
NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Monthly Board Meeting

October 22, 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.

1 MEMBERS IN THE BOARDROOM:

- 2 Chair Sister Denise Roche
- 3 Commissioner Michael Hughes
- 4 Commissioner Adam Perry
- 5 Kimberley Minkel (Executive Director)
- 6 David State (General Counsel)
- 7 John Cox (Chief Financial Officer)
- 8 William Vanecek (Director, Aviation)
- 9 Tom George (Director, Public Transit)
- 10 Darren Kempner (Manager, Government Affairs)
- 11 Helen Tederous (Director, Public Affairs)
- 12 Lara Seniw (Assistant to Executive Director)

8 MEMBERS ON THE PHONE:

- 9 Commissioner LaVonne Ansari
- 10 Commissioner Joan Aul
- 11 Commissioner Anthony Baynes
- 12 Commissioner Rev. Mark Blue
- 13 Commissioner Margo Downey
- 14 Commissioner Wesley Hicks
- 15 Commissioner Jennifer Persico
- 16 Commissioner Stephen Tucker
- 17 Commissioner Philip Wilcox
- 18 Vicky-Marie Brunette (Deputy General Counsel)
- 19 Steve Duquette (Chief Information Officer)
- 20 George Gast (Chief of Police)
- 21 Karen Novo (Director, Human Resources)
- 22 John Schaefer (Director, Engineering)

18 MR. STATE: Commissioners, good afternoon. Before
 19 Sister calls the meeting to order, we're just
 20 going to do a roll call to make sure we have a
 21 quorum. We need six for a quorum.

22 Commissioner Ansari?

23 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Present.

1 MR. STATE: Commissioner Aul?
2 COMMISSIONER AUL: Here.
3 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?
4 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Here.
5 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?
6 Commissioner Blue, I'm calling you again.
7 MS. MINKEL: I didn't hear.
8 MR. STATE: Commissioner Downey?
9 Commissioner Downey, calling again.
10 Commissioner Hicks?
11 Commissioner Hicks, calling again.
12 Commissioner Hughes?
13 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Here.
14 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?
15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Present.
16 MR. STATE: Commissioner Persico?
17 COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Present.
18 MR. STATE: Commissioner Tucker?
19 COMMISSIONER TUCKER: Present.
20 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?
21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Present.
22 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?
23 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: I'm here.

1 MR. STATE: So just calling again for Commissioner
2 Blue?

3 Commissioner Downey?

4 Or Commissioner Hicks?

5 We do have a quorum.

6 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: We do have a quorum?

7 MR. STATE: Yes.

8 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Good.

9 Thank you for being on line.

10 I ask everyone who is present in this room,
11 please, to keep your masks on and make sure that
12 we do maintain the social distance which we do
13 have now. It is important and if you're going to
14 speak, please speak just a little bit louder and
15 more clearly so that we can pick up your voices
16 carefully.

17 So I call this meeting of the Niagara
18 Frontier Transportation Authority for October
19 22nd, 2020 to order. I ask for an approval of
20 the minutes of our last meeting.

21 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: So moved.

22 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And a second?

23 Is there a second for our minutes?

1 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Second.

2 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay. All in favor?

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Aye.

4 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Aye.

5 UNIDENTIFIABLE COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

6 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. And now I'm going to
7 ask Kim Minkel to give us the executive
8 director's report.

9 MS. MINDEL: Thank you, Sister.

10 A couple of things for the board. First,
11 staff is working very hard on trying to prepare a
12 balanced budget. This will be brought to the
13 board and discussed at the November 19th meeting.
14 It would then come to the board at the December
15 10th meeting for the board to approve. Please
16 note that because of the Thanksgiving holiday and
17 the Christmas holiday, the November and December
18 board meetings are not the fourth Thursday of the
19 month. They are November 19th and December 10th.

20 Since the committee meetings are not taking
21 place during the pandemic, the committee packages
22 were sent out to the board to review a week ago.
23 In there we have the audit, governance and

1 finance committee, we have the surface committee
2 and we have the aviation committee. We do at the
3 end of this board meeting have discussion items
4 as it relates to both aviation, surface and
5 government affairs. But, there's a couple of
6 things that are in the committee reports that I
7 sent to the board that I wanted to point out and
8 draw your attention to.

9 The first is I wanted to recognize and
10 commend staff -- we just lost our lights here.
11 We are working here, but there's so few of us in
12 the room that the lights powered down, so bear
13 with us. We have light now so I can see.

14 So I wanted to recognize and commend staff
15 for controlling expenses. I guess they did that
16 by turning the lights out on me. And so while
17 our operating revenue and assistance are down,
18 our year-to-date operating expenses are down nine
19 percent below budget. And this is going to be
20 very important and really crucial for us going
21 forward over the next several months.

22 This month we have a number of quarterly
23 reports that are in the committee reports that

1 are sent to the board. The first of the
2 quarterly report is a capital report which shows
3 that we are seven percent over budget for capital
4 projects. Now, this is due mostly to a timing
5 issue. At the end of that quarterly capital
6 report, there's the quarterly capital budget
7 variance analysis. And if you take a look at
8 that, you will see that the capital projects that
9 are greater than five hundred thousand dollars
10 that have closed closed just under two percent
11 budget. So in terms of the actual projects,
12 we're doing a good job of controlling the cost.
13 But, on a quarterly basis, due to timing, it
14 looks like we're over budget.

15 I also wanted to mention our injuries and
16 illnesses remain low. We are twenty percent
17 below for reportable injuries, eleven percent
18 below for lost time, and thirty-four percent
19 decrease in days away. And the fact that there's
20 less traffic on the road has also benefitted us
21 when it comes to preventable vehicle accidents.
22 We're actually down nineteen percent which is
23 significant. All of this helps to benefit our

1 Workers' Comp. claims. Year to date, six months
2 into the year, we only have forty Workers' Comp.
3 claim cases which is significantly below where we
4 would normally be.

5 Finally, I wanted to mention to the board,
6 as we try to recruit drivers, which has always
7 been a challenge, in the past we've done open
8 houses. So what we did is a drive-through open
9 house to encourage and help our recruitment, and
10 that was actually well attended.

11 And that's all I have for the board.

12 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much, Kim. Good
13 news, actually.

14 And now for our -- is there a question?

15 MR. HICKS: No. This is Wesley Hicks. I don't know
16 if you took a roll call, but I wanted to show
17 that I'm on the line now. Okay? That's all.

18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you, Wesley. Yes, we did
19 take a roll call, so thank you for letting us
20 know.

21 I'm now going to call on John Cox, who has
22 not too much to do these days. Right?

23 MR. COX: Thank you, Sister.

1 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Also, let it be known that
2 Reverend Blue is on as well.

3 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you, Reverend Blue. We'll
4 count you in. We had trouble getting you, so
5 thank you.

6 John?

7 MR. COX: Good afternoon, commissioners. If you
8 refer to page six. For the month of September,
9 2020, which is the end of our second quarter in
10 the fiscal year, we had a positive variance to
11 budget of twelve thousand dollars. And on a
12 year-to-date basis, it's fifty-four thousand
13 dollars.

14 Total operating revenues and assistance are
15 below budget by five hundred and eighty-six
16 thousand or two point eight percent for
17 September; and on a year to date basis, seven
18 point nine million or six point five percent.

19 Our revenues shortfalls are primarily due
20 to -- we saw a negative variance in Metro
21 passenger fares for September of one point nine
22 million or fifty-eight percent; and twelve point
23 eight million or seventy-five percent on a

1 year-to-date basis. And that's due to decreased
2 ridership, and in the month of September, without
3 being any public schools at all, so it's further
4 decreasing the ridership.

5 We saw a twenty-seven and a half percent
6 reduction in STOA versus budget. That's
7 approximately one point four million for the
8 month of September or eight point four million
9 year to date.

10 BNIA revenues were one point four million or
11 twenty-four point six percent below budget for
12 September; and on a year-to-date basis, it was
13 eleven point nine million or thirty-four point
14 six percent below budget. Of course being driven
15 by the lower enplanements at the airport.

16 We're seeing similar at NFIA. Revenues of a
17 hundred and three thousand or fifty-nine point
18 three percent below budget; and approximately
19 five hundred and eighty-six thousand or forty-one
20 point three percent on a year-to-date basis.

21 Of course, as has happened during this year,
22 those revenue shortfalls have been offset by
23 CARES Act funding from both the FTA and FAA. For

1 the month of September, we've applied
2 approximately three point three million; and year
3 to date, it's twenty-seven point one million
4 dollars of CARES Act funding.

5 As Kim mentioned earlier, our total
6 operating expenses were below budget by one point
7 five million dollars or eight point six percent
8 for the month of September; and on a year-to-date
9 basis, nine point seven million or nine point one
10 percent. And those lower expenses are primarily
11 due to across-the-board reductions in costs being
12 driven by delayed purchases, vendor discounts and
13 various cost controls. Of course, the exception
14 being any operationally critical or safety
15 sensitive expenditures that we need to make.
16 Those are still being made. And of course
17 continued favorable pricing for commodities such
18 as diesel, gasoline and natural gas.

19 And as I've stated before, just how
20 important the CARES Act is, this funding, and
21 what a critical financial lifeline it is to us.
22 We wouldn't be operating in the manner that we're
23 currently operating without it. Just for

1 example, for the month of September, we would
2 have recognized a negative variance of three
3 point three million dollars, and that would be a
4 one point four million dollar deficit. And on a
5 year-to-date basis, we would have seen a
6 twenty-seven million dollar negative variance to
7 budget and a twenty point eight million dollar
8 deficit.

9 And unless there are any questions, that
10 concludes the consolidated financials.

11 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: John, just a question on the
12 gasoline. How far in advance have you locked in
13 on some of those prices?

14 MR. COX: We're in through the end of this fiscal
15 year. We haven't gone any further out at this
16 point, just because there's so much uncertainty
17 out there without -- you know, it doesn't look
18 like they're expecting them to increase anytime
19 soon. And even at the time when we did fix those
20 prices, they were still very favorable pricing.
21 And just -- you know, and we're seeing even
22 additional favorable pricing on the remainder.

23 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Thanks.

1 MR. COX: Yeah.

2 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Good. And thank you for doing
3 all that and trying to keep it, you know, as
4 close to what we expect as possible.

5 And, Kim, corporate resolutions.

6 MS. MINKEL: Thank you, Sister.

7 And starting on page fourteen of the packet
8 that was sent out to you. The first one, staff
9 is recommending an authorization for an agreement
10 with the New York State Department of
11 Transportation. This is the state match to our
12 federal funds. The agreement amount is three
13 million one hundred and twenty-nine thousand
14 fifty-one dollars. In the resolution there are a
15 number of items that the federal funding and the
16 state match will provide for; namely, some
17 replacement buses, paratransit vehicles, our
18 preventative maintenance line as it relates to
19 operating within rail, some bus shelter and the
20 Utica Station bus loop.

21 The next resolution is on page sixteen.
22 Staff is recommending a settlement agreement with
23 New York Central Mutual Fire Insurance Company in

1 the amount of seventy-five thousand dollars.
2 This is related to an accident -- or, an incident
3 that occurred on October 26th of 2017 with a
4 Metro bus. The bus was heading down south on
5 Michigan Avenue down to our Cold Spring bus
6 garage. The bus made a left-hand turn and in
7 doing so caught the left rear corner of the
8 plaintiff's vehicle. She is alleging neck and
9 back injuries. She did carry insurance through
10 New York Central Mutual Fire Insurance Company
11 for personal injury protection and additional
12 personal injury protection and optional basic
13 economic loss. This is part of the subrogation.
14 The initial recovery amount asked was
15 eighty-eight thousand six hundred and ninety-nine
16 dollars and eighty-one cents. It did go to
17 private mediation with a more favorable payment
18 for seventy-five thousand dollars to resolve this
19 in full.

20 The next corporate resolution is on page
21 eighteen. Staff is looking for authorization for
22 agreement with AddOns. This is for our business
23 process improvement and technical solution study.

1 We've held back on funding, as John had
2 mentioned, for anything unless it's operational
3 critical or safety sensitive. This is an
4 exception. Technology is important. It provides
5 efficiency and long-term cost savings. So in
6 areas where we can see longer term cost savings,
7 I think it's important that we continue forward.

8 We had updated our Ellipse system, our
9 financial system, with an accounting a year ago.
10 This will look at the procurement portion of that
11 system. That will build in and automate that
12 procurement process, streamlining it, making it
13 more efficient, more tight, ironclad, and reduce
14 quite a bit of paper, hopefully, and save time
15 and money. The amount for this is a hundred and
16 fifty thousand which will also include travel
17 expenses.

18 The next resolution on page nineteen is an
19 authorization for agreement with the Town of
20 Cheektowaga. This is to utilize their detention
21 facility agreement. We've been using their
22 facility going back prior to 2010. We can't use
23 the holding center here downtown, so when we have

1 an event, when we need to secure someone, we use
2 the Town of Cheektowaga. This would be a
3 three-year agreement. As part of that agreement,
4 we would pay the town two hundred dollars a month
5 for the duration of the agreement and for the
6 rights to use the detention.

7 And for those new board members, the NFTA
8 does not own or maintain its own facilities, so
9 we think this is a more cost effective way,
10 rather than building our own facility, is to use
11 the town's facility when needed.

12 The next resolution is on page twenty. This
13 is for a lease agreement with John Kratz who is
14 doing business as Affordable Computer Solutions
15 at space at 247 Cayuga Road. He's been a tenant
16 at this facility since 2019. The current lease
17 expires at the end of this month, so this is a
18 renewal, it's a one-year renewal for five hundred
19 and two square feet of class C office space. The
20 annual rental rate will increase three percent
21 from the previous rent rate, which will be just
22 over sixty-four hundred dollars per year. And
23 the company will be required to pay rent on a

1 quarterly, in-advance basis.

2 The final corporate resolution on page
3 twenty-one is an authorization for a lease
4 amendment with Buffalo Broadcasters. And this is
5 for space at 485 Cayuga. Buffalo Broadcasters
6 Association had approached us and asked if the
7 space could change from light industrial to
8 warehouse space. Previously they were using the
9 space and they would host different events,
10 charity events to help support their operation.
11 As you can imagine, with the pandemic, they have
12 not been able to do that, so the space is just
13 being used to store their operation.

14 Staff is recommending that their current
15 twenty-three hundred square feet of industrial
16 space, which has a rental rate of seven dollars
17 and eighty-two cents per square foot be reduced
18 to a warehouse rental rate of six dollars and
19 thirty-seven cents per square foot just for the
20 remaining nine months of their initial term.
21 After this, it will revert back to the previous
22 lease arrangement. So the two additional renewal
23 option years that start on August 1st, 2021 will

1 go back to the higher rate. This would be, for
2 the nine months, a total decrease in rent of just
3 over twenty-five hundred dollars.

4 And those are the corporate resolutions.

5 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Kim, if we were not to allow
6 that, that last resolution, they would possibly
7 leave and we would have empty space?

8 MS. MINKEL: Right.

9 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay. Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: On number five, why is he
11 required to pay quarterly in advance?

12 MS. MINKEL: There had been issues --

13 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Have had issues?

14 MS. MINKEL: -- in the past. So we had put that
15 provision in before and that's been working very
16 well.

17 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: So it's not an issue?

18 MS. MINKEL: Yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay.

20 MS. MINKEL: Yeah.

21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Any other questions on any of
22 the resolutions?

23 If not, I will ask for a summary and we will

1 vote for all of them at one time if that's okay.

2 And if there needs to be an abstention --

3 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: I'll make a motion to move all
4 six as a batch.

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

6 COMMISSIONER AUL: Joan Aul. Second.

7 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you, Joan.

8 Is there anyone who wants to abstain from
9 one or more?

10 COMMISSIONER PERRY: On number four.

11 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay.

12 COMMISSIONER PERRY: But okay on the rest.

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay. Good. So it's an
14 abstention?

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: That's correct.

16 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Any other person who wants to
17 abstain from any of these resolutions?

18 Okay. Then we will call for a vote.

19 MR. STATE: Roll call vote, commissioners.

20 Commissioner Ansari?

21 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.

22 MR. STATE: Aul?

23 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes.

1 MR. STATE: Baynes?
2 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.
3 MR. STATE: Blue?
4 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Yes.
5 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hicks?
6 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Yes.
7 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hughes?
8 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.
9 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?
10 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Aye.
11 MR. STATE: With an abstention on number four.
12 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Correct.
13 MR. STATE: Commissioner Persico?
14 COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Yes.
15 MR. STATE: Commission Tucker?
16 COMMISSIONER TUCKER: Yes.
17 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?
18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.
19 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?
20 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.
21 MR. STATE: Items pass.
22 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much.
23 So we move to aviation business group

1 report. And I'd ask Chair Adam Perry if he would
2 introduce us to this.

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I
4 assume that we're going to continue the
5 convention that we've been using in the past.
6 And although we have the AIP in prior meetings,
7 Mr. Schaefer is not here, so I'll ask Mr. Vanecek
8 to go over any items that we want to cover or
9 need to cover on the AIP. I do have a comment on
10 one of them so --

11 MS. MINKEL: I have a comment on one.

12 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes.

13 MS. MINKEL: And that's on the Buffalo terminal
14 enhancement project.

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes. Me too.

16 MS. MINKEL: The one baggage carousel is scheduled to
17 come online --

18 COMMISSIONER PERRY: In March.

19 MS. MINKEL: -- in early November.

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Wait a minute. That's way ahead
21 of schedule. It says here March, 2021 baggage
22 carousel one complete.

23 MR. SCHAEFER: Excuse me. It's John Schaefer,

1 director of engineering. Good afternoon.

2 MR. MINKEL: Go ahead, John.

3 MR. SCHAEFER: Just to add a little clarification.

4 Great pickup, Commissioner Perry. The milestones
5 listed in the AIP are the contract obligated
6 dates and we have had some fortune on the project
7 where they have been accelerated, at least that
8 particular item of carousel number one. And of
9 course we have encouraged that. They've taken
10 advantage of some slow spots in the airport, and
11 it's being reflected, at least at this moment, on
12 carousel number one, and they're in the middle of
13 commissioning, expecting to be completed in and
14 around the first week of November.

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: That's like two weeks from now.

16 That's amazing. Does that also -- is that also
17 going to potentially have the impact of expanding
18 the completion dates for the other baggage
19 carousels?

20 MR. SCHAEFER: So it has the potential, but as every
21 careful contractor is, they don't like to
22 advertise too far ahead and get ahead of
23 themselves. So they like to reserve the option

1 to maintain their contract dates, which they have
2 the right, but they are trending very favorably
3 of finishing a bit sooner, provided some of their
4 other milestones are -- intermediate milestones
5 like deliveries of some large equipment like
6 escalators, elevators and such. But as far as
7 the carousels, they arrived on time and their
8 crews have been operating accurately and
9 promptly.

10 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Any indication that --

11 considering that these are complex mechanical
12 devices, that there's a potential for delay on
13 the equipment for the remaining carousels?

14 MR. SCHAEFER: Carousels seem to be trending well.

15 The subcontractor has been on site, and
16 especially after they finish one and they know
17 the, quote, unquote, the lay of the land, they
18 should be maintaining that pace, if not
19 accelerating it. Some of the other equipment we
20 haven't received yet, so I can't speak for that
21 just yet, such as I said the escalators and
22 elevators which are starting to trickle in.
23 Don't know if we'll have the same success. We're

1 hopeful. But, carousels we're feeling good about
2 them. And it's just a matter of phasing them.
3 You may recall, obviously, we still had to keep
4 the baggage carousels, the existing baggage
5 operations in place. Before we take one down,
6 have one operating. So that will be the inherent
7 slowdown of making sure we get one operating
8 before you take one down.

9 MR. VANECEK: Yeah. If I could just comment on that.
10 So the baggage carousel that's coming online has
11 about a hundred-and-fifty-percent capacity of
12 what our existing bag belts have, so we're going
13 to put that into place. We're going to take
14 baggage carousel number two, which is one of our
15 flat plates, out of commission, and we'll operate
16 with the three on the end. So we will have
17 redundancy just in case for whatever reason we
18 have a problem with the new belt on. We don't
19 anticipate it, but we are not comfortable not
20 having a backup plan to make sure we can get
21 luggage to our passengers.

22 COMMISSIONER PERRY: And what I was going to note,
23 Kim, is that even, even on the original schedule,

1 it indicates completion of the last baggage
2 carousels by March, 2022, and that's just
3 eighteen months away, so not long.

4 MS. MINKEL: That's right. And what I would offer to
5 any board member, anyone who wants to take a tour
6 of the airport and see the progress, it's pretty
7 impressive. It doesn't even look the same as
8 when we started. And you can -- even from the
9 last event when we had the topping-off ceremony
10 on the west end of the airport, so much has been
11 accomplished in a short period of time. So
12 anyone who wants a tour, we can do it undercover
13 now because most everything is closed in, we
14 would be happy to give tours.

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Can I do it on my Segway or my
16 hoverboard?

17 MS. MINKEL: Absolutely.

18 MR. VANECEK: And just to follow-up a little bit more
19 on that as well. We also have now -- it's not
20 completely installed, they're just doing the
21 final checklist, but our new jet bridge on gate
22 nine has been installed and they're just going
23 through the kind of final prep, if you will, of

1 the airlines to put it into service, so we're
2 very excited about that. But to go even further,
3 they've hung the escalators in the east side for
4 the people that will be coming down out of the
5 east concourse going down, which is a very
6 exciting piece of the project here. They're
7 going great guns on the terrazzo flooring for the
8 exiting concourse itself. So as Kim had
9 mentioned, you can really see a huge difference
10 now than what you have seen before. So please
11 take advantage of calling me up and I'll take you
12 through. And you'll have to wear a hard hat and
13 you'll have to wear some safety glasses along the
14 way, but, you know, we like to think we put on a
15 pretty good tour of the construction project and
16 you're more than welcome to come out anytime of
17 the day or week. Thanks.

18 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Anything else on the AIP, Bill,
19 that we want to go over that's remarkable? I
20 didn't see anything. That's, that's something
21 very significant that we wanted to point to.

22 And from the business group items, is there
23 anything that you want to go over, financials or

1 anything else now?

2 MR. VANECEK: Do you want to go over the financials
3 or not, Kim? It's up to you.

4 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I don't feel a need to. I mean,
5 we do have other items to cover.

6 MS. MINDEL: Yeah.

7 MR. VANECEK: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Okay. Discussion items or just
9 resolutions?

10 MS. MINDEL: Resolutions.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Sounds good to me.

12 MS. MINDEL: And then we'll do the discussion items.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Outstanding.

14 MS. MINDEL: So the first item is on page twenty-four
15 of your packet. And staff is recommending an
16 agreement with Penn Power Group. This is for the
17 inspection and maintenance of our emergency
18 generator system for both airports. We have
19 fourteen emergency generators and one fire pump
20 located at the Buffalo airport. The term of the
21 service agreement is three years with two
22 additional one-year options at our discretion.
23 The estimated cost of this service over the

1 five-year term is a hundred and thirty-two
2 thousand six hundred and forty dollars.

3 We did go out with an RFP. Penn Power was
4 selected based on the proposals that they
5 selected. They are the incumbent. They have
6 done excellent work for us in the past. This RFP
7 was excluded from Empire State's MWBE
8 requirements because there are no New York State
9 certified providers of this service. And NFTA
10 excluded this procurement from the SDVOB
11 requirements because there are no New York State
12 certified providers of this service.

13 The next resolution on page twenty-seven.
14 This is for procurement from Gernatt Asphalt
15 Products. This is for special grade runway sand
16 for both the Buffalo and Niagara Falls airport.
17 Staff is recommending that we purchase three
18 thousand tons of the sand to use at the Buffalo
19 airport and a hundred and twenty tons that we use
20 at the Niagara Falls airport. The delivery price
21 for the sand over five years would total four
22 hundred and thirty-six thousand eight hundred
23 dollars for both airports over the five years.

1 We did go out with a bid for this work. We
2 only received one responsive proposal. Because
3 this is a specialty item, it needs to meet the
4 FAA requirements so that we can ensure the safe
5 operation and movement of aircraft using our
6 airport. This item also was excluded from Empire
7 State Development procurement MWBE requirements
8 because there's no certified providers; and,
9 similarly, from our SDVOB requirements because
10 there's no New York State providers.

11 The third resolution in aviation on page
12 twenty-eight is for the procurement from
13 Automatic Systems for the baggage carousel spare
14 parts. So just a moment ago we had some
15 discussion about how the first carousel line is
16 scheduled to be up and running in early November.
17 And in anticipation of that and the long lead
18 time for spare parts, we want to make certain
19 that we have the spare parts in-house so that if
20 something were to happen and the system goes
21 down, we can very quickly change it out so that
22 we can keep the baggage carousels running. The
23 carousels do carry a one-year warranty on parts

1 and three years on design deficiencies, so this
2 would just be for the spare parts needed to fix
3 this in the event that there's an issue.

4 This is sole source procurement because the
5 parts need to fit the manufacturer of the
6 carousel. The total cost for this is a hundred
7 and thirty thousand six hundred and twenty-three
8 dollars and seventy-four cents.

9 MR. VANECEK: And, Kim, if I could add. The cost of
10 all those parts, since they're solely procured
11 for the benefit of the airlines, the airlines
12 will reimburse us one hundred percent for all
13 costs.

14 MS. MINKEL: Thank you, Bill.

15 The fourth resolution which is on page
16 thirty-three of your packet is an agreement with
17 Prentice Office Environment and Interior
18 Solutions. And this is for the procurement of
19 furnishings for the administrative offices at the
20 Buffalo airport. The total amount is a hundred
21 and eighty-six thousand two hundred and fourteen
22 dollars and eighty-nine cents. Prentice is a New
23 York State Office of General Service authorized

1 vendor. And this would be to provide the
2 workstations, the cubicle walls of the space
3 that's being built out as part of the addition.
4 Our current space will become hallways and part
5 of the exitways of the airport, so we've built
6 out this new space.

7 And for those who haven't seen the new
8 space, when you take the tour, you'll be able to
9 see the conference rooms that are going to be
10 made available and available for rent for the
11 public. So this will be equipping those spaces.
12 This did come in under budget and staff is
13 recommending this procurement so that we can get
14 the furnishings in. At this point we are
15 anticipating that we will moving either at the
16 end of December of this year or early January,
17 into that space.

18 MR. VANECEK: And if I could just have one more
19 comment on that. So Kim mentioned that, you
20 know, we really took a long, hard look at the
21 budget because we know that in the world we live
22 in now, every dollar is pretty valuable to us.
23 So the original budget for this was three hundred

1 and forty-six thousand. So we went back and we
2 said whatever we can use in any possible way,
3 shape or form from our current office
4 environment, we are going to use that in the
5 new-build, so that helps cut down significantly
6 on the cost. And then we also are going to be
7 able to repurpose some of the furniture that
8 are -- that don't fit in the new office design,
9 we've kind of opened it up to anybody else at the
10 NFTA that needs furniture, they can come and get
11 it and they can do that as well. Thank you.

12 MS. MINKEL: Okay. Thanks, Bill.

13 And then the final resolution in aviation is
14 a license agreement with Amazon. This is for
15 space at our economy parking lot at the Buffalo
16 airport. This would be a license agreement that
17 would expire at the end of January of 2021. The
18 total parking area that we have at the economy
19 parking lot is just under twenty-one acres.
20 Amazon would occupy just over four acres of
21 space. The parking fee would be sixty-five
22 hundred dollars per month, and this is based upon
23 recent property appraisals that have been

1 adjusted for CPI.

2 Amazon would be responsible for all the
3 maintenance and repairs necessary to conduct its
4 operation, and that would include snow removal.
5 The short-term use of this parking lot we do not
6 anticipate will affect our operations at all.
7 Sadly, our parking lots are mostly empty at the
8 moment, so this is a way for us to generate some
9 revenue with those empty parking lots.

10 And those are the resolutions in aviation.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I'd like to move to take them as
12 a batch.

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much.

14 Second to that?

15 Is there a second?

16 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Second. Reverend Blue.

17 COMMISSIONER AUL: Joan Aul. Second.

18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you.

19 Any conversation, questions, et cetera?

20 I'll turn it over to David.

21 MR. STATE: Roll call vote for approval on the
22 aviation items.

23 Commissioner Ansari?

1 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.

2 MR. STATE: Commissioner Aul?

3 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes.

4 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?

5 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Baynes is good, except with
6 Gernatt, number three. I have to recuse myself.

7 MR. STATE: Yes as to all except for item three, a
8 refusal.

9 Commissioner Blue?

10 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Yes.

11 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hicks?

12 COMMISSIONER HICKS: 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 Tucker?

20 COMMISSIONER TUCKER: Yes.

21 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?

22 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

23 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

1 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

2 MR. STATE: Items pass.

3 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you.

4 Surface transportation business group, and
5 I'm going to call on Michael Hughes.

6 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Thank you, Madam Chair. Like
7 aviation, the surface transportation committee
8 did not meet this month. I know we do have one
9 resolution. We do have a discussion item at the
10 end.

11 I don't know if there's anything you want to
12 highlight.

13 MR. GEORGE: There's a few items I'd like to go over
14 if I could for the board.

15 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yeah.

16 MR. GEORGE: Yeah, that would be great.

17 Starting with our initiative status report,
18 just a couple of updates on where we are with a
19 couple projects.

20 Battery electric bus. We are out to bid
21 right now with our battery electric bus
22 procurement. We anticipate having those bids in
23 early November. We have robust competition from

1 a number of manufacturers so we're excited about
2 advancing that project. We also have completed
3 the bidding process with our partner, NYPA, New
4 York Power Authority, for the infrastructure
5 improvements to Cold Spring garage. Those are
6 pending some funding. We have an agreement with
7 them to advance that. So those two pieces are
8 ongoing.

9 On the light rail expansion, we did complete
10 the SEQR responses to the DEIS through the draft
11 environmental impact statement. We received a
12 number of comments. We have addressed all of
13 those comments. We populated that document on
14 our website. So we have wrapped up at least the
15 responses to the SEQR comments. We're moving
16 forward with the NEPA process with Federal
17 Transit Administration. Negotiating with them
18 right now. We have an RFP on the street to hire
19 a consultant to act as a third-party reviewer on
20 behalf of the NFTA to help streamline that
21 process, and we're working through our scope of
22 work with our consultant to address the changes
23 in the process for NEPA. Anticipate moving

1 forward with some additional noise studies in the
2 corridor and a few other things this fall. Not
3 much work until we get at least some additional
4 funding as well as concurrence with FTA on that.

5 And then on the fare collection system, if
6 you're out in the system, you'll see a lot going
7 on. We've got construction in almost all of our
8 underground stations with the placement of ticket
9 vending machines, as well as the barricades and
10 the fencing. You'll see ticket vending machines
11 on the surface. You'll also see two brand-new
12 ticket vending machines downstairs in our
13 customer service center. So that project is
14 ongoing.

15 We also have eight buses equipped with the
16 new fare boxes which were doing a pilot testing
17 program with those as well. So that project is
18 moving along. Still some more time yet to go
19 with some testing, but we are advancing that.

20 That's all I had on the initiatives. Just a
21 couple other things I think I'd like to cover if
22 I could. An update on ridership. So right now,
23 if you'll look in your book on page sixteen, bus

1 ridership is fifty-two percent year to date, and
2 rail ridership is thirty-five percent year to
3 date. September for bus, we were forty-five
4 percent of where we were last year, which is
5 below the fifty-two percent. But if you discount
6 that for the fact that schools are not in session
7 currently, we're at fifty-six percent of our
8 non-school ridership, so still a long way to go.
9 And that number looks fairly stable. We are not
10 seeing that ramp up at this point in time, so
11 that's fifty-six percent.

12 On the rail, thirty-five percent year to
13 date. Comparing over to the other, for the month
14 of September, we were at thirty-six percent.
15 Once again, if you discount for the schools, we
16 are at forty-one percent of that. So we're
17 still, once again, a flat profile on that, so
18 we're not seeing a lot of growth.

19 The one group that is proving to be very
20 resilient is our paratransit riders. Currently,
21 for the first week of October, we were at
22 sixty-seven percent of our ridership, so we're
23 seeing growth there. Average of five hundred and

1 sixty-nine riders. For the first week of
2 September, we were at fifty-seven percent, so
3 we've seen a ten-percent jump from the first week
4 of September to the first week of October. That
5 group is coming back, and we're seeing big growth
6 of there and back to -- normally we carry about
7 an average of eight hundred and fifty-five
8 passengers. We're up to five hundred and
9 sixty-nine average for the first week of October.
10 So I wanted to bring the board up to date on
11 where we are with ridership. Obviously a lot of
12 work yet to go there.

13 And then last but not least, certainly, is
14 my report on the citizens advisory and the
15 accessibility advisory committees. Citizens
16 advisory met on September 24th. We had a very
17 robust presentation on COVID-19, the NFTA's
18 finances, ridership, funding sources, some of the
19 trade-offs we've been looking for moving forward
20 and then some of the lobbying efforts.

21 Some of the comments we received back was,
22 we had talked about in there that they could help
23 us by doing some lobbying for some funding,

1 especially on the federal level. And they asked
2 us to put together basically a template for them
3 to e-mail or a letter to sign and to send in. We
4 talked about some transfers. We talked about how
5 important the presentation we made was, and we --
6 they asked if we'd try to consider how we
7 communicate that further to the public. We
8 talked about transparency. We had a question and
9 answer period. And then we talked about -- a
10 little bit about an independent cleaning and
11 sanitizing review we did of the system and some
12 of the results from that.

13 We talked about the fact that we are
14 monitoring our cleaning practices and some of the
15 results. We've looked at the air filtration in
16 the vehicles. Currently in the bus vehicles,
17 there's a lot of challenges with changing those
18 out because of the capacity of those. But, on
19 the rail vehicles, we've got considerable
20 capacity and we're looking at a number of
21 different filtration types and techniques that we
22 can involve to do that. So we're doing some
23 pilot testing on some different kinds of

1 filtration. And once again, the CAC asked us to
2 try to communicate that to the public the best
3 they could.

4 We've also had a challenge accessing our car
5 wash because of the construction at the LOW for
6 the railcars, which still we're doing a lot of
7 hand-washing, and we feel it's important that we
8 get those cars cleaned on the outside as well as
9 the inside because just the perception. So we're
10 advancing that.

11 And then we talked, last but not least, with
12 the CAC about Magnusmode. That's an app that was
13 put in place to help folks with autism and other
14 developmental disabilities navigate the Metro bus
15 and rail system. So that was well-received.
16 They indicated that Self Advocacy is a good place
17 to educate about Magnusmode, so we'll be
18 advancing that in our accessibility advisory
19 committee.

20 And then on the same date, September 24th,
21 we also had an accessibility advisory committee
22 meeting where we spent some time there talking
23 about the Token Transit system and how you can

1 now buy a paratransit ride on the Token Transit
2 as well. So there's a mobile app for paratransit
3 now. We've advanced that.

4 We talked about going to VIA, which is
5 formerly the Olmstead Center for Sight. They had
6 an opportunity to tour our vehicles and look at
7 the brand-new paratransit vehicles we have.
8 We've made some changes in the interior of those
9 to accommodate some of the needs of the community
10 and we wanted to show those to the folks and get
11 feedback. And the last thing was just to get
12 some feedback on our new rider schedules that we
13 put together, so we've asked them for that
14 feedback.

15 So that's my report. If there's any
16 questions, I'd be glad to try to answer them.

17 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Tom, just a question on the
18 DEIS and the comments. Can you or Kim just send
19 the link to that? I know you said that you
20 received a lot of comments.

21 MR. GEORGE: Absolutely.

22 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Send that to the board.

23 MR. GEORGE: And we responded to all those comments.

1 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Any other questions of Tom?

2 Good work. Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: We do have one resolution.

4 MS. MINKEL: The resolution for surface is on page
5 thirty-seven. Staff is recommending an
6 authorization for procurement with Nova Bus.
7 Nova makes -- manufactures the buses here in New
8 York State. This would be to purchase ten buses
9 at a cost not to exceed five million five hundred
10 and twenty-five thousand six hundred and
11 twenty-six dollars. The agreement also has an
12 option to purchase up to a hundred and forty
13 additional buses over the next five years.
14 Anytime we would purchase a bus, it would come
15 back to the board for approval. We went out for
16 an RFP for these buses. These are for diesel
17 buses to replace model years 2000, 2001 and 2002.

18 By way of information, the useful life of a
19 bus according to Federal Transit is twelve years.
20 So we have an incredible maintenance team that
21 we've been able to squeeze out twenty years for a
22 bus. But, in spite of everything that they do,
23 twenty years, we really need to replace some of

1 the buses.

2 At the end of this, Tom will talk a little
3 bit about our bus strategy going forward. He
4 mentioned as part of his remarks earlier that we
5 are moving to battery electric buses, supporting
6 the governor's initiative that by 2025
7 twenty-five percent of our fleet would be battery
8 electric buses. But, we also have a requirement
9 that FTA requires under Title Six that the
10 average age of the buses in any one of our
11 locations throughout the system is around the
12 same. And so the battery electric buses will be
13 housed at Cold Spring. That will make them newer
14 buses. We have our CNG buses at our Frontier
15 facility, and then diesel is at our Babcock
16 facility. And the average age of the buses at
17 our Babcock facility continues to increase, so
18 this will bring the average age more in line so
19 that we can remain compliant with Title Six
20 requirements.

21 The funding is provided, it's grant funding.
22 Sources include Federal Transit, New York State
23 DOT, the State ATC Fund, and forty-five thousand

1 from NFTA as part of the matching responses.

2 We did receive three proposals. Nova Bus
3 was scored the highest. We do have Nova buses in
4 our fleet. They have performed well. The
5 proposals we received were from Gillig, New Flyer
6 and Nova Bus, all good buses, but we've been very
7 happy with Nova Bus. And as I mentioned earlier,
8 they are manufactured right here in New York
9 State.

10 So that's the only resolution that we have
11 in surface.

12 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay. May I ask --

13 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: So moved.

14 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Second.

15 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: -- someone to move? Thank you.

16 And a second? You're the second?

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: He's the move. I'm the second.

18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay. Is there any
19 conversation, questions, comments to make on this
20 resolution?

21 Hearing none, I ask for a roll call vote.

22 MR. STATE: Roll call vote.

23 Commissioner Ansari?

1 COMMISSIONER ANSARI: Yes.

2 MR. STATE: Commissioner Aul?

3 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yes.

4 MR. STATE: Commissioner Baynes?

5 COMMISSIONER BAYNES: Yes.

6 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?

7 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Yes.

8 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hicks?

9 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Yes.

10 MR. STATE: Commissioner Hughes?

11 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yes.

12 MR. STATE: Commissioner Perry?

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Aye.

14 MR. STATE: Commissioner Persico?

15 COMMISSIONER PERSICO: Yes.

16 MR. STATE: Commissioner Tucker?

17 COMMISSIONER TUCKER: Yes.

18 MR. STATE: Sister Denise?

19 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

20 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Wilcox?

21 COMMISSIONER WILCOX: Yes.

22 MR. STATE: It passes.

23 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much. Thank you

1 all.

2 We have some reports now, right?

3 MS. MINKEL: Yes.

4 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Would you introduce them?

5 MS. MINKEL: Yes. Thank you, Sister.

6 So following along in the packet that we
7 e-mailed to the board. Starting on page
8 forty-two. There was a discussion of -- a nice
9 discussion last month as it relates to the
10 Niagara Falls International Airport. So Bill
11 Vanecek is going to provide an update to the
12 board, and for those new board members, kind of a
13 nice overview as to how Niagara Falls
14 International Airport operates in relation to the
15 Buffalo airport.

16 So with that, I'll turn it over to Bill to
17 go over Niagara Falls International Airport.

18 MR. VANECEK: Great. Thank you, Kim.

19 So the board adopted a strategic plan back
20 in 2016 and there were four goals. Enhance and
21 maintain the Canadian traveler base. Right now
22 that's very difficult for us to do given the
23 situation with the border closure. But,

1 typically, we get about eighty to eighty-eight
2 percent of our travelers out of Niagara Falls
3 will drive down from Canada and fly out of
4 Niagara Falls International Airport.

5 Provide excellent customer service. We get
6 really good reviews from all of our travelers
7 that use the facility up in Niagara Falls. You
8 know, they love the easy access in and out. The
9 proximity of parking to the terminal plays big
10 into that as well.

11 Enhancing air cargo development. This has
12 always been a challenge in Niagara Falls. You
13 know, where we are located -- and this includes
14 Buffalo. Buffalo has FedEx and they have UPS.
15 Those are integrated carriers so that's kind of
16 the need to get you somewhere quickly -- your
17 product quickly back and forth. Whereas at
18 Niagara Falls, even though it has a longer
19 runway, we're really at the sole I'd say whim of
20 Toronto, when they can carry so much cargo just
21 to the north of us. Hamilton actually has a
22 pretty vibrant integrated freight operation.
23 You've got Chicago to the east of us, you've got

1 JFK to the -- I'm sorry. Chicago to the west.
2 Certainly you have JFK to the east. And that all
3 presents very serious challenges for us because
4 they have well-established operations in those
5 airports.

6 Improve financial stability of the airports.
7 You know, we do what we can do. And we're going
8 to go through and see some of the metrics that we
9 look at relative to how the airport was operating
10 before the terminal was built and how it's
11 operating now.

12 So basically we have an airport that is
13 shared not only by the NFTA but also by the U.S.
14 military. We own about seven hundred acres of
15 land of the airport proper itself. The U.S.
16 military has about five hundred and eighty acres
17 of property. Our joint use facility obviously is
18 home to the 914th air refueling wing and the
19 107th attack wing. We do operate under a joint
20 use agreement which provides certain things must
21 be done by each party to cohabitate, if you will,
22 the airport and also to help fund some of the
23 issues at the airport as well.

1 One of the big things with respect to
2 funding is the aircraft firefighting and rescue
3 operation at Niagara Falls. We at Buffalo fund
4 that completely. That's under our dime. We
5 really charge a lot of that back to the operating
6 airlines that are existing at Buffalo. Niagara
7 Falls is a little bit different story. The
8 military wants to be -- have their control, if
9 you will, over that operation, because if they
10 have a plane go down at the airport, they don't
11 want anybody else going down and fixing that.
12 They really want to be there right then, right,
13 you know, right at the time. They can go out and
14 mitigate it as much as they can if any accidents,
15 heaven forbid, happen at the airport.

16 If there would be an operation, if the
17 military ever left, what we'd have to do is enter
18 into agreements with the local firefighting
19 communities around that surround the airport in
20 Niagara Falls. Obviously response times would be
21 much slower in those scenarios. So they provide
22 a huge benefit to us, literally millions of
23 dollars, by being able to staff the aircraft

1 firefighting and rescue at Niagara Falls.

2 We own approximately two thirds of the
3 runway and the military owns one third of the
4 runway. Basically, we get the western -- the
5 eastern end of the runway for two thirds and then
6 there's a section that is owned and operated
7 by -- it's operated by us, but they create --
8 they constructed the runway and they own one
9 third of it to the west. They also have a
10 thousand foot overrun area to the west. That
11 also can be used by any airplane that lands at
12 the airport, so it makes a big benefit for us.
13 You know, to the extent that we have large -- a
14 large carrier come in, as in a plane -- we've had
15 a couple of huge generators that have been
16 shipped to Niagara Falls that come in on those
17 planes and they need the full length of that
18 basically ten thousand plus foot runway to land.
19 So it's a big benefit from our behalf that the
20 military chose to extend the runway out here and
21 we didn't have to contribute any capital cost to
22 that.

23 The military also, you know, covers our

1 security costs for the -- basically for the
2 perimeter. You know, they have a vested interest
3 in making sure none of the bad guys are getting
4 onto that airport given the military activities
5 that are going on on there. So it's something
6 that we don't have to fund, which is, again, a
7 nice, big cost savings for us.

8 We do share some maintenance
9 responsibilities on the runway. During the
10 winter hours, the military removes snow from
11 seven-fifteen a.m. in the morning until four p.m.
12 in the afternoon. So that's a Monday through
13 Friday operation, so that does save us some --
14 particularly in overtime costs, et cetera.

15 We are responsible to control the
16 obstructions around the airport. As you recall,
17 we just obtained the former Hutchins property to
18 the west of the, of the airport, and we've cut
19 down all the trees out there, so that we can
20 ensure safe operation of aircraft, taking off and
21 landing at Niagara Falls. That's also a huge
22 benefit to the military. They were very happy to
23 see that, particularly with the type of planes

1 that they use. Those tankers are very heavy.
2 They have a very shallow approach and shallow
3 take-off, so it's important we don't have any big
4 trees penetrating those spaces.

5 We also get some low-cost power through the
6 Power Authority through an arrangement that we
7 entered into years ago.

8 So here's an idea of the property map. In
9 yellow is what the NFTA owns. In the blue is
10 what the military owns. So you can see the
11 runway length here -- it actually ends here. And
12 then we have -- this is our obstruction area here
13 where we cleared all the land and the brush and
14 we replanted some plantings in that area so that
15 no one will ever build homes on that. It will
16 always be clear and available for airport
17 operations. And then red is just private
18 property the's just kind of touching some of our
19 property on the runway as well.

20 So back in 2010, New York State put together
21 an economic impact of aviation for airports
22 throughout New York State. They determined we
23 have about seventeen hundred jobs that are

1 operating up in the airport, supporting it one
2 way or the other. We don't obviously have
3 seventeen hundred employees at Niagara Falls, but
4 it's really the one-offs, two-offs, anybody that
5 does business with the airport.

6 Annual earnings. About eighty-four million
7 dollars. As a result of that, of the airport
8 being there, the annual economic activity about a
9 hundred sixty million of impact for the
10 community.

11 And so this has been interesting. So once
12 we built the new terminal in 2009, you had very
13 few basically motels along Niagara Falls
14 Boulevard. And once we started getting flying
15 activity to Niagara Falls via airlines like
16 Allegiant, Spirit, going back, Vision Air, Miami,
17 Myrtle Beach, Direct Air, et cetera, we now have,
18 you know, at least three that could be I think
19 directly attributable to being constructed on
20 Niagara Falls Boulevard. What we're seeing is,
21 again, a lot of the Canadians like to come down,
22 they like to do their shopping, they go on their
23 flights, they go away for a week, they come back,

1 get their car, stay a night, go back to Canada.
2 So it's a nice economic impact for us.

3 Next, this is a comparison of the FAA what
4 they call terminal area forecast. It's what the
5 FAA thinks you're going to be able to do at the
6 airport. So when you compare those to our master
7 plan which we updated in 2013, what you see is
8 there's a -- right after 2000 I think it's '16
9 here, right, all of a sudden you see we are
10 significantly higher than what the FAA thought we
11 were going to be able to do at Niagara Falls, and
12 that's really due to the fact that we were able
13 to attract air service to Niagara Falls. And it
14 accelerated more than they could have thought, so
15 it's almost double what it was. Looking up
16 through 2032, and looking at 2032 for FAA, it's
17 double, what the anticipated growth rate would be
18 at Niagara Falls. Now mind you, that will be
19 slow growth, but still I think it's an important
20 thing to point out.

21 Next, these are annual enplanements at NFIA.
22 And as you can see, we were kind of chugging
23 along. We had a little bit of service back in

1 the day, mostly I think probably New York City or
2 something along those lines. I wasn't here. I
3 came onboard in 1998. We saw a little bit of an
4 uptake, but then it just dried up for a number of
5 years, and that's when we decided if we're going
6 to start attracting air service, when we did, we
7 actually started a little bit better air service
8 in 2008 and -- 2007, 2008, and that was Myrtle
9 Beach Direct, and they were flying. And so then
10 the decision was made by the board that we should
11 look to build a new terminal up at Niagara Falls,
12 which we did.

13 So our new terminal opened in 2009 in
14 December. And as you can see, once we had that
15 new terminal, it became a much more attractive
16 airport to fly to for the carriers, because they
17 had the amenities that they needed to make a go
18 of it if they were going to enter into the
19 Western New York marketplace. So we jumped
20 literally from almost nothing up to -- up over a
21 hundred thousand enplanements per year at Niagara
22 Falls. So it really did accomplish a very
23 valuable objective for us and for the community.

1 So, again, just looking at in here. If you
2 look at the breakdown of what the airlines were.
3 We had Direct Air, Vision Air. Vision Air was
4 flying the Florida market. Then we've got Spirit
5 and Allegiant. These have been the totals to
6 date. Now, we know that Spirit has suspended
7 service at the airport. They do not expect to
8 completely pull out. They're going to keep
9 evaluating. As the economy starts to change, as
10 the COVID impact starts to change, they will
11 identify a time when hopefully they will come
12 back and start flying again at the airport. They
13 really do want to come back, and so we're, you
14 know, we're anticipating that they will come back
15 sometime. More than likely in the second -- end
16 of second quarter of 2021.

17 This is the number of flights. You can see
18 it has steady kind of growth along the way.
19 Peaked in 2017, had a bit of a drop-off but still
20 pretty healthy with respect to the number of
21 flights.

22 Air cargo activity. As we mentioned before,
23 very limited opportunities for air cargo at

1 Niagara Falls. Even with the long runway. We
2 just don't have the facilities built. We are not
3 going to speculate on putting together and
4 building cargo facilities. It's a very expensive
5 proposition. And really in my mind not much
6 return at Niagara Falls. So we've kind of gotten
7 back off of the cargo initiatives at Niagara
8 Falls, if you will.

9 Airline costs per enplanement. So the blue
10 columns represent what one passenger -- basically
11 the cost of one passenger to fly out of
12 Niagara -- out of Buffalo. So it's about the ten
13 dollar range, give or take. And you can see at
14 Niagara Falls, it's much less expensive to fly
15 out of Niagara Falls for those passengers. Part
16 of that is the fact that we have to charge the
17 airlines more money at Niagara Falls to maintain
18 the airfield. We have a much bigger personnel
19 base in Buffalo than we do in Niagara Falls so
20 that drives a significant amount of cost for
21 them. Whereas in Niagara Falls we don't have to
22 have as many airfield personnel there, partly
23 because of the benefit of the military at the

1 airport.

2 And here is an interesting story. They
3 flip-flopped. Right? So Buffalo, when you, you
4 know, when you park a car at Buffalo, on average
5 you can see you're doing about seven bucks per
6 enplanement at the Buffalo airport. But at
7 Niagara Falls, we actually have a different
8 parking structure. We are -- you know, again,
9 primarily the Canadian airports (sic) who are
10 there. They're typically staying for a week.
11 You have less business travel originating out of
12 Niagara Falls, so the cost, you're really getting
13 primarily a seven-day parking stay versus a one
14 or two or three-day stay for the business person
15 and the leisure traveler. So we do benefit from
16 that end.

17 And then, here, this chart is interesting.
18 It's a revenues as a percent of expenses. And
19 you can see back in the day before we had the new
20 terminal built, we were recovering a very small
21 part of our expenses from -- revenue was very
22 small relative to the expenses we were incurring.
23 You know, revenues were, you know, fourteen,

1 fifteen percent. Now we have more expenses, but
2 we're covering a larger percentage of those
3 expenses with our parking operations and our
4 airline fees, et cetera. So we've seen a huge
5 jump, so it's, you know, more that doubled,
6 covering the revenue -- or, the expenses at
7 Niagara Falls.

8 So, here, this is our history of our net
9 deficit/loss. What you'll see is it actually had
10 one year where we had a really positive, actually
11 a surplus, if you will. But, generally speaking,
12 it's, you know, it's pretty much on the downside.
13 So if you see at peak, we're about two million,
14 that's on the high end. Average probably puts us
15 somewhere maybe in the middle, about one point
16 three, one point four million. But this was a
17 unique year in that that's when we got the Seneca
18 proceeds, one point seven million, which we -- I
19 think we're still looking for more of that.
20 Right? Which we haven't yet received. And so
21 that would have -- that's what caused this to go
22 up. Because we had one point seven. So it would
23 have been -- we were probably about one point six

1 or so of loss in the area there.

2 But this is the key point for Niagara Falls.
3 When you start thinking about terms of economic
4 impact, jobs in Niagara County, we have through
5 1998 through 2020 totaled over fifty-one million
6 dollars in grants that came in for construction
7 projects at the airport in Niagara Falls. That's
8 a big number. And when you look at the ones that
9 we have here, most of it is, you know, runway
10 work, safety area work, all basically
11 construction jobs. Right? Really well-paying
12 jobs for the community. If you add them all up
13 and you look at what we had in our deficits over
14 those years, we significantly outweighed through
15 our grants the amount we lost on the bottom line
16 at Niagara Falls. So cash flow, if you looked at
17 it just from a cash flow perspective, we're well
18 ahead at Niagara Falls from a cash flow
19 standpoint versus just looking at the income
20 statement.

21 Let's see. And then lastly here -- while we
22 did impose a passenger facility charge at Niagara
23 Falls, we did that in October of 2017, early on

1 we were a little bit concerned that the PFC might
2 scare away some airlines from flying out of
3 Niagara Falls. And we just determined now that
4 we really have to get them on a par with Buffalo.
5 The Buffalo airlines are complaining, why don't
6 you have a PFC up there as well? So we are
7 charging a four dollar and fifty cent rate for a
8 PFC. Annually we get about five hundred thousand
9 dollars that can go towards capital projects that
10 we collect from the passengers using the NFIA at
11 this time.

12 So a couple smaller other things. This is a
13 slide that came from the annual virtual airport
14 law workshop, airport finance 101, which was put
15 together in October of 2020. So on the left
16 side, you see large and medium hub airports.
17 Large and medium hub airports really can be
18 self-sustaining because they have the ability to
19 drive significant revenue. They have operational
20 revenues, they have passenger generated revenues;
21 i.e., parking, food and beverage, you know, you
22 can -- you have a lot there. They have
23 significant PFC revenue. So at Buffalo when you

1 put four fifty on a base of -- let's call it just
2 for grins, two million, you can see that it's a
3 significant difference than what you can drive up
4 at a small airport. And they're much more
5 self-sufficient. They have more capabilities of
6 dealing with the airlines and controlling their
7 financial destiny.

8 Small and GA airports are not so, not so
9 blessed I guess. Cash flow is severely
10 challenged. You know, it's like living day to
11 day from your paychecks when you're working
12 minimum wage, et cetera. Hangars, rental fees,
13 fuel flowage fees are some of the ways we derive
14 some revenue. It's a very, very small percent of
15 our revenue. They often require public
16 subsidies. A lot of the models of airports
17 throughout the country, particularly small ones
18 and municipalities, are either city owned or
19 overseen by cities or municipalities, and,
20 therefore, they inject money into the airport to
21 keep it operating because they realize that by
22 doing that, they're going to be able to get the
23 financial return on the point where people flying

1 to their communities will spend when they're
2 staying there.

3 And I think that's really the key take-away
4 of the difference between small and general
5 aviation. So funding for major capital projects
6 is difficult without grants. The airfield,
7 without having the support of FAA to be able to
8 do a main runway to be able (inaudible) at a
9 small airport that's doing minimal flights per
10 year, it's very difficult to get. But the bottom
11 line is they're -- all airports are extremely
12 important to their communities, again, for the
13 economic return that the passengers provide for
14 the municipalities.

15 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Bill?

16 MR. VANECEK: Yeah.

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I don't know if it's included in
18 the factors that you raised there. But, the
19 small regional airlines, like when we were flying
20 Buffalo to Albany, they get an FAA subsidy for
21 serving those smaller --

22 MR. VANECEK: Yeah. There's something called the
23 essential service program that the FAA puts

1 together. And so that's something that an
2 airline has to apply for. It has to be
3 through -- to communities that are smaller in
4 size. And so the FAA can provide them funds to
5 make them whole and generate a profit by flying
6 point to point. So, for example, you know, right
7 now we don't have Albany service. But, if
8 somebody were flying out of Niagara Falls to
9 Albany, they could apply for those grants under
10 the essential air service program.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thanks.

12 MR. VANECEK: You're welcome.

13 So our recommendations. We've got to
14 continue with our strategic plan goals as they
15 relate to NFIA. You know, that is looking to
16 make sure we can maintain, first and foremost,
17 you know, air service at Niagara Falls. We're
18 going to re-evaluate the airline fee structure at
19 Niagara Falls to be a bit more sustainable for us
20 from a revenue stream perspective. We were very,
21 we were very cognizant of the fact that we didn't
22 want to be overpriced. We wanted to make sure we
23 could get people in the door so we could prove to

1 other airlines that the model can work at Niagara
2 Falls being so close to Buffalo.

3 That was always the big question. You know,
4 you have an airport in Buffalo; why doesn't
5 everybody just fly out of there? But not every
6 airline has the same understanding of where they
7 want to be. You know, do you want to be flying
8 up against the big dogs in Buffalo or do you want
9 to carve yourself a niche at Niagara Falls?
10 Spirit and Allegiant decided to go with the
11 latter, to go with the niche up at Niagara Falls.
12 So we were very -- we've been very hesitant to
13 raise prices too high, but now that they know it
14 works, we're going to start looking at how to
15 better rationalize what we're actually charging
16 the airlines at Niagara Falls; i.e., we're going
17 to be increasing some costs along the way. It
18 won't be overburdening to them. You know, we're
19 not going to chase them away with what we'll do,
20 but we do have to look at a better financial
21 structure at Niagara Falls.

22 So the Niagara Falls Reserve Base. We're
23 going to make sure we're looking at any joint

1 cost saving processes at the airport. Again, if
2 we do the main runway, we're basically covering
3 two thirds of the cost and the military will
4 cover the last third, so that's a huge savings
5 and benefit for us. And then, lastly, we're
6 going to continue to pursue grant opportunities
7 from every level, federal, state, local, you name
8 it, to be able to help put into the airport to
9 make it sustainable on a long-term basis.

10 So questions? That wraps up my presentation
11 on Niagara Falls. I'd be happy to address any
12 questions anybody may have.

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Bill, what airlines do you think
14 are most vulnerable right now?

15 MR. VANECEK: Well, some of the low-cost carriers.
16 You know, Spirit is pretty strong. Allegiant has
17 been doing okay. But I would say if you're
18 looking at all the airlines across the board, the
19 majors are all, they're all -- you know, are
20 hurting right now. I mean, they've had -- as you
21 can see in the paper, they've had to lay off a
22 lot of employees. They've cut flight schedules
23 way back. I don't think anybody is insulated

1 from that now. So I would say they are all
2 susceptible to, you know, having a significant
3 downsizing or, worse yet, maybe go through some
4 sort of, you know, bankruptcy. Filing for
5 reorganization, Chapter 11 I would think. I
6 don't think any of them will necessarily go
7 Chapter 7, but I think some may go into a Chapter
8 11 on this end so --

9 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Wow. Thank you.

10 MR. VANECEK: Just a quick comment here. This is
11 Buffalo. And this is the checkpoint throughput.
12 We've shown it to you for the last few months,
13 and you can see that we are really mirroring
14 what's happening on a national basis. This is
15 the national snapshot and then this is where
16 Buffalo is. But, just a couple of numbers I want
17 to point out here.

18 So the numbers you're seeing here are daily
19 input trackings. Okay? So, again, it's flat.
20 We don't have the same thing for Niagara Falls,
21 but I did want to point out that, you know, for
22 last, you know -- one, two, three, four, five --
23 six months or so, kind of the start of the COVID

1 era. March came in about eight thousand eight
2 hundred enplanements. It dropped to a hundred
3 and thirty-eight in April. Rebounded to one --
4 seventeen hundred in May. Twenty-four hundred in
5 June. They were about fifteen hundred in July.
6 And they were about a thousand in September.

7 So Allegiant and Spirit were still flying.
8 Spirit is not flying now. But the change in the
9 schedule when Spirit dropped out, Allegiant has
10 now added another flight, another two flights I
11 think it is, that actually gets them slightly
12 above seats they're going to be operating out at
13 the airport than they were when Spirit was with
14 them. So we really haven't lost much from that
15 perspective, and hopefully that stays true.

16 And then at Buffalo -- that was Niagara
17 Falls. But, at Buffalo I wanted to point out
18 that Southwest is back with a bang, believe it or
19 not. They are actually going to be operating for
20 the month of November, three hundred and
21 thirty-seven flights out of the airport, which
22 brings them back to about seventy-five percent of
23 their pre-COVID schedule, so we're very happy to

1 hear about that.

2 The rest of the carriers are a different
3 story. You have United that's about fifty
4 percent, and everybody else is seventy percent or
5 so still down at the airport. But, hopefully,
6 hopefully Southwest will lead the way and show
7 that it can work and maybe the others will tag
8 along.

9 And then just to put another spin on the
10 Southwest. They're are going to be running now
11 twenty-four weekly flights to Baltimore, six to
12 Denver, five to Las Vegas, thirteen to Orlando,
13 eleven to Tampa and four to Phoenix. Those are
14 the big ones. So that's a big change in
15 philosophy here, and I'm very interested to see
16 how that's going to turn that around.

17 And then, lastly, it's not on any of this or
18 in here, but I had a conversation with the border
19 crossing committee of NITTEC yesterday -- the day
20 before yesterday, and they were talking about
21 when we think the border will be opening. And of
22 course it has just been punted to mid November
23 and third week in November. The bridge folks

1 believe that that won't happen until April.
2 They're -- that's what they're planning for.
3 They think that's when -- if it will happen,
4 that's when it will happen. I'm hoping and
5 knocking on wood it doesn't. Because if it
6 doesn't open before then, we miss a huge, big --
7 you know, our big spring break period which is
8 always one of our busiest months.

9 So that's what I have for you and happy to
10 address or answer any questions you may have or
11 at least try.

12 MS. MINKEL: Thanks, Bill.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Well, I don't have any
14 questions, but I had a comment.

15 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So it seems to me that for both
17 Buffalo, as we're approaching, you know, meeting
18 the benchmarks on the terminal redesign and also
19 for Niagara that we need to maintain our
20 facilities and our capacity. You know, we've got
21 to maintain the status quo until we can make
22 reasonable assumptions about what the future is,
23 you know. When the smoke clears from all this

1 and we can really see what the future of air
2 travel is going to be, you know, I think we have
3 to get at the process of updating the strategic
4 plans for both the airports.

5 MR. VANECEK: I agree.

6 COMMISSIONER PERRY: You know, Bill, you mentioned
7 and you showed that the plan was March of 2016.
8 But, we started that process long before that.
9 Right?

10 MR. VANECEK: Yep.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So while we -- while the final
12 plan contained, contained current data, we
13 started that process to get a consultant, figure
14 out what we're going to do and to start the
15 process long before that, so it takes time. And
16 it just seems to me that I would, you know,
17 suggest to my fellow board members and staff that
18 as soon as the smoke clears and we can kind of
19 see we're getting, you know, we're past this,
20 that we really need to, need to go out and look
21 for strategic planning consultants and see what
22 kind of services are available, whether it's the
23 same consultant or a different one to procure

1 those services and do a strategic plan for both
2 airports.

3 And it's something you just mentioned, is
4 that one of the biggest threats is to the
5 low-cost carriers. So that's going to change the
6 equation for the majors and for others and for
7 the market in general. And that implicates
8 things that we, that we have been looking at.
9 You know, there are opportunities that may come
10 out of this for economic development that
11 benefits Western New York.

12 You know, the terminal redesign is hopefully
13 going to have a big impact to attract service.
14 Resurrection of our efforts for the Buffalo to
15 Dublin direct, nonstop, which is a complete
16 transformation -- transformational opportunity
17 for the entire region. And, you know, Albany
18 flights too is something that we're going to come
19 back to.

20 And, you know, in my view, all of these
21 things -- this presentation focused on Niagara
22 Falls, but we need to see where the opportunities
23 are when we get there and certainly the

1 trajectory of the service there and the
2 opportunities that may be available are -- and
3 while there's a challenge to low-cost carriers,
4 there's also going to be opportunities for some
5 low-cost carriers to expand service when, you
6 know, we can start attracting the Canadian market
7 again.

8 So, you know, as far as I'm concerned, we
9 need to be at the cutting edge of doing
10 everything we can to advance and provide the best
11 and most comprehensive air service to support
12 this entire economy, not just in Buffalo, but
13 also Niagara and the entire Western New York
14 region. So that's the way that I see it.

15 MR. VANECEK: We will certainly get to work on that.
16 Probably wait until, like you say, some of the
17 smoke clears and then get that rolling, but it
18 will be, it will be good.

19 MS. MINKEL: Yeah. I think we've learned a lot from
20 the pandemic. Some of the threats and
21 vulnerabilities that we had identified in terms
22 of risk for the aviation system, we're seeing
23 that, and it's playing out even more intensely

1 than what we had ever anticipated.

2 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: It's a national trend, though,
3 too.

4 MS. MINKEL: Right. But if you look at that graph,
5 the TSA checkpoint throughput graph, which is
6 page sixty-one for those who are on the phone,
7 although we're similar, if you look at the slope
8 of the blue line on the bottom, you can see we
9 are not going up at the same rate that the rest
10 of the airports, and that's because the bridges
11 are closed. We are impacted more than any other
12 airport in the U.S. because of those bridges
13 being closed.

14 MR. VANECEK: That's exactly right.

15 All right. Well, thank you for your time.

16 MS. MINKEL: Thanks, Bill.

17 And now I'm going to ask Tom George if he
18 can talk about our future bus deployment
19 strategies. And this starts, for those who are
20 on the phone, on page sixty-two of the PDF that
21 we had sent out to you.

22 MR. GEORGE: Thanks. So, you know, earlier we talked
23 about procuring diesel buses and we talked about

1 battery electric buses. We've been down in the
2 weeds a little bit and I thought it would make
3 sense if we took a step back.

4 Our bus procurement program has got a number
5 of goals associated with it, and I won't read
6 them here, but they're pretty straightforward.
7 We've been trying to procure one fifteenth of our
8 fleet on an annual basis so that we have a
9 sustainable model for our community. We're
10 always trying to harness any kind of funding
11 opportunities that come along, whether they're
12 associated with a new technology or whether
13 they're just associated with maintaining a bus
14 fleet. And, you know, in order for us to do
15 that, it really creates an environment where
16 we've got an attractive bus fleet that's reliable
17 and cost effective for us to operate.

18 So with these goals in mind, we're moving
19 forward with a strategy. But, before I do that,
20 I wanted to talk a little bit about what our
21 fleet looks like today, once again. So we've got
22 three different types of vehicles in our fleet.
23 We've got straight diesel buses, which today we

1 refer to as clean diesel. The technology is
2 certainly a lot different than it used to be.
3 We've got diesel/electric hybrid, and we've got
4 compressed natural gas. And there's a number of
5 advantages and disadvantages with each of these.
6 Everything from the way our workforce has a
7 familiarity with them to public perception and
8 what those look like. So there's advantages and
9 disadvantages with each of these.

10 And then I talked about proposed fleet,
11 which is battery electric bus. Public perception
12 is really high on this. Zero-point emissions is
13 very attractive. Theoretically, they have lower
14 maintenance costs. We haven't proven that out
15 yet in our environment, but we're assuming that's
16 true. And they're obviously aligned with climate
17 initiatives. There are still concerns out there
18 relative to their range and how they work in a
19 cold environment. The capital cost is still a
20 bit of a burden relative to the regular diesel
21 buses or CNG buses. And then there's a major
22 investment required in electric charging
23 infrastructure.

1 I did also put down here future
2 considerations, because when we talk about the
3 mandates that you see, whether they're coming
4 from our governor or from any state or anybody
5 who's really pushing for the zero-point emission
6 buses is hydrogen and other technologies. I was
7 speaking with somebody from Great Britain
8 yesterday. They're moving forward with more
9 hydrogen buses than we are here in the States.
10 Hydrogen buses, there is some in the Southwest of
11 the country that are being moved. The last time
12 I looked, I believe there was six hydrogen
13 fueling stations in New York State, only two this
14 side of the Hudson River.

15 And our maintenance people like to say
16 hydrogen technology is ten years away. They
17 always tell me the same thing, ten years away,
18 it's always going to be ten years away. But we
19 think that that's a point.

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Are those hydrogen fuel cell
21 buses or are those hydrogen internal combustion?

22 MR. GEORGE: Hydrogen fuel cell.

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: What about just plain hydrogen

1 as internal combustion fuel?

2 MR. GEORGE: I don't see that as being advanced right
3 now as something that folks are looking at. But
4 right now they're looking at the fuel cell as the
5 opportunity for that.

6 But, once again, I think we have to be open
7 to the technologies that are coming down the road
8 and not necessarily handcuff ourselves to one or
9 the other, especially with the infrastructure
10 costs. When we did the CNG, we had a large
11 infrastructure cost in order to build our fueling
12 stations. That's gone by the wayside now, but we
13 had to leverage that.

14 So last but not least, the three
15 technologies here. We have three hundred and
16 twenty-one big buses in our fleet, about equally
17 divided. We've got a hundred and twenty-four
18 diesels, we've got ninety-nine -- ninety-seven
19 diesel/electric hybrids and ninety-nine CNGs. So
20 it's about a third of each technology that we
21 have in the fleet today.

22 And this kind of lays out what the years of
23 them are. You see everything older than a 2007,

1 that's ninety buses, in this range are almost
2 expired. You can see '99. We call this the
3 2000s, but they're actually '99 model year.
4 Those are actually more robust in some cases than
5 our newer ones are. So you'll see we've been
6 hanging on to those and using them. And you'll
7 also see by the technology. So the yellow is the
8 diesel. The green is our hybrids. We had the
9 big hybrid initiative in around 2006. And then
10 we see the big spike of about almost seventy
11 buses bought in 2010. That was associated with
12 the ARRA funding and the Recovery Act. This is
13 something that's very daunting to an agency
14 because they all get old at the same time, and
15 older and older. And then you'll see on the far
16 end where we've been investing in the CNG, those
17 are the ninety-nine buses we bought down there,
18 with some sprinkling in of diesels. And that
19 sprinkling in of diesels is what we talked about
20 earlier with the need to spread out the age.

21 And then I broke this down again by
22 facility. Babcock, you'll see a mixture of
23 diesel and the hybrids, with an older life there.

1 Cold Spring, again, more of the hybrids here, a
2 little bit newer bus fleet. And then on the
3 bottom, you'll see the buses at Frontier are
4 mostly all CNG buses. That's our CNG fueling
5 facility and most of those are fairly new and the
6 best part of our fleet at this point in time. So
7 the distribution is such that we have to, have to
8 keep that in mind and what that means.

9 So we talked about Title Six requirements.
10 You have to have an equitable distribution of
11 your fleet across your service area, especially
12 relative to the different demographics that we
13 serve. That's measured by fleet condition and
14 fleet amenities. Fleet condition is directly
15 relate to age. FTA says you can -- your fleet
16 condition is related to your age, so an older bus
17 is automatically assumed to be in worse condition
18 than a newer bus. And then amenities. All of
19 our buses have the same amenities. They all have
20 air conditioning, they all have bike racks. They
21 have the same amenities across the fleet so
22 that's not an issue for us, but the age is, so we
23 have to look at that.

1 We also in 2018 did a facility or a
2 system-wide assessment of our facilities to look
3 at modern technologies and we're moving forward
4 with that. And we identified through there --
5 and we knew we were looking into a battery
6 electric bus initiative. We identified through
7 that study that Cold Spring Station was the most
8 appropriate place for that. Couple driving
9 factors to that was power was readily available.
10 It happens to be on a light rail line which has
11 robust power. Neighborhood. It's very conducive
12 to a neighborhood with residential units. You
13 know, we've got a brand-new apartment building
14 that looks over our parking lot. Obviously,
15 first thing in the morning, bringing out a
16 hundred diesel buses and having them idle there
17 for point check is not that positive. So it's
18 going to be a great contributor to the
19 neighborhood having electric bus fleet there.
20 And then cost. It was the most cost-effective
21 place for us to do the electric buses.

22 We've got the investment in CNG at Frontier
23 Station. We anticipate continuing to use that

1 investment. Matter of fact, we're in the proces
2 of putting another compressor in there to allow
3 us to do better maintenance on that and to
4 maintain that facility. And we're seeing really
5 positive returns on the CNG fleet, probably some
6 of the best we've seen. Our fuel costs are not
7 only stable, but they're subsidized and they're
8 low. We're finding the fact that there's no
9 emission equipment on the CNGs, it's much more
10 cost effective for us from a maintenance
11 standpoint. There are other things that add
12 costs, but it's more attractive from that
13 perspective, so it's been a really good
14 investment for the agency and it's really
15 provided some great cost savings and cost
16 stabilization as well, not just the savings. So
17 we see us maintaining that fueling place.

18 And then taking a look at Babcock. As we
19 start to deploy out Cold Spring with the electric
20 buses, what makes sense at Babcock. Does it stay
21 a diesel facility? Do we look at CNG there? Do
22 we look at electric? Do we look at hydrogen?
23 Where do we go with that? And what does our

1 system look like at that point in time? Our
2 system could evolve. I just talked a little bit
3 earlier about fifty percent ridership. So what
4 does our system look like and where are we with
5 that? So these are the considerations we're
6 looking at in the future.

7 Our next steps are to advance the electric
8 bus deployment at Cold Spring Station. We've got
9 some funding outstanding that we need to secure.
10 We're working hard on that and we anticipate that
11 will come through. Advance construction of the
12 facility. Procure the buses. Target date of
13 operation is fall of next year, about a year from
14 now. If the funding comes through and we don't
15 end up with too many challenges, we look like
16 we'll be here in the fall of 2021. I would like
17 to say that we could bring both the
18 infrastructure and the bus procurement to you
19 around the first of the year. If everything
20 falls into place, we'll be doing that and getting
21 our orders in and our contractor in place.

22 And then we've got to prove battery electric
23 bus technology. How does it work? How effective

1 is it in our system and are there issues that
2 we're not seeing as an agency? Once we get them
3 on the ground -- cold weather environment is
4 certainly different than any other environment
5 than a lot of battery electric buses are deployed
6 in, so we need to prove that out. And then we
7 need to migrate to battery electric buses while
8 we maintain the equitable distribution. So I use
9 the word migrate here specifically because we're
10 asking you to purchase those diesel buses today,
11 and we will migrate over. So this year, in the
12 next period we're buying ten diesels and ten
13 battery electric buses. That may go to five and
14 fifteen or zero and twenty as we move forward.
15 As we did with the CNGs, once we got it proven
16 out and we got that effective, we moved into
17 buying twenty a year or twenty-four a year. We
18 would envision that if we prove the BEB
19 technology is effective here at the NFTA. If
20 it's not, then we'll have to look at service
21 area, we'll have to look at what routes we can
22 put them on. Is there more buses required to do
23 the same amount of service than a diesel because

1 of the charging requirements and the amount of
2 service you can provide? So this piece, the
3 proving it out is very critical to the migration
4 to the BEB and how we do that.

5 And then at the end, review Babcock for
6 future fueling technology as the BEB approaches
7 full build-out. Probably not waiting until it
8 approaches it, but as we get probably into the
9 second and third year, we're going to have to
10 have those discussions about Babcock, which I
11 would envision would be about 2023 or so.

12 And I think that was it, so if there's any
13 questions on how we're moving forward or what
14 we're doing, I'd be glad to try to answer them.
15 Thank you all.

16 MS. MINKEL: Great. Thanks, Tom.

17 So if there's no questions on the buses, the
18 last thing we have is Darren Kempner is going to
19 provide an update. This was current a couple of
20 days ago. This keeps changing as it relates to
21 federal COVID relief proposals. So he's going to
22 go over three proposals. There's probably twenty
23 different ones being discussed at the moment, but

1 three general ones, and how it would relate to
2 the NFTA.

3 So, Darren?

4 MR. KEMPNER: Thanks, Kim.

5 So as John mentioned earlier, the
6 coronavirus relief, the CARES Act, has been a
7 lifeline for the agency. But, as we all know,
8 care packages, eventually they run out, your
9 roommate takes them or something like that. So
10 there's a need for additional assistance here.
11 It's been identified by both houses in Congress.
12 I just want to review the three proposals --
13 primary proposals and their status.

14 So the first one here, the Heroes 1.0 as we
15 call it. The top line number was a three point
16 five trillion dollar bill. As you know, that was
17 much higher than the administration said it had
18 agreed to. And I think it's important just to
19 kind of reference a couple points that were in
20 there. There was fifteen point eight billion for
21 transit and thirteen point five billion for
22 airports. Now, that compares to twenty-five
23 billion for transit and ten billion for airports

1 that were included in the CARES Act. So less
2 money for transit in this one, more for airports.
3 The way the transit was structured in that one,
4 it was primarily for the larger urbanized areas,
5 the MTAs and the San Franciscos of the world, and
6 less -- a smaller portion for other agencies that
7 needed assistance.

8 The airport piece here and as you'll see in
9 the next one was allocated based on enplanements,
10 but there was a set-aside -- or, at least a
11 requirement to assist airport concessionaires
12 with some of that money.

13 And then the last piece, which is very
14 important here in New York State and elsewhere,
15 state and local government assistance was
16 substantial in this package. Five hundred
17 billion and three hundred and seventy-five
18 billion.

19 So the second iteration of that, negotiating
20 for a more passable proposal, the Heroes 2.0 was
21 two point two trillion. And I should say both of
22 these were passed by the House, 1.0 and 2.0. And
23 thirty-two billion for transit, more than the

1 CARES Act, but distributed in the same manner as
2 the CARES Act. And thirteen point five billion
3 for airports, the same approach as in the first
4 Heroes Act. And a smaller amount, but still
5 substantial, for state and local governments.

6 So the Senate has been very different as you
7 know. This was the -- kind of the proposal that
8 had the most meat, or at least energy, when we
9 put this presentation together, the HEALS Act.
10 This did not pass the Senate nor have any of the
11 subsequent proposals -- relief proposals passed
12 the Senate. But, this was one trillion. It had
13 no funding for transit, ten billion for airports,
14 same amount as distributed through the CARES Act,
15 and then no additional funding for state and
16 local governments.

17 So even for those who have followed this
18 closely, I think it's hard to follow all these
19 details as well as figure out where we stand
20 right now, as negotiations certainly continue.
21 Whether a lame duck Congress can pass a relief
22 proposal or not remains to be a question. But
23 what we've continued to say when we've talked to

1 our Congressional representatives is to point out
2 the parts that we like in these bills that meet
3 our needs going forward, as well as the
4 particularly unique aspects of our systems that,
5 that demand more assistance, like the border
6 closure, like the size of our system and the
7 impacts that we have on transit, and so we'll
8 continue to do that as these proposals evolve.

9 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Darren, do you think there's any
10 possibility this would happen before Election
11 Day? Just coming to a conclusion, I guess, not
12 giving the money.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Do you have a crystal ball?

14 MR. KEMPNER: As I say often, I don't have a crystal
15 ball, I have a Magic 8 Ball, it always says no.

16 It's highly unlikely, but it's still
17 possible. The Supreme Court Justice nomination
18 has thrown things into flux too. So I think
19 everybody is focused on is it still possible
20 after Election Day. The need is still there.

21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Something probably will happen,
22 but when.

23 MR. KEMPNER: That's what I've been saying all along,

1 but it's trying all of our patience.

2 MS. MINKEL: And so this discussion is important
3 because as we're trying to put together a budget,
4 you can see how much uncertainty we have. And
5 while we're required at the moment to submit a
6 balanced budget to Albany by the end of December,
7 there are so many assumptions that we are putting
8 in that, quite frankly, I know our assumptions
9 will be wrong come January.

10 As a reminder to the board, and this is the
11 only thing that lets me sleep at night, is we
12 have a second crack at our budget once the
13 executive budget comes out, typically near the
14 end of January from the state. And at that time
15 we revise our budget. Our fiscal year, for new
16 board members, starts April 1st, so we have some
17 time and hopefully there's more clarity before
18 our new fiscal year starts. But, as John pointed
19 out and Darren, and really Tom and Bill as well,
20 the CARES Act funding that we received was a
21 lifeline and has kept us operating. That money
22 is running out, so we are very hopeful that the
23 feds will come out with something because it is

1 desperately needed.

2 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Absolutely. I assume any -- I
3 mean, the large, the small, the government and
4 the private agencies. So we can hope. But the
5 strategy right now is up for grabs.

6 Is there anything else that needs to come
7 before our board today?

8 Hearing nothing, I will call for --

9 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So moved.

10 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Second.

11 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: All in favor?

12 UNIDENTIFIABLE COMMISSIONERS: Aye.

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you all.

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STATE OF NEW YORK)

SS:

COUNTY OF NIAGARA)

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

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

VALERIE A. ROSATI,
Notary Public.

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