each of the work

assignments to meet these goals.

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The next resolution is on page thirty-four. And the next three resolutions are in some ways So earlier I had mentioned as it connected. relates to our property and working out resolutions to accommodate some of these leases. Previously we had a large area of space that was leased by RMS at our 485 Cayuga Road facility. They have branched out and formed different segments of their business in order to remain compliant with the collection industry standards. So that space is being divided up and adjusted accordingly and extending the ultimate lease agreement over a longer term, holding the lease at the current rate but extending it and increasing in years going forward.

So I'll take the first one on page thirty-four. And this is with a company called D1AL at 485. They are looking for a little over three thousand square feet. Their current office space lease would expire at the end of June of 2021. We would cancel that lease and enter into a new five-year lease agreement for the same

space. It would be at a rate of ten dollars per square foot or just under thirty-one thousand for the year, with a total rental income over the five-year period of just under a hundred and sixty-four thousand dollars.

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The next lease is on page thirty-five, this is with RMS who has been a tenant of ours since November of 2016. They've expanded their five lease amendments over multiple times during that time. They are looking to start leasing twenty-eight hundred square feet -- excuse me. Leasing twelve thousand five hundred and sixty-seven square feet. Their current rental rate of nine dollars and eighty-five cents per square foot would increase to ten forty-eight, depending on the investment in upgrades and The current lease would be canceled and space. the new five-year lease would begin on January 1st of next year, and it would extend through December 31st of 2025. They would continue to lease the office space at ten dollars per square foot or eighty -- just under eighty-six thousand per year, with a three-percent annual increase.

The total income over the five-year period would be just -- would be four hundred and fifty-five thousand four hundred and seventy-one dollars.

So the branch-off from that lease is on the next page, on page thirty-six, where a portion of that space will now go to a company called Accounts Interchange Group. They would take just over thirty-six hundred square feet of office space. It would also be the same term, five years, at the same rate, ten dollars, or just over thirty-six thousand for the first year. It would also have the three-percent annual escalator, so that the total rent over the five-year period for that space would be just under a hundred and ninety-two thousand dollars.

And then, finally, there is a new lease with a Start-Up NY company also at 485 Cayuga. And this appears on page thirty-seven in your book. It's with JECA Energy Bar. They're requesting to lease just under two thousand square feet of kitchen space. This is on the second floor of this facility in bay four. The initial term of the lease would be two years starting in January.

They would have the option to renew with our approval. The rent for this space would be seven dollars and eighty-three cents per square foot or just over fifteen thousand for the first year, and a three-percent escalator after that. They would be responsible for the maintenance and repairs of the kitchen equipment that would be available for them to use. Additionally, they would have the right for a first refusal of just over twenty-six hundred square feet of adjacent space. And in the meantime, we would continue to market that space to see if we could get a tenant in it.

And then the final lease agreement is on page thirty-eight. It's with Westmatic, also at 485 Cayuga. They've been a tenant of ours since 2009. They are looking to purchase a new building and relocate their entire operation; however, they've seen some delays in that process so they've requested to extend their current lease through June 30th of 2022, adding an additional almost thirty-one hundred square feet of storage space. And that would be on a

month-to-month basis for the storage space. So the current lease would be cancelled upon execution of this lease. And the new lease would start January 1st and end on June 30th, 2022. So eighteen months for that lease. The total annual rent will be just under a hundred and sixty-four thousand dollars. It would increase on January 1st for the next six months.

And those are the resolutions.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: So it would be my goal to take all nine as a batch here, barring any objection to that.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.

14 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Motion by Commissioner Perry.

15 Is there a second on that?

16 COMMISSIONER AUL: Joan Aul. Second.

17 | COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Second by Commissioner Aul.

Okay. So motion to approve resolutions two

19 through ten. All in favor? Or, no. I need a

20 motion first.

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21 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.

22 | COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Second?

23 MS. MINKEL: I think it was Joan Aul.

- 1 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yeah. Okay.
- 2 MS. MINKEL: Joan, did you second that?
- 3 COMMISSIONER AUL: I did. I did second.
- 4 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Are there any abstentions?
- Dave, do you want to call roll?
- 6 MR. STATE: Roll call votes.
- 7 | Commissioner Ansari?
- 8 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.
- 9 MR. STATE: Commissioner Aul?
- 10 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes.
- 11 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?
- 12 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.
- 13 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hughes?
- 14 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.
- 15 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?
- 16 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Aye.
- 17 MR. STATE: Commissioner Persico?
- 18 COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Yes.
- 19 MR. STATE: Commissioner -- I'm sorry. Sister
- 20 Denise?
- 21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.
- 22 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?
- 23 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

1 MR. STATE: Item carries.

2 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Great. Thank you.

With that, we'll move on to the aviation group. Commissioner Perry?

COMMISSIONER PERRY: Consistent with our pandemic practices, I'm going to turn to the presentation of the agenda over to Mr. Vanecek. And I note that Mr. Schaefer is not here, so as per usual, I assume Mr. Vanecek is going to start with the airport improvement project update.

MR. VANECEK: Yes. I'll just go over some of the highlights. So we are getting very close to opening our new administrative offices at BNIA and we'll be moving at the end of either this month or very early in January. So the carpeting is all in, all the offices have been, you know, lined with glass, the restrooms are ready.

Pretty much all we need to have to go now is to get the rest of the furniture put in and we'll be able to effectuate that move hopefully by the end of the year here.

And so next year, and hopefully kind of maybe mid summer or so, it's my thought that we

can bring the board out for a board meeting in our brand-new conference rooms at the airport so you're able to take a look and we'll get you out there on that end.

The big news on the west side is the fact that the escalators have been put in place now. They're not operational yet, but they are put in place. The elevators on the east side are scheduled to arrive I believe in two weeks, and they'll go in and they'll see the elevators on the east side. And the terrazzo is almost complete in the arrivals area on the east side as well. So they're making great progress. They're certainly on schedule and we look forward to a successful completion of that project.

A quick note on the engineered wetlands project, which is going to be an expansion. This is where we treat all of our glycol runoff at the airport. But we had a little bit of a hiccup with some cabling that had to be relocated with the FAA. They were stalling us. We were looking at some pretty significant delay claims if we couldn't get the project started. We were able

to convince someone higher up in FAA to put pressure on the local group and we were able to get that effectuated. So they'll be starting that work to tie in the cables and reroute the cables. They're actually already in place. They just have to be spliced in on both ends. That should happen within the next about four weeks and then we'll be on time to open and start the project for the expansion of the wetlands.

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Let's see. What else is significant that we can talk about. I did want to mention, though -it's not in here. But, we worked very closely with the 914th. They were doing a runway project at our airport, and so we were, we were -- we coordinated all the -- we actually shortened that runway for a significant period of time. able to accommodate all of our commercial flights and they get that reopened in time for the winter season, because we didn't want to -- we wanted to have full length for our winter season. So that has been accomplished and we're very happy on that end.

So just a couple quick highlights. John

already went over the financials so I don't want to necessarily repeat those. But, to give you an idea of the activity levels that we're looking So for the month of October, we had at. enplanements of forty-seven thousand four thirty. That's a seventy-eight percent decrease year over And it's not -- we just really are not seeing any sort of an upward trend on these. They have been pretty stable. Year to date we are one million three hundred and forty-seven thousand below last year which is an eighty-six percent drop. So the numbers are really staggering and of course it's having significant issues with respect to generating revenue, most notably our parking revenues which are nonexistent. It's a very, very small number.

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So with respect to Niagara Falls, their enplanements were down, they were down by seven thousand, which is an eighty-one percent drop for the month of October year over year, and year to date they are just under sixty thousand down which is an eighty-six percent decrease in Niagara Falls. And, unfortunately, as you

recall, Spirit stopped flying. They only flew two flights in October and then they have pulled their service. They're looking forward as to when they will return. They're pretty confident they will, they just don't know when yet, so we'll stay tuned for that.

To put it in some other real numbers, the actual number of flights that were flown -- so at Buffalo we were -- we had actual flights that went out were nine hundred and six, compared to 2019 for the month of October which were almost twenty-four hundred. So the seats are just not there because people are not traveling. So that was a sixty-two percent decrease in actual flights.

At Niagara Falls, similar, similar numbers. The actual flights flown were twenty-four versus fifty-six the year before, so a fifty-seven percent decrease. So, again, hurting out there on the, on the activity levels at both airports.

So we are trending just almost exactly like the rest of the airports around the country.

This is not unique to Buffalo. Our numbers that

are comparable really among all sizes of airports as well. New York City is still down in that eighty percent down numbers. You know, it's just got to pass at some point and then we'll start seeing activity come back up.

So I guess that will kind of go through my comments for the aviation committee. If there are any questions, I'd be happy to address them.

Yes, sir?

COMMISSIONER PERRY: So I assume that we have no reason to believe that the Canadian, the Canadian travelers will return? Nothing indicating like a big market change is going to change that so --

MR. VANECEK: No. You know, until some of this passes and the bridges open, you know, we're going to get basically no Canadian travel.

COMMISSIONER PERRY: Right. But then -- and then assuming, as soon as we have normal conditions, we have no reason to believe that that won't return to normal levels?

MR. VANECEK: I believe it will return to, yeah, some sense of normalcy, but it will take, it will take a while I'm sure to ramp up, but they'll come

1 back. I have no doubt about that.

- COMMISSIONER PERRY: And in addition to Norwegian which filed for bankruptcy, do we have any other changes in low-cost or ultra-low-cost carriers that is going to positively or negatively affect our current enplanements?
- MR. VANECEK: I don't believe so. You know, a lot of those smaller carriers have actually filed for bankruptcies and some have actually gone out of business. Like you said, Norwegian. I don't have a list of those. But, my guess is we're not going to see any new entrants into the airport I think for quite a while.
- COMMISSIONER PERRY: And all the coverage on the 787 Max has been confusing to me.
- MR. VANECEK: Yeah. You know, and I don't have much to comment on it, other than the fact that, you know, they've been authorized to go back into service. And, you know, we'll see how it, how it works out to be for some, particularly Southwest and American. Those are the two largest buyers of those planes.

23 | COMMISSIONER PERRY: And just something that strikes

me, I keep hearing this and it's been repeated now by just about everybody, that we won't have herd immunity vaccine protection until, quote, the end of the summer. So it just -- when I hear that, it makes me feel like we're going to be facing a big challenge in the high travel times because of that. You know, certainly we'll start to see an increasing number of enplanements, but we're going to be facing a depressed demand into the summer.

MR. VANECEK: Yeah. You know, as we all know, it's an inbound market in the summer primarily, coming up here to see the falls and the wonderful vistas that you get in Western New York. And so that's, you know, that's going to be a very challenging time. It's going to be a huge issue on businesses being able to generate revenue, because I don't think -- it will be a trickle, I think, and certainly early on, and who knows how long it lasts. But you're right, I think we're in for a pretty weak demand at Buffalo, both inbound in the summer and then we've already had it outbound (inaudible).

1 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thanks, Bill.

2 MR. VANECEK: You're welcome.

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: And, Mr. Chairman, if there's no

4 other questions, we do have a few resolutions.

MS. MINKEL: Thank you, Commissioner.

Starting on page forty-one, there are six aviation resolutions. The first one is an agreement with DiDonato in a lump sum amount of three hundred sixty-seven thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven dollars. This is for them to do design services for our main runway at the Buffalo airport, our 5/23 runway. The last major rehab project was completed in 2006. So as part of our airport pavement management study that was done in the summer of 2019, it identified the need to rehab and do some work on the main runway.

We did go out with an RFP. The design service contract was evaluated using FAA guidelines and NFTA guidelines, so it's a qualification-based RFP. DiDonato was selected based on their presentation and their response to the RFP. We did establish DBE goals of seventeen

percent. DiDonato has committed to exceeding these goals and is proposing nineteen and a half percent participation. Funding for this project would be provided, seventy-five percent of it from FAA, twelve and a half percent from New York State Department of Transportation, and our matching contribution would come from our airport development fund to complete this design work.

The next resolution within aviation starts on page forty-four. Staff is recommending a supplemental agreement with JE Architects. This would be in the amount of three hundred and seventy-six thousand dollars two hundred and eighteen, with a revised contract value of just over three million.

This is for additional design support
services as part of our enhancement project at
the airport. This is to address three different
areas. One, unforeseen varying site conditions.
As we find with a lot of projects, sometimes
as-built drawings don't identify things
accurately and sometimes there is surprises when
you dig into the ground as well. So this is to

address those unforeseen varying site conditions that we've uncovered as we continue on with the project, but it's also for additional enhancements when this project has developed, staff is recommending going forward, and to also address opportunities for cost reductions.

The engineer's estimate for this additional work was three hundred and eighty-three thousand eight hundred and four dollars, and the consultant had proposed to do it for three hundred and seventy-six thousand two hundred and eighteen dollars.

The next resolution on page forty-six is a change order. This is change order number seventeen with Pike Company, also for the baggage claim expansion project. Staff is recommending as part of this change order a two hundred and seventy-nine thousand one hundred and thirty-one dollar increase to that contract. The total contract increase since the beginning of the project is now just under one and a half million or a total increase for the total project of two point seven five percent. By way of information,

we are approximately two thirds completed with this project. Normally, you will see cost overruns somewhere within five percent, so we're doing a pretty good job of trying to keep those within the normal range.

These are related in a couple different categories. The first category representing just over eighty-two thousand is due to unforeseeable varying site conditions, similar to what I had mentioned previously for the other resolution, but also due to some design inconsistencies of just under a hundred and ninety-seven thousand dollars.

We have -- for those design inconsistencies, we have negotiated and received credit for rework of those. To date we have utilized around three hundred thousand dollars of design credit to address those design inconsistencies that have been related to those additional charges.

We also have some enhancements that total just over twenty-five thousand, and cost reductions, where we take a credit, of twenty-five thousand. So the enhancements are

coming at the expense of the cost reductions.

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The next resolution on page fifty-two is an authorization for amendment with ALD Development. And this is for that common-use airport lounge at the Buffalo airport that opened up just last They need about three thousand passengers vear. a day in order to reopen. And they had proposed a MAG, a minimum annual quarantee, based on airport activities that certainly exceeded what we have today. So they came to us, and staff is recommending an agreement -- or, an amendment to their existing agreement, that would provide for an additional three years for them to operate the Their MAG would be reduced common-use space. slightly, we're in contract year two, by fifteen thousand dollars a year, but then ramp up.

So the original agreement, the five-year agreement, provided a MAG guarantee of eight hundred and fifty-five thousand dollars to the Authority. The new proposed amendment over a longer term, over eight years, would provide one million four hundred and five thousand dollars.

For those of you who have seen this space,

this new space that opened at the airport, it's incredible. It's a wonderful space and we've gotten a lot of positive feedback from folks who have used it. But, once again, they really can't open the space up until passenger levels get to about three thousand a day. Currently, we're around twelve hundred a day, so we're not where it needs to be.

Additionally, as part of this agreement, ALD will pay the minimum of the MAG or twelve percent of the gross revenues for each of the contract years. They were required to put in a little over one point six million in capital improvements. To date they've made just under one point three million in capital improvements, and they are proposing that that remaining capital investment would occur around contract year five.

MR. VANECEK: Kim, if I could add, they are current on their minimum annual guaranteed payments.

They have not missed one.

MS. MINKEL: Thank you.

The next resolution on page fifty-four is an

operating agreement with OnCore Aviation. This is for them to operate a flight school at the Buffalo airport. Earlier this year we brought an agreement to the board for them to operate a flight school at the Niagara Falls airport. As part of the agreement, they would provide five percent of the gross revenues and the term would be one year starting today with four optional one-year renewals. And they have been operating out of the Rochester airport for six years.

The next resolution on page fifty-five is a license agreement with Independent Taxi Association for taxi services at the Buffalo airport. This would be a one-year term that would start on January 1st with the option to renew annually under the same terms and conditions.

So previously we had a one-year agreement with ITA that was -- that we could renew at our option for four additional one-year terms. We did renew that one-year agreement for this calendar year, 2020, but then COVID broke out and their business has plummeted and they've been

struggling to retain drivers. They are a group of independent drivers, and they've lost a significant number of drivers as part of this COVID. They've asked that we not renew the agreement and it certainly makes sense.

They are in arrears of six hundred and five thousand that they owe the Authority, so what we are proposing is that they pay a license fee of three dollars per pickup and three dollars per drop-off as part of this agreement. Fifty cents would be applied to their arrears. By way of comparison, the TMCs that operate at the airport, both Uber and Lyft, pay two fifty per pickup and drop-off. Additionally, they would pay a fee of zero point one four per deplaned passenger and they would continue to pay rent of just under sixteen thousand for the taxi building.

They've provided wonderful service. One of the nice things about having a dedicated taxi business at the airport is to ensure that for those late arrivals that there's someone there to meet and greet passengers, and we get that assurance by having this. It's important that

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       the board know this is not exclusive. So this
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       would be available to other taxi services as
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       well.
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            And those are the resolutions.
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   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any questions for Kim on the
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       six resolutions?
            Okay. Hearing none, I'm looking for a
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       motion, if we can do it again, we'll move all
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       six. So motion to approve resolutions one
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       through six?
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    COMMISSIONER ANSARI: So moved. LaVonne.
   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Commissioner Ansari.
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13
            Second?
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   CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Second. Sister Denise.
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   COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Second. Commissioner Wilcox.
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   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Motion by Commissioner Ansari.
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       Second by Sister Denise.
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            All in favor?
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   UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONERS: Aye.
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   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Or do you have to call the
       roll? Do you have to call the roll?
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   MR. STATE: Yes.
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            I'll do the roll call vote.
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             Commissioner Ansari?
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    COMMISSIONER ANSARI:
                         Yes.
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    MR. STATE:
               Commissioner Aul?
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    COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes.
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    MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?
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    COMMISSIONER BAYNES:
                          Yes.
                Commissioner Hughes?
    MR. STATE:
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.
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    MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?
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    COMMISSIONER PERRY:
                          I vote in the affirmative on two
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        through six, but abstain on number one.
               Commissioner Persico?
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    MR. STATE:
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    COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Yes.
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    MR. STATE:
                Sister Denise?
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    CHAIR SISTER ROCHE:
                          Yes.
                And Commissioner Wilcox?
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    MR. STATE:
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    COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.
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               All items carry.
    MR. STATE:
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES:
                           Great.
                                   Resolutions approved.
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             We will move on to surface transportation.
        Similar to aviation, because of COVID-19 we did
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not have a committee meeting today, but I would

ask Tom George to go over some highlights.

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MR. GEORGE: Thank you and good afternoon. Just fairly brief today. I'll talk about Metro initiative status reports on page nine. I'm pleased to say that we did receive bus procurement proposals from suppliers and they are currently under evaluation. So we are moving forward with the bust -- the various bus initiatives and we are pleased that we did receive those (inaudible).

Also, on the Amherst-Buffalo light rail extension, part of the process for advancing that is to assist the Federal Transit Administration with their review. We're in the process of retaining a third-party consultant that would act as a representative for NFTA in the review process. We have gone through that selection process and we do have those proposals in hand and are in the evaluation process for that as well. We should have a recommendation coming forward shortly. That's all I had on the initiatives report for today.

I would have a brief comment about ridership. Again, ridership remains fairly flat.

It's a little challenging to see it this time of year as we get into the holidays, but, nonetheless, even with the -- I don't want to call it the locking back down, but the reduction of activities in the region, we are still seeing a fairly flat ridership curve. So we're not see a corresponding drop other than on paratransit. And we anticipate that moving forward for quite some time.

If there's any questions on any of the metrics, I'd be glad to answer those. Otherwise, I'll move forward into my reports on the committees.

On November 19th, we had a citizens advisory committee. We had previously done a survey on service trade-offs. We've been talking to the committee about as we look at modifying our service moving forward, there's a number of trade-offs that are required. And we've talked before the board. Similar things as ridership versus coverage, duration versus frequency, weekends and evenings, and peak versus all-day service. We did get a number of varying

responses from the committee, but at the end of the day, it averages right in the middle of all those categories, so much the same as we were trying to do, there's a lot of balances they would like us to see.

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We updated them on the winter service I will let the board know that we are reducing the frequency on the rail. currently carrying on the order of between four and five thousand passengers daily on our rail system. Peak hour we traditionally run a ten-minute headway. We're reducing that to a twelve-minute headway. And off-peak, midday, we're generally on a twelve-minute headway and we're reducing that to a fifteen-minute headway for some -- a couple of reasons. One is to reduce cost of operation to respond to the fact that the ridership is down, as well as we're having some challenges with operator availability.

We talked about mask outreach and compliance. We're pleased to say, again, we've been auditing the mask usage in the system, and

we've been creeping up on ninety-eight percent compliance for mask usage on the system. We're very pleased with that. We're working with our marketing group. We've launched a positive reinforcement campaign centering around thanking people for using their masks and covering their faces.

There was an app-based fare payment to

Moovit Transit, Token Transit and Transit. I'll

talk a little bit more about that later in the

meeting, but we did present that to the citizens

advisory committee as well. As well as we talked

about the independent cleaning and sanitizing

review. I'll present that later as well.

We provided them with an update on the fare collection system and got some input on them -from them on how to market and/or roll out the system. Some very valuable input we received that we're going to implement some of those suggestions we got.

And then we had a membership discussion.

Each one of the members is on a three-year term,

so a third of the committee comes up every year

for renewal. We will be renewing a number of those. We also look at people's attendance and participation and look at opportunities. We've polled the committee again to see if they had suggestions about new membership and we're working through that process right now.

A couple of other things just relative to member and emerging agenda items. Concerns about smoking in rail stations. You know, smoking has always been a challenge for us as an agency. It continues to be a challenge. We've done a number of initiatives and we'll continue to try to pursue ways to eliminate or reduce that.

And then we also annually do a self-assessment of the committee. And we completed the self-assessment -- we didn't complete it. We asked them to fill it out. We haven't got the results. We'll present those results to them at the next meeting.

And then in the same period, because we did not have a November meeting, we had two accessibility advisory committee meetings, one on October 29th. And we talked about the experience

in increase in ridership. At that point in time, we were ramping up to about sixty-five percent of ridership. Now we're back to about fifty percent with the closing down of the community.

We also talked about Metro requiring everyone to wear a mask when on Metro bus, rail or in any of our facilities. And we talked a little bit about the transit apps that I'm going to discuss later.

We also had a meeting on November 19th. At that meeting we updated the committee on the fare collection system and engaging them on different ways, again, to market it. So we're looking for all -- input from all of our committees on ways to make sure we reach the community, whether it's a specific community such as the accessibility community or just the general community at large because we want to be very effective with that.

And then we -- once again, this is a common theme. We emphasized the wearing of masks. And then we also had a presentation on Magnusmode, and we'll talk a little bit about that later. I believe Helen is going to do a presentation in

the meeting on that as well.

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And that was the end of my report today. If there's any questions, I'd be glad to try to answer those.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any questions for Tom George?

Okay. Hearing none, we'll move into

resolutions. We have one resolution that needs
approval, Kim?

MS. MINKEL: Yep. Thank you. And it starts on page fifty-nine. This is for an agreement with Erie Radiator for diesel particulate trap cleaning. The amount of this agreement is two hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred and seventy dollars and would run through December of 2023. These filters are used to capture the soot that comes from our engine exhaust and would -- they require periodic cleaning. We did go out with an Staff is recommending Erie Radiator based RFP. on the response to the RFP. Empire State Development has excluded this procurement from MWBE requirements because there are no New York State certified providers for this product. And, similarly, NFTA has excluded this procurement

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       from SDVOB requirements because there are no
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       certified providers for this service.
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            And that's the resolution.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Any questions for Kim on
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       this resolution?
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            Hearing none, I'm looking for a motion to
       approve.
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    COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Second?
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    COMMISSIONER AUL: Joan Aul. Second.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Motion by Commissioner Perry.
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       Second by Commissioner Aul.
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            Dave, do you want to call the roll?
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   MR. STATE: Motion -- Commissioner Ansari?
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   COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.
   MR. STATE: Commissioner Aul?
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   COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes.
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   MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?
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   COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.
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   MR. STATE: Commissioner Hughes?
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   COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.
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   MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?
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   COMMISSIONER PERRY:
                         Aye.
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- 1 MR. STATE: Commissioner Persico?
- 2 COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Yes.
- 3 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?
- 4 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.
- 5 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?
- 6 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.
- 7 MR. STATE: Motion carries.
- 8 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Great. The resolution passes.
- Dave, we'll move on. General counsel. Any
- 10 general counsel report?
- 11 MR. STATE: Nothing to report today, Mr. Chairman.
- 12 | COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Kim, I know you already did the
- 13 operational highlights. Anything else?
- 14 MS. MINKEL: Yes. We have a brief presentation. The
- 15 first thing I wanted to bring to the board is
- 16 normally at our audit, governance and finance
- committee meeting, Pat Dalton will bring the
- 18 audit plans for 2021. And as a reminder to board
- 19 members and a word of information to new board
- 20 members, as the director of internal audit, he
- 21 has direct dotted-line responsibility to the
- 22 board, so I think it's important that you hear
- 23 the plan for the audit for next year. Certainly

he's available for any input or comments that you might have to change that plan.

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So, Pat, if you want to briefly go through the audit plan. And this starts on page sixty-three of your packet.

MR. DALTON: One of the items that's required as part of our professional standards is that we provide an audit plan to show the scope of work that the audit department will be doing for the next calendar year. And as such, I have the plan before you. If you go to the executive summary, we have four thousand seven hundred hours of audit time scheduled. I have a staff of myself and two people, two auditors. I have forty-four hundred and fifty hours available to me, approximately. I haven't calculated it out. generally do schedule a little bit more on the plan than I have hours because oftentimes audits get delayed and as such sometimes we get under budget on the hours so -- but I generally try to come as close as I can to the hours that are available.

On the executive summary, you'll see the

first three categories. Those will be outlined in the following pages. We do have a hundred hours scheduled for -- in the plan for special requests because, as we all know, life happens. There may be an audit that may be required throughout the year as a special request from the committees or from the executive director or from any member of the management team.

The next item we have is single bid. That is part of our procurement guidelines. Whenever we have a single-bid situation, the internal audit does a cost and price analysis to determine the price is fair and reasonable.

And the last item we have some administrative and corporate compliance time. As you know, I am in charge of the -- certifying through PARIS, PARIS is the Public Authorities Reporting Information System. For example, this budget that you just approved will be uploaded into PARIS at the end of the month and we'll do a certification thereof. We also do a certification in March which is the five-year budget and five-year plan. And then we

do several certifications in the month of June, which is a very large upload with all of our financial and operating data.

So if you move on to the next page, I'll just briefly review the revenue audits. We pick revenue audits because we generate revenue.

Usually a lot of them are a percentage of gross revenue and as such we have five audits that are on the schedule.

Prime Flight handles the ground handling.

That is what we're currently working on and we're going to wrap that up. We get five percent of gross revenue there.

Niagara County Industrial Suites Incubator.

That is a rent sharing agreement with Niagara

County, and as such we'll be looking at the

financial statements ensuring that we get the

rent as well as looking at the deductions from

those rents to ensure they're in compliance with

the terms of the agreement.

The next one we're looking at is a new one,

Independent Taxi was a board action we just had,

and we'll be looking at the revenue sources there

to ensure they're reporting all the revenues.

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TacAir replaced Prior Aviation. Since we have a change of ownership, we're going to go ahead and do an audit about six months down the road to ensure that they're in compliance with the terms of the agreement.

And, finally, DAL Global Services is much like Prime Flight. They handle ground handling. We get five-percent of the gross revenues.

On the next page, we have the internal audits. The big one is the model governance principles. That is our Sarbanes-Oxley testing. That is part of our financial statement package. The executive director, the CFO and myself, we certify the financial statements. We also do a certification of the internal controls, and this is the body of work that supports that. external auditors, Lumsden McCormick, also do a certification of the internal controls. It's called an attestation report. It's part of our financial statement package, and as such they look at the information we've done and they use that as reliance on -- for their report.

We have certain compliance reviews and process reviews throughout the year. And, finally, we have a new fare collection system that Tom George is going to be talking about, and we'll be looking at that system, documenting it, ensuring that we get the revenues.

And, then, finally, on the last page, we have buy American and contract audits. The first three on the report are buy America audits.

Federal regulation requires us to determine that the components and subcomponents are American made, seventy percent of which must meet the rule. So we do both a pre-award as well as a post-delivery audit on those. And that's Gorman Enterprises, they do the small buses; Nova Bus does the large buses and we have a vendor to be determined for the electric buses.

The next five are all engineering-type contracts. Those are cost plus fixed fee contracts. What we do is we look at the labor and the overhead and make the audited adjustment thereof.

And, finally, we have Allied Universal BNIA

traffic control. That's the audit we're currently working on. We need a hundred hours to wrap that up. And they handle the traffic control, and as such we're looking at the hours that they're charging to us to ensure they are supporting it with documentation.

So overall we have a good mix of audits. We have eighteen audits scheduled for the calendar year. And that is the plan that we have. So if there's any questions.

- COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any question for Pat?
- 12 MR. DALTON: Thank you.

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- 13 COMMISSIONER AUL: Pat, it's Joan Aul. I just want

 14 to recognize you and your team. I don't know -
 15 this program of work looks like it would be done

 16 by many more than a staff of two and you. So

 17 thank you for all that you do. These are --
- 19 MR. DALTON: Thank you.
- 20 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Moving on?
- 21 MS. MINKEL: Yeah. Moving on. I'm going to ask

they're excellent reports. Thank you.

- 22 Darren Kempner to provide an update on our
- federal advocacy priorities. We're calling him

Jerry Maguire because he's going to show us the money.

MR. KEMPNER: Thanks, Kim.

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This slide is on page sixty-eight in your packet. I'm going to start with the middle bullet there, the federal fiscal year 2021 budget. As it states here, funding from the government expires tomorrow night at midnight. And the second bullet is wrong. A little humility in this environment is probably a good thing. It looks like right now the House yesterday passed, the Senate is -- could take up as early as today, an extension through next Friday, for funding to come to an agreement on a federal fiscal year '21 budget. The top line number is agreed to, one point four trillion. And in my report in the audit and governance packet, I've showed a list of House and Senate proposals, both of which increased the core capital programs that we are concerned with at federal transit and at federal aviation. we'll see how that comes through next, next week hopefully. It's still possible that it could

trickle into next year.

The other deadline that everybody is looking at is the end of the year, as we've talked about, for a lot of these programs related to the COVID and CARES Act. And the first bullet there, additional federal COVID relief. Both leaders have said that they want to attach COVID relief to the fiscal year '21 funding measures, but despite some additional proposals as of late that are bicameral and bipartisan (inaudible), it appears negotiations are stuck as of today. That's -- I'll leave it at that.

The bicameral and bipartisan proposal did include funding for transit and aviation, fifteen billion and four billion as shown there. I haven't seen the discrete language on that. Just by reference point, the CARES Act had twenty-five billion for transit and ten billion for airports.

So all eyes are focused there. We've been in regular communication with our Congressional delegation and our associations to make sure our priorities are known and communicated as much as possible.

One more thing. Looking ahead, the last bullet under federal infrastructure stimulus. There has been momentum gathering for economic stimulus, and infrastructure seems like a likely proposal. The Biden administration had a two trillion dollar infrastructure proposal that covered transit and aviation. Obviously much needs to be determined, including the makeup of Congress for that, but we'll continue to track that and let our congressional delegation know that -- our project priorities.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Any questions for Darren?

Kim?

- MS. MINKEL: Okay. Next, Helen Tederous is going to talk about our Magnusmode partnership.
 - MS. TEDEROUS: Good afternoon, everyone. This is a project that we've been taking part in for quite some time. And with the help of the aviation team and also Metro, this project is now complete and we're very excited about it and very excited to share with the board a project that is very powerful and it will enable greater accessibility for our community.

MagnusCards is a free app that will combine specialized instructions from a behavioral therapist. And it's meant for those who are autistic and have cognitive challenges. As you can imagine, going to an airport, going on a bus, going on the rail is extremely difficult for those with those challenges. And what this does, this wonderful app takes them step by step to get to where they're going. This app is going to be available at the end of December. It's going to be at the Buffalo airport and also on NFTA Metro buses and rail.

The parent organization is really committed to empowering people on the autistic spectrum and those who have cognitive challenges. We're so proud to be partnering with this group. They are truly an inspiration. We're really happy to support Nadia Hamilton. She's the founder. And she created this company after her brother, who is autistic, performed tasks through visual cues. And what she did when they were growing up is she would draw pictures for him to brush his teeth, to go to the bus stop, and this provided him with

wonderful independence, and she wanted to bring that to others so she created her company.

And she is a 43North winner. She is from Canada. Unfortunately, she can't be here. She would love to be because she's so passionate about this. And when you talk to her, you just want to -- you just are so inspired by her story and turning something that was so important to her into a business that is helping thousands of people and their families.

We join many other large companies and airports including San Francisco International Airport, Tim Hortons and Kaleida Health. And we will be the first upstate authority to provide this service, and that is something we're very proud of. And, again, we're very, very excited. It's something that we went and we did it and through very difficult circumstances, through COVID, both teams, the NFTA team really gathered together and really did -- as you can imagine, this took a tremendous amount of detailed work, so we're very excited about it.

MS. MINKEL: Great. Thanks, Helen.

MS. TEDEROUS: You're welcome.

MS. MINKEL: Any questions on Magnusmode?

If not, Tom, can you talk about our fare payments and cleaning operations?

MR. GEORGE: Yeah. So there's two real prominent travel planning or trip planning apps out there in the transit industry that we had an opportunity to partner with. One is Transit and the other is Moovit. And when we partnered with them, they would always work. They had access to our data. So they were tools that were used by the transit community in Western New York. But, with the partnership that we've developed with them, we've actually allowed the purchase of our fare products with those apps.

So if you're out in the community and you want to plan a transit trip, you go onto your travel planning app, either Transit or Moovit and you can plan that. And once you get done planning that, it gives you the option to buy your pass. So with one-stop shopping now, not only do you get to use the trip planning technology of these apps, but you also get to buy

your pass on those apps.

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We previously had Google and NFTA Trip

Planner. Those are still available to use,

although they're not integrated with the Token

Transit. And the Token Transit, which is the

service that you can buy your passes on with

NFTA, is still a standalone option that you can

still go there and buy your transit passes.

When COVID came, we introduced the thirty-day pass on -- when we reintroduced fares in July. And then the usage of the Token Transit and the mobile technology for transit for pass purchase has continued to rise. There's a graph on here that kind of demonstrates where ridership When we were about two million passengers a was. month, we were doing about eighty-five, ninety thousand dollars worth of fare payment through the pass. That dropped down through March. now that we're down closer to a million rides a month, you can see that we're back up close to a hundred and twenty thousand. We did some stacking here. The orange and gray on the top of those bars represents the folks that are using

those apps that I just referred to, the integrated apps to buy their passes.

So you can see some uptake specifically on those apps where more and more people are actually using the trip planner and the apps. So it's a couple things. One, it's a nice opportunity for us to integrate into a trip planning product, but it's also a nice opportunity for us to give people options on how to buy their passes without having to pay cash or go through a regular process.

The other thing I wanted to talk about today is when COVID hit, we reached out to a consultant who was doing a lot of work in the industry for cleaning and sanitizing and they were working with a lot of major transit properties. So we asked them to come and do an independent review of our processes and what we were doing. We looked at both the methods for cleaning and sanitizing as well as the materials and evaluated those. And we also looked at the general cleaning. So, you know, the thought process is if you sanitize and the inside of the railcars is

beautiful but it's filthy on the outside, the perception is just not there of cleanliness, so we wanted to look at that as well.

So we evaluated both of those and we looked at both the recommendations based on their review and best practice because they're doing this across the country. We still have the consultant onboard and they're reviewing things as they evolve in our processes.

I will say that for the railcar, the construction at the DL and W has been problematic for cleaning the railcars because we've rebuilt the entire track system that accesses our car wash. And we're just now putting the catenary back in place which will get our vehicles back in the car wash. So we've been hand-washing our railcars. We can't do it quite as often as we would with the car wash, but we're trying to keep up with it.

So we've been doing the high-touch cleaning areas, wiping down. We took a section of our -- basically twenty-four of our paratransit operators and we deployed them in two different

locations. We deployed them at the loops, both at University and here at the loop here and different locations to actually go onto the vehicles when they come down and wipe them down. We've also deployed them in the garages to double our soap wash capacity in the garages, so we're really upping that.

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But, what we found is through the consultant reviewing it, all of the traditional wiping and spraying is effective. We've implemented the ionized sprayers. And there's a photo here of these ionized sprayers that we're using. bought eight of these devices. They're employed across our system. And we go in and we spray the vehicles now, which is allowing us to bring those operators back out of this cleaning situation and putting them back into operation. So we're finding this is more effective. And we do ATP swabbing and testing. It's not directly related to COVID, but it's more of a bacterial load. it still gives us a very clear indication of the reduction of the bacterial load on the vehicles before and after. We've been monitoring that and we've found this process to be very effective.

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And then I think the last thing I just want to talk about is while the surface disinfection important, we're really finding through all the research, and it's common, that most of the COVID is through respiratory droplets is the primary form of transmission, so we are looking through our consultants. They've recommended three separate antimicrobial filters that we are going to be deploying in our railcar fleet so that we can do some work with those. We'll be We're unable to do that in the bus testing that. fleet simply because the HVAC systems in those buses is not capable of adding a more dense filter in simple terms. Although it is -- the bus vehicles are much more open and closed and there's a lot more air transfer in a bus than there is in a railcar and the environment is different, so we feel good about that.

So at the end of the day, when I talked earlier about the compliance with the mask wearing, we feel real positive about how that's going and, you know, just people washing their

hands and that. So the last thing I'll say, and it's really not here on the slide, but all the research that we've seen across the world and the nation, really there's been no documented situations where COVID has been documented to be transferred in the public transit environment, and we really need to continue to stress that every time we can.

The other thing we wanted to do is to promote the cleaning we've been doing and promote that to our ridership to once again let them know a level of comfort, so we partnered with Helen's group and we did a video. And I think Helen is going to show a quick video here of what we're going to be putting out to the community.

(Whereupon, the following video was played.)

Metro Bus and Rail doesn't sit still. Not out in the community and not in our garages.

Last spring we started heavy cleaning. Now we've introduced electrostatic equipment for even more efficient sanitization. We've added plenty of well-placed liquid hand sanitizer and we won't stop there. We'll keep looking for the best ways

to keep your buses and trains clean. Ride safe,
ride Metro.

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COMMISSIONER HUGHES: That's great. Any questions for Tom on his various initiatives?

Tom, from a budget standpoint, is this something, you know, with the change in jobs and things like that, the extra sanitizing, is that like a six-month, is that a year-long for you guys?

The spraying type of thing? MR. GEORGE: I think that's going to be a new normal in transit. spray thing is really not much of an add-on for our operation. There's certainly cost associated with the materials. We did deploy hand sanitizer on our entire fleet. There's a cost with that. We are monitoring the usage of it. We were very concerned upfront that it was going to have a high usage, but the usage doesn't seem so bad that we can't make that sustainable. We're going to continue to track it. We're also going to continue to track the transit to see really do we want to continue these ongoing into the future or is it really related to COVID. The hand

sanitizer is kind of a nice thing. When we did -- just one last thing. When we did a survey or our ridership to say, what would make you feel comfortable riding transit, there was two things that came strong to us, wearing of masks and hand sanitizers. So we've deployed both of those hoping again to try to appeal those folks.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: That's great.

MS. MINKEL: Great. Thanks, Tom.

And then, finally, we wanted to end with an update on our terminal enhancement progress, so, Bill, if you could take us through that.

MR. VANECEK: You bet. So they're making great progress and we're really starting to get excited because you can see -- actually see it coming into shape. Almost every day you see something different going in.

So what you're looking at here is our east side arrivals. And these light sticks up above, that's actually going to be the lighting in there. It's pretty cool. It will definitely be a talking point for people as they're sitting waiting for the travelers to come out, which is

coming out of this area over here. And you'll see that there are lanes now set up in that area. This is being put together by a company called Dormakaba. And what it is is it's a -- it's almost like a mousetrap exiting feature at the airport so we don't have to staff a TSA person there, because that drives costs for us when we have to have the TSA monitor that.

So, basically, you'll enter one of the three corridors that are there, the doors will shut behind you, and then it will let you out in the front. And the person behind you cannot get back in and somebody can't go backwards and backflow through into the terminal, so we're very excited about that.

Again, another look here is -- this is as you're exiting. This is what you will now see when you come off a plane in Buffalo if you're traveling on the east end of the airport. So if it's Southwest, if it's Delta, if it's United, if it's JetBlue, everybody will exit into this area over here. Again you see the lights. You can see on that back -- that big, brown rectangle,

that's going to be our living wall. We're going to have actual live plants covering that whole wall on that end. And down below it will be the seating areas for people that have to hook into computers, hook into electronics that they need. Along the left side there will be some very cool, low-level couch-type arrangements sitting up. And then you will flow in down through on the right end in this area, you'll actually go down into an escalator which will bring you right down into the baggage claim area.

Again, just again the exiting technology that we just talked about.

This is as you're exiting. So, again, you're walking in here, it shuts, you walk out and you -- the doors open, you walk out, they shut and then the doors open in the back.

This is the progress on our second baggage carousel. We've already got number one, it's operating, it's going great, it's getting really, really good reviews. And so they're moving right along, so we're happy with the progress they're making on the carousels here.

On the west side we -- you'll see when you go in now, there are construction walls. We had to move the baggage service offices deeper to the west so that we can accommodate all four of our machines, and so they're making progress here on that. Again, another look at those.

This is the west side escalator installation. So they had one hanging -- they're both hung now, but they were -- this was when the first one was hung, we took an operation there. So this is coming out from the -- if you know where the blue zone is by the American Airlines gates, people will be coming through this area to get into the terminal and the baggage claim areas. So this is coming from the west side. There's another shot of the escalator.

And then this is the arrivals area. And look how much more space we've now created for pickup and drop-off. Right? This is going to be great for the traveling public because you know how congested it gets at our very small drop-off and pickup areas today, so we're very happy about being able to provide that.

This is a picture of our new conference room at our new administrative offices. And so this is one section, and then as you go towards

Commissioner Hughes, you have another section of this. We can partition it off to create two separate conferences to be held at the same time. So like I said, we'll get you out there in due time to come out and have a meeting out there.

These are going to be our offices. So you'll see the glass windows in our main office area. We inserted a skylight up above so we could have some natural light coming in, because one thing we lost from our offices is we don't -- we can't -- we couldn't see outside. So we wanted to have some sort of natural light.

Natural light is good. It's good for your body if you will. This is going to be the employee break room in here.

And that's really where we're at with respect to the updates on the project itself. So things are moving fast. Like I said, every day now you can actually see progress which is wonderful.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Great. Any questions for Bill?

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   MR. VANECEK: Thank you.
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   MS. MINKEL:
                 And that's all we have for updates.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Great. Okay.
            Dave, any need for a general counsel report?
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   MR. STATE:
                No.
                     And no need for executive session.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: No need for executive session?
            Kim, any final comments as we wrap up here?
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   MS. MINKEL:
                 No. Other than, you know, I just --
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       once again, I want to thank the board for your
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       support for this year and I wish you all a very
11
       happy holidays.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Same to you and to the staff as
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       well. We live in uncertain times, so thanks to
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       the NFTA and employees like the NFTA employees, I
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       know we'll get through it, so thank you for all
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       that.
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            Looking for a motion to adjourn.
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    COMMISSIONER PERRY: Motion to adjourn.
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    COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Commissioner Perry.
20
            Second?
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   COMMISSIONER AUL: Thank you all.
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   MS. MINKEL: Joan Aul.
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1	STATE OF NEW YORK)
2	SS:
3	COUNTY OF NIAGARA)
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5	I, Valerie A. Rosati, a Notary Public in and
6	for the State of New York, County of Niagara, DO
7	HEREBY CERTIFY that the above transcript of a
8	video recording was taken down by me in a
9	verbatim manner by means of Machine Shorthand,
10	and that the transcript was then reduced into
11	writing under my direction.
12	I further CERTIFY that the above-described
13	transcript constitutes a true and accurate and
14	complete transcript of the video recording.
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17	VALERIE A. ROSATI,
18	Notary Public.
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