
NIAGARA FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Committee Meetings

October 28, 2021

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

1 MEMBERS IN THE BOARDROOM:

2 Sister Denise Roche (Chair)
3 Commissioner LaVonne Ansari
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 Helen Tederous (Director, Public Affairs)
11 John Schaefer (Director, Engineering)
12 Karen Novo (Director, Human Resources)
13 Darren Kempner (Manager, Government Affairs)
14 Christopher Ruminski (Manager, Financial
15 Planning & Analysis)
16 Steven Duquette (Chief Information Officer).
17 Christine D'Aloise (Director, Risk Management
18 and Special Projects)
19 Deanna Guest (Manager, Workers' Compensation)
20 Nadine Chalmers (Senior Transportation Planner)

21 MEMBERS ON THE PHONE:

22 Commissioner Joan Aul
23 Commissioner Rev. Mark Blue
24 Commissioner Margo Downey
25 Commissioner Michael Hughes

26 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Good morning, everyone. This is
27 the beginning of the combined committee meetings
28 for October 28, 2021 for the Niagara Frontier
29 Transportation Authority and the Niagara Frontier
30 Transit Metro System. And I thank you for being
31 with us this morning.

1 I think we should start by asking Dave if he
2 would call the roll.

3 MR. STATE: We have Sister Denise.

4 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Present.

5 MR. STATE: Commissioner Aul?

6 COMMISSIONER AUL: Present.

7 MR. STATE: Commissioner Blue?

8 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Present.

9 MR. STATE: And Commissioner Hughes?

10 COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Present.

11 MR. STATE: Any other commissioners that have joined
12 us on the call since Kim read the last set of
13 names?

14 Thank you. So we can proceed. We don't
15 have a quorum at this point, but we won't be
16 taking any action at the committee level. We can
17 proceed.

18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Very good. There is a lot of
19 business that we will hear and then discuss
20 today, so I would like to move it along on time.
21 We're going to begin with the financial
22 performance report, and I'm going to ask Chris
23 Ruminski if he would give it. And, Chris, you

1 could continue, then, with the quarterly capital
2 projects report.

3 MR. RUMINSKI: Thank you, Sister. Good morning,
4 commissioners. I'll begin with the September
5 performance report. Overall there was a positive
6 budget variance of two point five million dollars
7 for the month of September. We had higher than
8 budgeted operating revenues and there was a
9 favorable variance of one point five million
10 dollars. This is caused by Metro passenger fares
11 being five hundred eighty-two thousand favorable
12 to budget for the month, and BNIA concessions and
13 commissions revenue was seven hundred and
14 fifty-one thousand dollars favorable. And
15 that's -- BNIA's enplanements were about
16 sixty-two percent higher than forecasted for the
17 month of September, and that's what led to the
18 favorable variance in concessions and
19 commissions.

20 Also, we were higher than budgeted operating
21 assistance with a favorable variance of one point
22 four million. That includes STOA being three
23 hundred fifteen thousand dollars favorable to

1 budget. And mortgage and sales tax revenue was
2 one point one million favorable to budget for the
3 month of September.

4 We also had lower than budgeted operating
5 expenses that led to a favorable variance in that
6 area of one point one million dollars. And that
7 was strong results for personnel costs and
8 maintenance and repairs, and partially offset by
9 utilities as utility prices, as everyone knows,
10 have been increasing lately. And, finally,
11 non-operating capital items were one point nine
12 millions dollars unfavorable to budget and that
13 is due -- we are using our better than
14 anticipated Metro results to fund the
15 self-insurance fund at a faster pace than we
16 originally budgeted, so that's why -- it's a
17 negative variance, but that's using positive
18 results in other areas to fund that quicker than
19 we had initially planned.

20 And that is the results for September. Are
21 there any questions?

22 If not, we can look at year to date.

23 COMMISSIONER AUL: Chris, I'm sorry.

1 MR. RUMINSKI: I'm sorry. Sure.

2 COMMISSIONER AUL: I'm sorry, Chris. It's Joan Aul.

3 MR. RUMINSKI: Hi, Joan.

4 COMMISSIONER AUL: So on the utility costs -- good
5 morning. On the utility, it purely is a function
6 of the cost as opposed to any, any usage rates,
7 correct?

8 MR. RUMINSKI: Correct.

9 COMMISSIONER AUL: It's nothing unanticipated in
10 usage; it's just a pure function of the cost
11 increases?

12 MR. RUMINSKI: That is correct, Commissioner.

13 COMMISSIONER AUL: Okay. Thank you.

14 MR. RUMINSKI: For the year-to-date results. For the
15 year through September, we are favorable to
16 budget by sixteen and a half million dollars.
17 Operating revenues are favorable to budget
18 primarily due to higher concessions and
19 commissions at the BNIA as enplanement numbers
20 have recovered sooner than we had initially
21 anticipated. And operating assistance is
22 favorable to budget due to higher than expected
23 mortgage tax, sales tax and STOA revenue. And

1 also budgeted operating expenses are below budget
2 Authority-wide.

3 The overall positive budget to variance is
4 driven by two main business centers as you can
5 see. BNIA is four point two million dollars
6 favorable to budget for the year as enplanements
7 are about -- for the year, about sixty-five
8 percent favorable to what they were forecast
9 through the month of September, and that led to
10 much stronger concessions and commissions revenue
11 for the year. And also BNIA is -- BNIA also has
12 been favorable to budget in operating expenses by
13 approximately two percent.

14 And Metro is eleven point seven million
15 dollars favorable to budget for the year. And
16 that's due to favorable variances again in fares,
17 STOA, mortgage tax, sales tax revenue, and then
18 operating expenses are under budget by
19 approximately nine percent for the year.

20 Are there any questions relating to the
21 year-to-date performance?

22 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Good numbers. Thank you, Chris.

23 MR. RUMINSKI: Moving on to the capital report?

1 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Yes.

2 MR. RUMINSKI: This report summarizes total budgeted
3 and actual capital expenditures through the first
4 two quarters of the fiscal year. This is both
5 the NFTA funded portion and the grant funded
6 portion. As of September 30th, we're
7 approximately three point three million
8 unfavorable to budget. Most of that is related
9 to two items. Multi-task snow removal equipment
10 at the BNIA for one point eight million dollars
11 and a multi-task vehicle at the NFIA for eight
12 hundred thousand dollars. Both of these pieces
13 of equipment were originally budgeted and thought
14 to have been -- would be received last fiscal
15 year. They didn't actually arrive and get paid
16 for until this fiscal year. It's just a timing
17 thing. So we were under budget in capital last
18 year; a little over budget in capital this year.
19 It's not that unusual. But, that's what's
20 driving the variance year to date.

21 This report is the capital budget variance
22 analysis. This report is the progress of jobs
23 from the original budget when they started, not

1 within the year, but from the inception date
2 until when they complete. This report shows
3 projects that completed for the fiscal years
4 2020, 2021 and year to date in 2022 that were
5 greater than five hundred thousand dollars. We
6 do this report quarterly. There were no projects
7 that met that criteria of over five hundred
8 thousand dollars that closed during the second
9 quarter, so this report looks the same as it did
10 after the first quarter.

11 Are there any questions related to the
12 capital budget for the quarter ended?

13 And, finally, the cash management and
14 investment analysis. Total cash at the end of
15 September -- or, excuse me. Yeah, September.
16 Was two hundred and fifteen million dollars. And
17 that is ahead of budget. And we are ahead of
18 budget for all the same reasons that we're
19 overall favorable to budget in the other areas.

20 We had higher than expected BNIA concessions
21 and commissions revenue, STOA, mortgage and sales
22 tax revenue, along with operating expenses being
23 lower to budget Authority-wide, and we had

1 received COVID relief funds prior to their being
2 recognized in the budget. So we received them
3 and they will be recognized revenues in the
4 future, but we already have the cash.

5 And, finally, the quarterly investment
6 analysis. CDs make up nineteen percent of our
7 investments. These are short-term, three to
8 six-month CDs, and the interest rates are not
9 very impressive at point one three and point
10 one -- between point one three and point one six
11 percent. We constantly monitor these to make
12 sure we're getting the best rates. And the
13 diversification percentages between the
14 institutions that hold our investments are
15 comparable from the second quarter to the first
16 quarter, so not much has changed there.

17 Are there any questions relating to the cash
18 management report or the quarterly investment
19 analysis?

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much, Chris.

22 That's a good report. That's why we have no
23 questions about it. Thank you. That's very

1 good.

2 MR. RUMINSKI: Thank you.

3 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: We're going to look at risk
4 management now and I'm going to ask (inaudible).

5 MS. D'ALOISE: Good morning, Sister. Good morning,
6 commissioners. I'll begin with the self-insured
7 liability and funding analysis. This report
8 measures the relationship between the claims and
9 the funding balance. Overall it distinguishes
10 between Metro and NFTA as well as general claims
11 versus Workers' Compensation claims. If you take
12 a look at the bottom of the top box, you'll see
13 our liabilities have increased about five hundred
14 and nineteen thousand since the beginning of the
15 fiscal year.

16 Within the body of the top box, you will see
17 that we have increased our liabilities -- or, I'm
18 sorry. Our -- we've seen a shift from our Work
19 Comp. case reserves into our IBNR, which is our
20 incurred but not reported reserve that we receive
21 from our actuary on an annual basis that we have
22 to book. But this movement tends to be a
23 favorable trend from what we have seen in prior

1 years is that when a case shifts into the IBNR,
2 we have a favorable actuarial adjustment at year
3 end. Last year we had an over four million
4 dollar favorable adjustment. We are hopeful this
5 will remain throughout the rest of the fiscal
6 year, but of course we're only halfway through
7 the year and we do have the bad weather season in
8 front of us. So we will continue to monitor how
9 the metrics evolve.

10 Moving to the bottom box. From a funding
11 perspective, you will see that we are seventy-six
12 percent funded for all of our claims in IBNR. Of
13 our known case reserves, we are a hundred percent
14 funded, so that is a very strong funded position
15 and we're happy with that.

16 And that completes my presentation. If
17 there are any questions?

18 Okay. I will move on. The next report is
19 the number of Workers' Compensation claims versus
20 the average incurred. And we take a look at this
21 report because in the self-insurance report that
22 we just reviewed, approximately eighty-eight
23 percent of the costs are Workers' Comp., so we

1 like to give a little more detail and backup for
2 that.

3 And this report compares the annual claims
4 volume to the related cost. And it depicts the
5 entire period of self-insurance which began in
6 1990, and it does this because we have still have
7 open claims in all of the decades of
8 self-insurance.

9 If you take a look at the graph, the green
10 line represents the total number of claims. We
11 have greatly reduced the number of claims in the
12 last approximately ten-year period. In the early
13 decades, you will see that we were averaging well
14 over three hundred claims per year, and now we're
15 averaging under a hundred and twenty-five claims
16 per year.

17 And that's a very important and favorable
18 metric for us. This is because when you take a
19 look at the pink line, which is the average
20 incurred cost per claim -- and it doesn't include
21 the IBNR that I mentioned in the prior report
22 because that can only be put in at fiscal year's
23 end. But, you see that the pink line trends

1 upward, and so the cost of claims is going up.
2 Had we remained at the high, say even just two
3 hundred claims per year in the last decade, we'd
4 have approximately another thirty million more in
5 claim costs. So that's a very important metric
6 for us. And it's a great shout out to our
7 operations and safety personnel for working to
8 get those numbers down. And that's an analysis.
9 The second page is the data that supports the
10 graph. But, that's it in a nutshell. If there
11 are any questions?

12 Okay. Thank you.

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much. Government
14 affairs. Darren?

15 MR. KEMPNER: Good morning.

16 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Good morning.

17 MR. KEMPNER: In a deviation from the past few months
18 of my reports, I don't have anything for you on
19 the federal government affairs side. You've
20 probably all seen the drama of the Build Back
21 Better Bill, which I did receive a framework this
22 morning. If that can somehow move forward in the
23 coming days, that should free up the

1 Infrastructure and Jobs Act which is what we're
2 all hoping to see. So the play continues. We'll
3 know more soon hopefully.

4 So I just wanted to quickly review some
5 pending grant applications, because we've
6 continued to progress these with everything going
7 on. The first there is the RAISE program,
8 formally known as TIGER and BUILD. If you
9 recall, this year we requested twenty-five
10 million dollars which is the maximum request to
11 purchase battery electric buses and install
12 charging infrastructure at Cold Spring. Those
13 awards are due within just a couple weeks. And
14 we were talking to congressional staff yesterday
15 and asking for their support in working with the
16 U.S. DOT, so we hope to hear positively on that
17 soon.

18 The second one listed there is a new federal
19 transit grant program that's meant to help
20 transit enhancement projects across the country
21 move into development. We requested the max
22 amount there of just under a million dollars for
23 assistance with our Bailey Avenue bus rapid

1 transit project.

2 The last two. There's a large upstate
3 airport economic development competition which
4 I've mentioned before. The requests there were
5 fifty million for Buffalo and seven and a half
6 million for Niagara Falls. And those projects
7 would be focused on enhancing the customer
8 experience as well as improve public health and
9 the environment for the customers at our
10 airports.

11 And the last -- and every couple years New
12 York State releases some funds for federal
13 infrastructure investment. And we requested five
14 million dollars for battery electric buses as
15 well as just under four million dollars for a
16 series of bus stop canopies on North Division
17 Street, two Metro projects.

18 The last thing I mentioned is we wanted to
19 thank Senator Schumer and Gillibrand for member
20 designated projects that were recently released
21 as part of the 2022 appropriations bills.

22 Senator Gillibrand was able to secure, at least
23 in the member designated projects lists, two

1 million dollars for DL and W station sky bridge;
2 and Senator Schumer, just under two million
3 dollars for Cold Spring battery electric bus
4 infrastructure. There's still some work that
5 needs to be done there, but we wanted to thank
6 them for their support of those two projects.

7 And that concludes my report.

8 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you very much. And human
9 resources. Karen?

10 MS. NOVO: Thank you. I'll just stand up here
11 because I have some slides that show a little bit
12 of my presentation here. So I just wanted to --
13 good morning, everyone. I just want to start off
14 with our Authority openings. I want to keep the
15 board updated as to where we are and how
16 concerning this is. Our mechanics and operators,
17 as you can see, the numbers keep going up. It's
18 very concerning as we see all across the nation
19 right now, it's the trades. It's very difficult.
20 It's very challenging.

21 So what are we doing? We're trying to do
22 everything and anything we can do. We're working
23 very closely with Northland Workforce Training

1 Center with the help of Commissioner Tucker.
2 He's been great. We took the training bus out
3 there about a week or two ago. John Dembik from
4 Tom's team, Holly Carpenter, recruiting staff.
5 They're working with the students. We're looking
6 to -- there's about thirty students we're looking
7 to test in the next couple weeks. So it takes
8 time because they're going through their classes,
9 they're going through their courses, they're
10 graduating. So that's been a tremendous help.
11 And we're hoping that's going to really show in
12 the future as to how many mechanics and trades we
13 can continue to work with.

14 We're also working now with the Department
15 of Motor Vehicles, both Niagara, Erie and Genesee
16 County. We're working with the -- in addition
17 with the Department of Motor Vehicles, we're
18 trying to help employees prepare how to get their
19 permit, how to get through the permit B, the --
20 we train coming here for the CDL and everything
21 like that, but the first step is to get your
22 permit D. You have to have that in order to go
23 through. So we're working with the Employment

1 Opportunity Center as well, the EOC, with Billy
2 Lobuzzetta, with Amy Hughes. We're trying to
3 help these candidates get through the process.
4 So that's another area that we're trying to get
5 out there and help. And we're going to be doing
6 -- we're going to be at all the DMV offices on
7 Saturdays now. We're going to be at our
8 locations, you know, pulling their applications
9 in, let's go to the DMV, this is what you need to
10 do, this is to help you. So these are the things
11 we're trying to really guide them through, help
12 them through and whatever else we can do for
13 them, we're doing everything. So that's,
14 that's where we're at.

15 Other areas that we're working with. Social
16 media of course is huge. Helen's team has been
17 great with social media. Facebook, Instagram,
18 LinkedIn, everything that you can see out there.
19 We're doing -- like I said, we're at the
20 locations. We're talking with our operators.
21 We're having them go out. Everybody is really a
22 recruiter right now for the Authority. As you'll
23 see, it's everywhere. It's very, very concerning

1 going forward. So we're continuing with
2 everything we can do.

3 The employee referral program. I mentioned
4 that last month. We're going to probably roll it
5 out in the next week or two. This is more for
6 retention and employee referral. So it's --
7 we're going to give a check out to employees who
8 can refer mechanics and operators only, but it's
9 going to be for Authority-wide. So we're looking
10 to roll that out in the next -- we're just tying
11 up a few things and that's going to be rolled out
12 to the Authority very shortly, so hopefully that
13 will help impact us as well.

14 The next slide. So this is with the help of
15 a lot of people in the Authority. Helen's group
16 of course. Michael Martinek did a great job.
17 This is a radio ad that we're going to play
18 shortly. Tom's group, Jason Abounader from
19 finance helped out, James Morrell helped out, and
20 of course my team, recruiting, Holly Carpenter,
21 Nick Kurtz and Amy Hughes. Everyone's put a big
22 part in all this.

23 So Helen is going to play this fun ad that

1 we just started running about two weeks ago or
2 so. So it's starting to get a lot of action, so
3 I just wanted the board to hear what -- some
4 things that we're doing.

5
6 (Whereupon, the following audio recording
7 was then played and transcribed.)

8
9 *****

10
11 Need to go to the dentist? We've got you.
12 Need to get your daughter to the doctor? We've
13 got you. Need a little stability in your life, a
14 future? We've got you there too. It's Metro Bus
15 and Rail. That's what we do. We make a
16 difference in people's lives. Not just getting
17 people around. We get people ahead in their
18 lives, careers, with the kinds of benefits that
19 matter right now, today. Health care,
20 retirement? Sure. (Inaudible) days off when you
21 need them and overtime when you need to make a
22 little more.

23 Don't know how to operate a bus? We've got

1 you. Metro will pay for your commercial driving
2 lessons. Let me say that again. You get your
3 commercial driving license, Metro picks up the
4 bill. Like I said, we've got you, plain and
5 simple. Metro is a nice place to work and might
6 be the best move you ever make. Take a look at
7 job options at NFTA dot com. We've always got
8 you at Metro Bus and Rail. East Side, West Side,
9 Riverside, Canalside. Metro Bus and Rail.

10
11 *****

12
13 MS. NOVO: So that's an ad that just was recently put
14 out. So what's next? We're going to look at TV
15 ads coming up next. So hopefully I'll be able to
16 share that with you in the next couple months.
17 So hopefully the TV ads will get some action as
18 well.

19 And then the last item of course is what I
20 talked about, the challenges that we're up
21 against. We hear it every day. In the schools,
22 the truck driving, mechanic, every mechanic place
23 you'll see, you see help wanted everywhere. From

1 the Wegmans to everywhere. We're up against
2 everything. So we're out there, we're doing the
3 best we can, we're doing everything we can.
4 Anything. We're looking for ideas from everybody
5 and we'll try whatever we can to help get our --
6 to help get candidates in the door and let them
7 get a career here at the NFTA.

8 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So these jobs are like long-term
9 career jobs? They have good benefits?

10 MS. NOVO: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: And people will sometimes work
12 them for an entire life -- lifetime --
13 professional lifetime?

14 MS. NOVO: Yes. We have employees that have been
15 here thirty-plus years. They've made a career
16 here. Benefits.

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Do these jobs require a college
18 education?

19 MS. NOVO: No.

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So we have this huge --

21 MS. NOVO: Most of them don't. I mean, the ones I'm
22 talking about --

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Some of them do. The ones that

1 you're talking about don't.

2 MS. NOVO: Yes. The mechanics and (inaudible).

3 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So we have this huge shortage of
4 people. And it sounds like you're talking about
5 we all see it across all sectors. You know,
6 private auto dealer, public authorities,
7 government officers, police, fire.

8 Somebody actually mentioned that one of the
9 reasons why so many police cars are needed is
10 because they can't fix the ones that break down
11 on an efficient enough basis to keep them on the
12 street. Have you heard that same thing?

13 MS. NOVO: I've heard -- I haven't heard specific to
14 the police, but I've heard -- yeah, I've heard
15 those issues.

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Trust me. Same for police.

17 So like what is our educational system
18 doing? Are they just like sending off to people
19 for college jobs there or are they really
20 focusing on this to address this economy-wide
21 shortage?

22 MS. NOVO: So we've been with the high schools
23 recently -- you know, start with the high schools

1 and all that. We do see a little bit of a push
2 now towards trades, towards going to the BOCES,
3 going to Northland Training Center, looking at
4 trades more as opposed to what we used to hear
5 years ago, college, college, college. I've seen
6 a little bit of a change of that. I don't have a
7 lot of data to show that, but I've heard it. And
8 we've been talking with like Niagara Falls
9 schools, all the schools here in the city and
10 around.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: It sounds like they didn't
12 listen to Wayne Gretzky. They skated to where
13 the puck is going to be after the other side
14 already scored the goal.

15 MS. NOVO: Right.

16 COMMISSIONER BLUE: This is Reverend Blue.

17 COMMISSIONER AUL: Karen?

18 MS. NOVO: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER AUL: Go ahead, Reverend.

20 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Have we tried -- you said you
21 talked to the Buffalo Board of Education. I know
22 Burgard, they did specialize in auto mechanics
23 and at one time aviation. Have we reached out to

1 Burgard High School?

2 MS. NOVO: Yes, we have. We actually reached out to
3 all and every trade school or one that's offering
4 trade schools or looking to offer schools,
5 because things are changing in the schools, as
6 Commissioner Perry just asked the question. I'm
7 starting to see a little bit of a change and they
8 are -- a couple -- in fact, Niagara Falls is one
9 of them just for an example -- has hired a new
10 person to help in the trades area, to help, to
11 help some of these students see where they really
12 want to go instead of just hearing the college,
13 college, college.

14 So -- but Burgard, yes, we've reached out to
15 them as well, yes, to answer your question.

16 COMMISSIONER BLUE: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I don't want anybody to think
18 I'm --

19 COMMISSIONER AUL: Karen, this is Joan Aul. Sorry.
20 Go ahead.

21 COMMISSIONER PERRY. No. After you, Joan.

22 COMMISSIONER AUL: Okay. Thank you. Karen, just a
23 question. I'm just trying to put this into

1 context. So the numbers on page seventeen -- and
2 you said -- and I know the numbers are going up.
3 But, do we have any trend lines for these numbers
4 or put them into perspective to, you know, a
5 percentage of the overall jobs in a given
6 category? So fifty-nine mechanics. You know,
7 what percentage of our overall mechanic
8 population is that?

9 And, you know, I know clearly we've been in
10 this situation for a long time. You know, at
11 what point -- and we may be beyond that. But, at
12 what point are we really looking at, you know,
13 serious impact to our operations from these
14 vacancies?

15 You know, I mean, I applaud all of the
16 efforts that we're doing, but it's kind of like
17 fighting an uphill battle and then when you look
18 at retirements and potentially widening that gap.
19 I'm just trying to put it into perspective of
20 both trends and percentages. And I don't want
21 you to do an awful lot of work, but if there's
22 something that could be done to kind of put that
23 even more into perspective.

1 MS. MINKEL: Yeah. So, Joan, I'll start and then I'm
2 going to turn it over to Tom. In terms of --
3 first off, let me say that the existing staff we
4 have does an excellent job. So up until this
5 point, we've been doing everything on overtime.
6 We have responded in that fashion. Additionally,
7 the pandemic hid some of this in some ways for
8 our operators, because we have less service out
9 there in response to the ridership levels.

10 The mechanics is the area that I'm most
11 concerned about. Fifty-nine mechanics
12 essentially represents one of our facilities. We
13 have three bus maintenance facilities, Babcock,
14 Cold Spring and Frontier. Now, all the
15 fifty-nine are not at just one location, but that
16 gives you the order of magnitude as to how
17 devastating and concerning that number is.

18 And, Tom, I don't know if there's anything
19 else you want to expand.

20 MR. GEORGE: Yeah. As far as percentages, Kim's
21 point is clear. Fifty-nine. That's between
22 twenty and twenty-five percent of our workforce
23 on the mechanics side. The impact really is more

1 so -- you know, one of my things is clean buses.
2 Well, when you have to make priorities, you're
3 not cleaning buses like you should clean buses
4 because you've got to keep them on the street.
5 We focus on safety related items. Challenges
6 relative to putting new systems in place such as
7 battery electric buses create other hardships for
8 us. So on the mechanics side is really the
9 biggest concern as Kim indicated.

10 On the operators side, I was going to talk
11 in the next portion of the meeting some about
12 paratransit and how the impacts are there. So
13 that's impacting us as well, but that is a much
14 lesser percent. That's on the order of
15 magnitude -- and I -- thirty-eight might be a
16 little low, really, because where we need to
17 be -- that's closer to a ten-percent number.

18 There's another thing -- factor that's
19 coming into this. And I spend a lot of time in
20 the garages and talking to folks. And the
21 younger generation is much less willing and
22 likely to work overtime. And that's also
23 impacted us in the past. We've been able to get

1 a lot of overtime and our folks have generally
2 looked for that and enjoyed that as a way to
3 subsidize their income. The younger folks would
4 rather subsidize their quality of life and not
5 work the overtime. So we're getting hit with
6 that as well with the younger generation of
7 employee, at least at this point in time, so
8 there's a lot of factors that go into play here.

9 COMMISSIONER AUL: Yeah. Thank you. Thank you both.

10 I mean, clearly it's not a sustainable situation.
11 And, you know, then when you have a perception
12 even that -- you know, even cleanliness of a bus,
13 you know, if you have perception over time that
14 that is suffering, you know, then it impacts your
15 ridership as well. So, yeah, not -- I know
16 you're doing all you can. I think we as a board,
17 I mean, we may have to take some more detailed
18 looks at the impacts here and what it's truly
19 doing and, you know, the domino effect to the
20 rest of the operation.

21 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I just want to clarify. I was
22 not generally dissing or disrespecting the higher
23 education industry in Western New York, because

1 ECC does have an automotive technology program.
2 That was a program that was very active when I
3 was on the board of trustees there. We have
4 critical colleges and universities and colleges
5 that provide important short-staff jobs like
6 allied health and nursing that are doing a great
7 job, but this one just seems like -- I don't know
8 where we missed the boat on this. And to me part
9 of it is not necessarily the educational
10 resources that we have, ECC had those programs,
11 but we have outside forces which are driving
12 people. Private, private entities and
13 philanthropic entities and policy entities and
14 government entities that just didn't figure out
15 that this, that this was coming, that this -- you
16 know, they could see it on the horizon, but they
17 didn't do anything about it. And now, you know,
18 it's very, very serious issue.

19 MR. GEORGE: One point I wanted to make is the
20 American Public Transit Association has got a
21 major initiative in workforce development across
22 the industry. So they're developing a lot of
23 programs specifically targeting community

1 colleges. So we're going to be following that
2 very closely and looking at the programming
3 they're putting together, a lot of the
4 initiatives they're developing. There's a major
5 task force at APTA because, as we talked earlier,
6 it is an industry issue. So there's a lot of
7 effort going in at APTA nationwide to develop
8 programming which we'll be following and trying
9 to implement here, or at least educate ourselves
10 as to what's going on across the country for this
11 same issue everywhere.

12 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: I think there was a sense for a
13 long time that people needed to go to college and
14 so the trades were downplayed from counselors and
15 others in high schools. And, actually, people
16 who have talent for mechanics should become
17 mechanics and they'll probably love it and do
18 well. And not everybody needs or wants a college
19 education. I'm wondering if there are any parts
20 of the job that mechanics do that someone else
21 can do. I don't, I don't know what it takes to
22 keep a bus clean, but could that be something
23 another category of worker can help with or can

1 do or -- and I -- along with that, I want to
2 know, you know, what kind of background you need
3 to go into maintenance.

4 MR. GEORGE: So we have a number of positions in
5 maintenance. We have -- the base position is a
6 helper. And a helper basically -- you really
7 don't need many requirements at all to become a
8 helper. It's much like a porter at the rail.
9 It's a helper. That's who does most of our bus
10 cleaning. We are able to bring some of them in.
11 And so even though I said earlier that, you know,
12 it's affecting bus cleanliness, because we have
13 to use those people, they are also not able to
14 work a mechanic A or a specialist. We've got a
15 lot of different positions. And certain
16 people -- you're not rebuilding a transmission if
17 you're a helper. Right? So we do have those
18 positions. Those are easier to fill, although we
19 do have many vacancies there as well, because
20 it's also a lower paying job. It's maybe not as
21 rewarding as being a specialist for us. So it's
22 across the board. There's vacancies at every
23 single position. But, yeah, you're absolutely

1 right. We can pursue those because they're a
2 much lower level of requirements to get into the
3 position initially.

4 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: It's also difficult, I know,
5 when you have unions, you know, you can't just
6 cross lines easily.

7 MS. NOVO: And to your point, Sister -- I'm sorry.

8 COMMISSIONER BLUE: This is Reverend Blue. I just
9 wanted to ask about the wages. Now, are we --
10 are ours better wages than the ones McDonald's is
11 offering? I mean, you have to look at that as
12 well. When we look at the hiring of any of these
13 positions, if the fast-food industries are paying
14 much more per hour, people may be leaning towards
15 them.

16 MS. MINKEL: Yeah. You're -- it is a concern as
17 competing jobs in the community, as fast food is
18 increasing the rate of pay. I went to Tim
19 Hortons yesterday and I see they're paying
20 sixteen dollars an hour now to start. Sixteen
21 dollars to work at Tim Hortons. One of the
22 trends we are seeing is, you know, as Tom has
23 mentioned, some of the positions are at lower

1 rates starting. There's a five-year progression.
2 But, we do provide really robust benefits in
3 terms of health care, pension, but sadly, the
4 trend seems to be, especially among the younger
5 generation, they don't have an interest in health
6 care, they don't have an interest in a pension.
7 It's more about what will you pay me in terms of
8 an hourly wage. So total pay, we are
9 competitive, but sadly total pay is not a
10 consideration for many of the applicants coming
11 in.

12 COMMISSIONER PERRY: It seems to me, if I may, that
13 the messaging has been badly wrong, like Sister
14 was talking about. These are jobs that cannot be
15 offshored. You cannot offshore a plumber or a
16 mechanic or an electrician, period, ever. Number
17 two, these jobs are a hundred percent mobile.
18 You can get up and decide to move to Houston
19 tomorrow and you'll have ten job offers and a
20 bonus in any one of those positions. But also
21 the reciprocal is true. This is a nationwide
22 shortage. We can entice people to come here, but
23 they just don't exist because the message was --

1 and the fast-food question is an important one.
2 What counselors need to tell people is, well, if
3 you start as an electrician with some type of
4 certificate training in an electrical program,
5 when you're a master electrician, you can write
6 your own ticket and you can start a business and
7 you can be a millionaire literally by the time
8 you're thirty if you start out of high school.

9 So the messaging has just been a failure.
10 And it's not too late to start starting that
11 aggressively, because those, those are, those are
12 not inconvenient truths; those are truths that we
13 as a people have failed to tell people that they
14 should be thinking about about the future and not
15 just what's right in front of them.

16 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: It's interesting to discuss it.

17 It's a little harder in your position to actually
18 take care of it. But you're doing a great job.

19 MS. NOVO: But they're all -- I mean, they're all
20 great points. These are all things (inaudible).
21 We've been talking about this, right? So it's
22 (inaudible) a little bit, but this is tough.
23 Like I said, we're behind.

1 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you, Karen.

2 And we'll begin now the surface
3 transportation meeting update, and I'm going to
4 ask Tom George to take us through.

5 MR. GEORGE: Good morning. What we'd like to do is
6 start with our discussion items this morning. We
7 recently completed an onboard survey. We do this
8 every three years in collaboration with the
9 Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation
10 Council or NPO. Nadine Chalmers, who is our
11 senior transportation planner and had a major
12 part in this is going to do -- walk the board
13 through the results of the onboard survey. So
14 I'd like to introduce Nadine.

15 MS. CHALMERS: Good morning, Sister. Good morning,
16 commissioners. Again, my name is Nadine
17 Chalmers. I'm here from surface planning to talk
18 to you about our 2021 onboard survey. So in the
19 next ten or so minutes, I'm going to go through
20 an introduction and an overview of the survey,
21 dive into some of the most interesting results,
22 talk about how our data has changed since we last
23 did the survey in 2017, and, finally, talk about

1 how our -- how staff at NFTA are already using
2 the data from this survey in our daily work.

3 So, again, this is a large-scale survey that
4 is statistically rigorous and statistically
5 significant that occurs about every three years.
6 And we do this survey in conjunction with the
7 Title Six report that we submit to the Federal
8 Transit Administration. And Rob Jones, manager
9 of service planning, was here last month talking
10 to you about that report.

11 Here at NFTA we frequently survey our riders
12 on the buses to learn about their opinions and
13 needs, but for this survey we need thousands and
14 thousands of responses, so we do outsource it.
15 And this year we were helped out by WBA Research
16 and Foursquare ITP.

17 As you'll see in this presentation, the
18 survey provides us with unique service
19 information, rider demographics, trip
20 characteristics and more. And I will say that
21 I'm only going to scrape the surface of the
22 results of the survey in this presentation.
23 There's much, much more available in the full

1 report which is on our website.

2 So this survey took place in April and May
3 of 2021, so COVID-19 was a factor then as
4 unfortunately it continues to be today. And the
5 major way that it influenced this effort is that
6 ridership continues to be down, so it was hard
7 for us to get as many surveys as we might have
8 had ridership been at pre-COVID levels.

9 How it works is the surveyors got right on
10 the bus or the rail, handed out paper surveys to
11 the riders. Most of the riders filled out that
12 survey right on the bus and handed it back before
13 they got off, some riders took it home and mailed
14 it back to us, and a few riders went home and did
15 the whole survey online.

16 We did receive approximately twenty-five
17 hundred completed and valid surveys out of around
18 the six thousand that were handed out. There was
19 a rigorous quality control process for these
20 surveys to make sure that it's not an impossible
21 trip or, you know, if the survey was illegible
22 then obviously we couldn't use it. And just a
23 note here about the data, that it does represent

1 unlinked weekday trips. So if I'm someone who
2 rides lots of different routes throughout the
3 week, it's possible that a single rider could
4 have been surveyed more than once.

5 So I'll get into the results here. The
6 first slide is about frequency of use. And we
7 learned from the survey that the vast majority of
8 our riders are frequent riders who are taking our
9 services three or more days per week. We also
10 asked survey respondents to indicate their home
11 ZIP Code, and you can see from the map here that
12 the most common home ZIP Codes are in and around
13 Buffalo, across the city and in our first ring
14 suburbs.

15 In terms of the demographics, we get a lot
16 of detailed demographic information from the
17 survey, and it shows that the majority of trips
18 on our system are taken by people of color, with
19 forty-five percent identifying as black or
20 African-American, twelve percent identifying as
21 Hispanic or Latino and thirty-three percent
22 identifying as white or Caucasian.

23 In addition, we see that the majority of

1 trips are from low-income riders. So eighty
2 percent of trips are taken by riders from
3 households earning thirty-five thousand dollars
4 or less. And, in addition, most trips are from
5 riders who either don't have access to a driver's
6 license or don't have access to a vehicle.

7 So those last two points are really
8 important because it shows how important our
9 services are to folks who are low income and/or
10 don't have any other transportation options.

11 The survey asked riders to indicate where
12 they started their trip and where they ended
13 their trip. So we have a look at origins here.
14 In red you can see that the most prominent start
15 location is in Broadway-Fillmore, Elmwood,
16 Genesee-Moselle and Kenmore. The red blob there.

17 In terms of destinations, it's pretty much
18 what you would expect. The most common transit
19 destination is downtown Buffalo where we have
20 lots of jobs, we have lots of transportation
21 connections, social events, educational
22 opportunities. Number two is north Cheektowaga
23 where we have the Galleria and the airport along

1 with all the jobs and the shopping that comes
2 with that. And number three is University
3 Heights where we have the University at Buffalo,
4 education and jobs, and also a lot of shopping
5 there at the Tops plaza. And I will say that all
6 three of these locations are places where we have
7 a lot of transit service and a lot of transfers.

8 We also asked people what the purpose of
9 their trip is. We learned that forty-six percent
10 of trips were between home and work. So either
11 you're at home -- you're going from work to home
12 or home to work, either direction. And then the
13 second most common trip purpose was a broad
14 category called home to other. So other includes
15 lots of things, shopping, dining, recreation,
16 et cetera.

17 We also asked people how they got to their
18 bus stop or rail station and then from their bus
19 stop or rail station to their final destination.
20 And you can see here that overwhelmingly people
21 are either walking, or if they use a mobility
22 device, rolling to their bus stop or rail
23 station. And this just highlights how important

1 sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps are to our
2 services and to ensuring that our riders have
3 access to the bus and rail station.

4 We get detailed information on how riders
5 are using our system in terms of transfers. And
6 we learned that more than half, fifty-seven
7 percent, of our trips required no transfers. So
8 that's ideal from the rider's perspective, right?
9 You just have one bus to worry about or you get
10 on the rail, you don't have to transfer, you
11 don't have to worry about waiting for the
12 connecting bus. Thirty percent of trips require
13 one transfer, and a smaller number require two or
14 more transfers.

15 We also have demographics on who was
16 transferring and we learned that riders earning
17 less than thirty-five thousand dollars a year are
18 transferring at a greater frequency than riders
19 from households that earn more than that. We
20 don't know exactly why that is, but it's likely
21 that it's related to a mismatch between where
22 people are living and working in terms of low
23 and mid-wage jobs and low and affordable housing.

1 You know, a lot of those jobs are in the suburbs.
2 Sometimes it's harder to get them using the high
3 frequency transit routes.

4 We also learned that transfer activity is
5 highly distributed throughout the system. So
6 there's no single transfer that's overwhelmingly
7 common. It shows that people are using our
8 system in lots of different ways to get to lots
9 of different places.

10 So in terms of fare information. We asked
11 riders how they pay for their trips and where
12 they pay for their trips. And in terms of how,
13 cash remains the most common way to pay for your
14 trips, with thirty-eight percent of trips being
15 paid for using cash. In terms of where people
16 are purchasing their passes, the most common
17 place to purchase your pass is right on the bus.
18 So people get on the bus, they pay for their ride
19 and that's how they use our system. In terms of
20 number two here, we have the smartphone app and
21 the store outlets like Tops tied for thirteen
22 percent each in terms of how people are
23 purchasing their fares. And I just want to draw

1 your attention to the smartphone apps here. That
2 includes Token Transit, Moovit and the Transit
3 app. And those are three apps that we brought
4 online in 2019 and 2020, fairly recently, but
5 already they're doing thirteen percent of our
6 business, so that's a really significant uptick.

7 So I have a couple slides here about how
8 this data has changed since 2017. On the left
9 here you have race and ethnicity, and you can see
10 that the percentage of trips taken by people who
11 identify as black or African-American has stayed
12 exactly the same at forty-five percent. In terms
13 of white or Caucasian folks, it's down a couple
14 from thirty-nine percent to thirty-three. And
15 the percentage of riders who are Hispanic or
16 Latino is up slightly. We've seen basically no
17 change in the percentage of riders who speak
18 English very well.

19 These two are really interesting in the
20 context of COVID. So back in 2017, fifty-eight
21 percent of riders said they did not have access
22 to a vehicle. In 2021, seventy-eight percent of
23 riders said they did not have access to a

1 vehicle. So this really fits with what we've
2 been hearing anecdotally which is that, you know,
3 during COVID, folks who had the option to drive,
4 many of them left our services and chose to get
5 in their cars.

6 In terms of fare type, this is also related
7 to COVID. You can see 2017 to 2021, the
8 percentage of cash purchases went up
9 significantly, and the percentage of monthly pass
10 purchases went down. And we think this is
11 because many people used to buy a monthly pass
12 because they would commute five days a week.
13 Maybe now they're working a couple days a week
14 from home, maybe they're unemployed, so they're
15 not purchasing that monthly pass anymore.
16 They're using the flexibility of cash to just pay
17 for that single trip whenever they ride once or
18 twice a week.

19 So finally here, we're already using this
20 data in our daily work at NFTA Metro. For
21 example, in planning and scheduling, this data
22 helps us align service with how riders are
23 currently using our buses and the rail. So, for

1 example, we can see that the traditional
2 nine-to-five or eight-to-four commuters are less
3 prevalent whereas, you know, shift workers, low
4 to mid-wage workers are still very reliant on our
5 services, so we can use that data to help inform
6 scheduling to serve those riders better.

7 In terms of communications, the survey
8 provides information about language options. You
9 know, if we, if we started to see pockets of
10 riders speaking a new language, we would want to
11 make sure to accommodate for them. And target
12 age groups, right? If you know the age groups of
13 who is riding, we can target our ads and our
14 messaging to make sure that people of all ages
15 understand what we're trying to say.

16 In terms of facility and equipment planning,
17 that continued use of cash certainly informs how
18 we look at MetGo and our fare system going
19 forward. And benches and shelters. Right? We
20 need to know like who's riding and where they're
21 riding in order to plan for making sure that they
22 can wait for our bus in a comfortable manner.

23 And, finally, this data comes up a lot in

1 working with government partners, community
2 partners and elected officials. First, in
3 discussions that happen frequently with our
4 municipal partners about the built environment.
5 Whenever folks are redoing a road or they have
6 construction out there, we're talking to them
7 about sidewalks and crosswalks and how that's
8 such a key feature for our riders. And then,
9 finally, just understanding, making sure
10 community partners and elected officials
11 understand NFTA's critical role in providing
12 essential mobility, essential trips to the whole
13 community, but especially to communities of color
14 and low-income families.

15 So with that, I'd be happy to try and answer
16 any questions.

17 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So thirty-eight percent of
18 people are still using cash?

19 MS. CHALMERS: That's correct.

20 COMMISSIONER PERRY: What's the -- like do we know
21 the reason or the demographic or it's just people
22 don't have a smart device, or what's the --

23 MS. CHALMERS: We do have a demographic breakdown of

1 that data. It's not dramatic. If we -- if I
2 remember correctly, folks of color are using cash
3 at a slightly higher rate and low-income
4 individuals at a slightly higher rate, but it's
5 not dramatic. People are doing it for any number
6 of reasons from just the flexibility to the, you
7 know, the convenience or maybe they don't have
8 access to a smartphone.

9 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Is there -- so I don't have the
10 apps on my devices. Is there like on the buses
11 or on the fare box -- I know you don't have time
12 to do the whole thing on the fare box. But, is
13 there a QR code that people can just scan?

14 MS. CHALMERS: That's a good question. We don't have
15 it on the buses, but we do have it in many other
16 places, including on our website, down in the
17 MTC, at the airport. And when we initially
18 rolled them out, we did, we did some outreach,
19 but it's probably time to do a little more. And
20 we saw a huge uptick during COVID, because a lot
21 of people who were using cash didn't want to take
22 that risk.

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yeah. The QR code sticker for

1 me would make a huge difference if it would take
2 me -- and is -- so it's more than one app that I
3 need? If I want to do the whole nine yards --

4 MS. CHALMERS: No. You only need --

5 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Only one app?

6 MS. CHALMERS: Yes. You have choices. So Token
7 Transit is just for fare payment. Moovit and
8 Transit are for trip planning and fare payment.
9 So you can see when your bus is coming and pay
10 for your ride.

11 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Wow.

12 MS. CHALMERS: It's pretty cool.

13 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Okay. If you put QR code
14 stickers on those buses, I will be the first one.
15 Can I be the first one?

16 MS. MINKEL: That's a good suggestion. We'll take a
17 look at that.

18 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thank you.

19 MS. CHALMERS: Thank you.

20 MS. MINKEL: You know, I just want to point out for
21 the board. Nadine, you know, you can hear the
22 passion in her voice.

23 Excellent presentation, Nadine. Thank you.

1 She's very knowledgeable. Nadine, along
2 with all the other planners in our planning
3 department, are passionate because they use our
4 system. She's talking from experience. So
5 sometimes you hear comments from the public that,
6 you know, we need to hop on a bus and understand
7 our system. The folks on the ground who are
8 planning our system for our riders are our
9 riders. So that passion you hear from Nadine,
10 she's passionate because not only is she planning
11 the system, she's using the system, so she knows
12 it inside and out. So thank you.

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: This is kind of a simple
14 question. But, is there a reduction if you have
15 more than one child with you? A reduction in
16 fare. Or do you pay the same amount for --

17 MS. CHALMERS: It depends on the age of the child.
18 If you -- I think it's under nine -- we keep
19 changing it because it's going to change for
20 MetGo. It's either at seven or nine children
21 ride free; and after that, it's half price. So
22 it will depend on the specific family.

23 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you. Any questions? That

1 was a really good report.

2 MS. CHALMERS: Thank you.

3 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: What's interesting to me is that
4 there's no one route that's most popular and that
5 we've sort of got to keep the buses running
6 everywhere to accommodate people. It's a nice
7 picture to get, though. Thank you. Any other
8 questions?

9 MR. GEORGE: Thanks, Nadine.

10 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay. We will move on to the
11 aviation report.

12 MR. GEORGE: No. I still have a few items.

13 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Okay.

14 MR. GEORGE: If you'll indulge me for a minute, I
15 would appreciate it. I wanted to talk about our
16 initiatives report quickly, on page sixteen. So
17 service modifications the board approved last
18 month. We are moving forward in earnest in
19 Niagara Falls. Those service changes will go
20 into effect on December 5th. In November we're
21 starting a major community outreach program.
22 Signs, notices, alerts, handouts, maps. All
23 sorts of different elements that we're trying to

1 reach out using social media as well as all of
2 our standard media.

3 On the Friday before December 5th, on
4 December 3rd, we will have people in the system
5 in Niagara Falls at the transit centers. We will
6 also have them through that period through the
7 middle part of that week. So we start on
8 December -- or, on December 5th, Sunday. Monday,
9 Tuesday, Wednesday, we will have people in the
10 system at both Portage Road and Niagara Falls
11 Transit Center, three shifts. We'll be there all
12 day every day to inform our people -- inform our
13 customers if there's questions on that. So that
14 is moving forward in earnest. We do anticipate
15 doing some changes in Erie County as we
16 highlighted to you back in September, in March of
17 this year -- excuse me. Of next year. So first
18 phase of Niagara Falls moving forward in
19 December.

20 DL and W rail station project -- or, the
21 rail station project. I wanted to indicate that
22 we did open bids for phase two for the station
23 work, and that will be coming to the board later

1 today with a recommendation for award. We were
2 pleased that it was received and it was within
3 our budget that we had established.

4 And then on the Amherst-Buffalo light rail
5 extension. I also want to indicate that our
6 public scoping process, the comment period for
7 the public scoping process is now closed. So we
8 will be moving forward with the DEIS in relation
9 to those comments that we received in the scoping
10 process. And we're also working with our
11 consultant to move forward with some phase two
12 work to move into some preliminary design, and I
13 would anticipate early in the year seeing a board
14 action for some design scope that we will be
15 moving forward with on that.

16 I did want to talk a little bit on page
17 thirty of our report, performance measures.
18 You'll notice in there that's on complaints for
19 paratransit. Our complaints on paratransit are
20 the highest they've been in a long time this last
21 month. And you'll see earlier we had high
22 complaints, and most of those were related to
23 COVID-based issues, masks. At this point in

1 time, they're no longer related to that. Now
2 they're related to late service.

3 So as you're aware, we are unable and would
4 not decline service for any paratransit customer.
5 We talked earlier today about the shortage of
6 operators. So in 2019 we were in the mid
7 eighties for our operators. We have -- our
8 budgeted operators for paratransit is just under
9 one hundred operators. We had in the mid
10 eighties in pre-COVID 2019. We currently have
11 sixty-nine active operators in paratransit. So
12 we've responded by essentially some of the trips
13 are now longer. We're putting more people on the
14 bus. We are still delivering the service, but we
15 are having impacts to our service and we're
16 having late service in some instances. So our
17 complaints are going up.

18 So you're seeing a direct impact of the
19 hiring challenges that we have. We do have four
20 new operators coming in in the next month, and
21 then our next class will put a significant
22 number in there again. So it just, again,
23 highlights the need for us to continue to

1 recruit, continue to bring folks into the fold.
2 We are nearly back to our pre-COVID numbers on
3 paratransit. So we are over ninety, ninety
4 percent of where we were pre-COVID on
5 paratransit. That compares to about sixty-five
6 percent pre-COVID on our fixed route system,
7 which is very good relative to our peers, but not
8 nearly the ninety percent that we're seeing or
9 close to a hundred percent. We're anticipating
10 as many as a thousand scheduled rides going into
11 December as we get into the winter months. So
12 that service is back, but our operators are not
13 at that level so -- and we're unable to, you
14 know, control that in any way. We just have to
15 deliver those rides. So I wanted the board to be
16 aware of that.

17 And as usual we had a citizens advisory
18 committee meeting, and I'd like to go over the
19 results of that if I could. We did go -- this
20 was held on September 23rd. We did go over the
21 bus service changes that the board approved that
22 same day. We did have some questions. I think
23 the only question that really came back was some

1 pressure to really look at the Lockport to
2 Niagara Falls connection that we eliminated. We
3 are working with Rural Niagara to see if there's
4 ways that we can enhance -- they do run that
5 service, but we're looking at ways to enhance our
6 connectivity with them, so it's more of a timed
7 connectivity. We've offered the services of our
8 planning department to help them with their
9 service, and we've even asked them if they would
10 consider fare reciprocity so that if we have a
11 Metro -- someone with a Metro pass, they can use
12 their service and we would reimburse them for
13 that. So we're looking at all sorts of options
14 to try to enhance that.

15 We talked about bus stop balancing. We did
16 receive public comments, and due to the public
17 comments, and this was brought up in the meeting,
18 five to ten of the stops that were planned for
19 removal were not removed. So one of the
20 highlighted ones, I think some of you were at the
21 public hearing, people came and were very
22 passionate about a housing complex that was in --
23 that was heavily used. Well, when we did our

1 research, that housing complex just opened. So
2 it was like, oh, absolutely, we'll keep that.
3 Right? So that's the beauty of the public
4 hearing process and the value we receive from
5 that.

6 Erie Canal Harbor Station. We did present
7 that to the committee as well, and they were
8 really focused on wind protection. Most of them
9 did like the design. And we also indicated the
10 accessibility advisory committee has a
11 subcommittee that reviews that specifically for
12 accessibility issues, so that's going on as well.
13 And then we talked about the Metro rail expansion
14 with the group as well. And then there's some
15 questions and comments that were asked about
16 that, and you can see that.

17 And then following on, we also had an
18 accessibility advisory committee on September
19 30th. We talked again there about the service
20 improvements. And at that point in time, the
21 primary issue generally with the accessibility
22 advisory committee, as well as the disabled
23 community in general, is how does that impact

1 paratransit. And as you're very well aware,
2 we're required to provide paratransit service
3 within three quarters of a mile of a fixed route
4 at any time that fixed route is operating,
5 essentially equivalent service. So we generally
6 have taken an approach to grandfather that
7 service. And so what we've agreed to do and
8 we'll try to move forward with them is hold
9 everyone harmless until one year past the last
10 service changes are made. So I indicated we'll
11 be making our last service changes in June of
12 '22. We will not be making any reductions in the
13 paratransit service until June of '23, which give
14 those folks a significant amount of time to make
15 other arrangements. Although, the new service
16 enhancements that we've made, we've added service
17 in certain areas, we will provide that to them
18 immediately. So they don't have to wait to get
19 it if there's a fixed route there, but we're
20 holding in abeyance the changes to them for one
21 year after those changes are made.

22 And we also talked about our website
23 accessibility has been an issue, so we are -- we

1 had Michael Martinek from our communications
2 department there. We talked about how we're
3 going to be working with them on the screen
4 reader, screen reader software implementation
5 with our new website, so we'll actually be
6 working directly with the committee on that.
7 We've had some issues with our phone system. Kim
8 was so gracious. She came to the meeting and
9 addressed the committee on that, as did Steve
10 Duquette, our chief information officer, and we
11 talked to them about some of the redundancy that
12 we'll be building out and creating a timeline for
13 that.

14 We talked about bus stop balancing. And
15 last, but not least, we talked about developing a
16 work plan for the accessibility advisory
17 committee. It's something we do with the
18 citizens advisory committee and we historically
19 have not done that. So we're actually -- this
20 month we're doing a work plan development. So
21 we'll be developing a work plan to identify
22 through the committee their highest priority
23 items and then create a reporting chain on what

1 we're doing relative to those items and create a
2 formal process on how we, how we address the
3 items that they brought up through that process.

4 And then they just had a couple comments,
5 again, that you could look at at your leisure
6 relative to their comments.

7 And that is the completion of my report if
8 there are any questions.

9 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Adam?

10 COMMISSIONER PERRY: I heard someone say recently
11 that the paratransit system needed to be
12 completely redesigned and that there was some --
13 yeah, that's what I heard. Did we -- did you
14 hear anything about some massive failure or
15 necessity to redesign the paratransit system at
16 the public meeting?

17 MR. GEORGE: No. And redesign is an interesting term
18 because --

19 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Yes, it is.

20 MR. GEORGE: -- again, we don't design paratransit.
21 Paratransit is a service that is supportive of
22 the fixed route.

23 COMMISSIONER PERRY: You know, I'm really not a

1 specialist in this, but that same thought
2 occurred to me when I heard it. It just, it just
3 sounds like the issues, the issues that we need
4 to fine-tune or continue to connect with the
5 community about you've carefully, you've
6 carefully gathered those in these kinds of
7 meetings and that we're, we're operating, we're
8 operating in the way that we're supposed to
9 operate and there's not some big failure of
10 paratransit or something. I just don't
11 understand why we hear those things.

12 MR. GEORGE: And I think my response to that would
13 be, you know, we try to keep an open dialogue
14 with anybody that has comments, and we'd be very
15 interested to hear what their concept of redesign
16 is so that we can try to be responsive to those
17 issues as they come up.

18 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Thank you.

19 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Thank you kindly.

20 MR. GEORGE: Thank you.

21 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And now we're going to move on
22 to the aviation report.

23 MR. VANECEK: Welcome, Sister. Welcome, board of

1 commissioners and all others present. First on
2 our list is the AIP status updates. Just quickly
3 going through this, I think the one that's going
4 to be very interesting for most of the folks here
5 is we talk about the terminal enhancement
6 project, and specifically the progress on the
7 baggage belts three and four, which are -- I have
8 walked down there this morning to see the
9 progress that they've been making and they are
10 optimistic -- I think would be the best way to
11 put it, but pretty -- almost very optimistic that
12 they will be able to have those in operation
13 before Thanksgiving.

14 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Wow.

15 MR. VANECEK: That's what they've told me. Now,
16 they're -- you know, that's barring some sort of
17 a setback, they're pretty confident that they're
18 going to be able to have them in there. They're
19 targeting the Friday before the Thursday of
20 Thanksgiving, which would be great news, given
21 that we've had a lot of struggles, as we all
22 know, with the two carousels and with the
23 loads -- passenger loads starting to pick up and

1 causing, you know, more issues. So knock on
2 wood, that's going to go into place and we'll
3 have all four. That's the, that's the intent.
4 There's still probably going to be some punch
5 list items, but they're, but they're very
6 confident. I went and looked not only on the
7 belt side, but I actually went on the back, on
8 the delivery side, and they're in a great
9 position, and they were very confident that they
10 would be able to get it open before Thanksgiving.
11 Now, again, that's barring no significant
12 setback, but I was really, really happy to hear
13 about that.

14 Our subsurface wetlands is on -- you know,
15 it's getting there. It's almost done. We
16 just -- for the most part, the installation of
17 the lagoon, south pump stations are complete,
18 but -- and the valve, the valve installations
19 (inaudible) are in progress. The delivery of
20 some of the materials necessary to complete that
21 have been delayed. They can't get the delivery
22 on that, so it's going to be pushed back a little
23 bit, but they do anticipate that they will be

1 still, as long as they get the materials, done by
2 the end of year. That's what we're hearing.

3 With respect to Runway 23 -- I'm not going
4 to talk about Buell Avenue. There's really not
5 much to update on that. But I did want to spend
6 a little time on Runway 2, the rehabilitation
7 that's necessary there. We've done a pavement,
8 pavement maintenance study on that, on that
9 system -- on that runway. It's in -- it's a
10 very -- there are parts of that runway that are
11 very, very, very old with respect to pavement and
12 concrete. And so DiDonato is our design engineer
13 for this and they're looking at the findings to
14 try to determine what is going to be the true
15 scope of this. Initially we thought we could
16 probably get away with just a typical mill and
17 overlay which we've done over the years, but what
18 we have found is that there's a lot of
19 deteriorating concrete on some of the ends.
20 We've got, we've got actually a slope in our
21 runway that we would like to maybe be able to
22 address, but the cost could be prohibitive.
23 We'll have to see if the FAA will be able to fund

1 enough of that to get that done. This would be
2 the long-term fix that we really need, but, you
3 know, it will all depend on how much they can
4 afford and we can afford with respect to how we
5 design the full rehabilitation of that runway.

6 John, I don't know if you want to jump in on
7 that.

8 MR. SCHAEFER: Just to enhance that a little bit.
9 The 5 end -- and for the layman, what does that
10 mean? That's the one towards Genesee Street.
11 That has shown -- hasn't been rehabilitated
12 since several decades. It's been resurfaced in
13 the past fifteen-years-ish, but it hasn't been
14 rebuilt. And that means going subsurface six to
15 eight feet even further. So there they're
16 talking about -- you've heard this term
17 rubblizing. There's these concrete blocks that
18 have shown deterioration over the years that will
19 have to be beaten up and either taken out or
20 rubblized and compacted. So that's a little
21 enhancement to where that is. Where the 23 end
22 is still suitable enough for a mill and overlay
23 type of work. So just a little enhancement.

1 And interesting enough, the situation Bill
2 summarized with the 5 end. There is a little bit
3 of a slope that's always been there, but recent
4 FAA requirements want us to level it up. And we
5 would be glad to do it, it's just give us the
6 money to do so. And that's been kind of the
7 angst of sure, we recommend it, FAA speaking, if
8 you will, but not sure how they're going to fund
9 it. So we want to do what, quote, unquote, the
10 right thing per their own guidelines. It just
11 needs to be funded accordingly. So just a little
12 enhancement --

13 MR. VANECEK: Correct. And that slope that's down
14 there, if you're down on the 5 end, when you're
15 looking towards the thruway end, you literally
16 can't see the end of the runway because it's that
17 significant of a slope out there. So they -- and
18 they really want us to address that. Knock on
19 wood, they'll come up with the funding to be able
20 to do.

21 They're also going to change some of the
22 taxiways that are creating what they call hot
23 spots at the airport where planes can have -- are

1 more at risk to not be able to follow the correct
2 procedures and have an incident with another
3 aircraft, so they're also asking us to design it
4 such that we can eliminate those for safety
5 purposes as well.

6 MR. SCHAEFER: So, incidentally, two phases. First
7 phase, last indication, fully funded would be the
8 23 end. The 5 end that I told you there was a
9 little more challenges in accommodating, there
10 will be a phase two which will be two
11 construction seasons later. We're still working
12 on how that gets funded following a commitment of
13 funding from the FAA. So just a little feel on
14 the scale of the schedule.

15 MR. VANECEK: And then the only other project out
16 there that's of significance is Taxiway D
17 rehabilitation up at Niagara Falls. And part of
18 that is also going to correct a hot spot issue
19 that we have there. Again, when you're going to
20 the main runway, there's some funny turns up
21 there, and pilots in recent months have actually
22 had what they call incursion, where they're going
23 where they shouldn't be going off of that area,

1 so we're going to correct that hot spot and make
2 it much safer, a safer operation up there.

3 Looking at the -- just looking at our
4 enplanement numbers. Our enplanement numbers are
5 looking very, very good. We're really seeing a
6 nice rebound here. As you can see, you know, the
7 blue, the blue numbers as far as 2021 versus
8 2020. So January and February, we weren't quite
9 in the throws, deep throws of the pandemic, but
10 then it suddenly -- you know, it all kind of
11 dropped off early on in -- that was 2020. But,
12 in January, February, March. We are now seeing
13 days that are really approaching normalcy, if you
14 want to call it that, kind of back to 2019 days.
15 We're still missing that group -- that percentage
16 of Canadians, and knock on wood, you know, when
17 it opens up on the 8th, we can start seeing
18 some -- probably a trickle down to begin with but
19 then maybe get more and more activity coming from
20 Canada.

21 But, we are seeing days where we're having
22 greater than six thousand enplanements going out
23 during a day. The patterns are pretty

1 consistent. Some of the lower days, Tuesday,
2 Wednesdays, aren't very good, but then they start
3 ramping up. Thursdays, Fridays get good.
4 Saturdays drop off a little bit and Sundays go
5 back up a little bit. So we're, we're really
6 seeing some nice recovery there. We're hoping
7 that that's going to continue. So our
8 year-to-date enplanements right now are at --
9 compared to 2020, we're almost at nine hundred
10 and eighty thousand enplanements versus five
11 hundred and eighty-seven last year, so you can
12 tell that there's a significant uptick there.

13 I also wanted to point out that Frontier
14 Airlines is going to start flying on April 29th
15 twice weekly to Myrtle Beach. And also on
16 June -- let's see -- again, that's April 29th.
17 And then June 9th of next year, Sun Country,
18 which is a Minneapolis based airline, is going to
19 start flying twice weekly to Minneapolis through
20 September. And depending on how successful that
21 is, they would keep it. And they're going to
22 kind of target the summer months. But, they do
23 have connections through Minneapolis to other

1 locations. So depending on how well they do will
2 dictate whether or not they stay longer or not.
3 But, again, we're sixty-seven percent increase
4 right now year over year in enplanements which is
5 really nice to see.

6 Niagara Falls. Competing with Frontier or
7 vice versa, Spirit is going to start flying four
8 flights to Myrtle Beach on April 20th, 2022, and
9 that will be their return of flights to the
10 airport. Spirit is still not flying currently
11 out of the airport so this would be their first
12 foray back to Niagara Falls. But, they have
13 committed to us that they will fly out of Niagara
14 Falls, so that would be nice to see, get a little
15 bit more activity up there.

16 With respect to our -- let's see. And then
17 the next one is the parking report here. I'll
18 summarize the totals here. They're pretty
19 sizeable numbers. We are currently at four
20 million two eighty-eight six o three. And that's
21 I believe through September that we have our
22 parking revenues at. So in the short-term lot,
23 the numbers are three hundred and nineteen

1 percent higher than the previous year; and in the
2 long-term lot, it's four hundred and ninety
3 percent higher than the previous year with
4 respect to revenue. So the tap is backflowing
5 and that's good to see.

6 We're actually going to start evaluating
7 when we have to start creating more spaces in our
8 long-term lots and where we're going to put our
9 employees so that we can make sure we can
10 continue to generate that revenue. We don't see
11 a -- unless something dramatic changes right now,
12 the economy lot most likely will not open up
13 anytime soon, unless something changes
14 dramatically. When we see forecasts on the
15 spring breaks, we may have to tap into that
16 overflow, but right now we believe we'll be able
17 to -- enough of our overflow in our own long-term
18 lot be able to accommodate what we're seeing.

19 Next slide. This is -- I put this graph
20 together, (inaudible) put it together. But, it
21 shows kind of our major markets that we fly to
22 here. And the blue is 2019, the red is 2020 and
23 then the green is, you know, obviously this year.

1 So you're seeing that we are eclipsing last year
2 in some pretty sizable gaps in these major
3 markets, and that's important. You know, you
4 want to make sure that the business traveler can
5 get to where they need to get, and so we're happy
6 to see that. I did want to also point out that
7 just more -- even more recent information here,
8 looking at increases from September to October in
9 flights, we had -- I think we had one, two,
10 three, four, five, six, seven -- eight, eight --
11 seven markets that added just from September --
12 the number of flights from September to October
13 of more than -- of thirty percent or more flights
14 going out, and some of them actually doubled
15 their number of flights out. So they're seeing
16 the opportunities and so there's no reason to
17 think that that trend won't continue because the
18 airlines are pretty much on top of things. So,
19 you know, that's I think very, very optimistic
20 for the airport.

21 And then just lastly I wanted to address one
22 other small thing that -- well, not yet, though.
23 Hang on for that. One other thing that kind of

1 popped into my mind. You probably have heard
2 that the TSA is looking at federally mandating
3 vaccines for their workforces at airports for
4 TSA. And I just wanted to let everybody know
5 that I talked to the federal security director
6 for Buffalo and I asked him, well, what does that
7 mean? What's the impact? Are we going to lose,
8 you know, half of our workforce here because they
9 won't get vaccinated? Well, the good news is
10 that -- what he said is eighty-five percent of
11 the workforce -- the TSA workforce at Buffalo are
12 planning to get their vaccines. They're already
13 at eighty percent. So that's really good for us.
14 It's very -- you know, very comforting. I would
15 have hated to go into, you know, the Thanksgiving
16 holidays with, you know, half of the staff at
17 this point, because it's going to be some very
18 busy times. So I was very happy to be able to
19 hear those words from him.

20 And then, lastly, I have a little thing that
21 we're going to start running in the terminal,
22 which I think is pretty cool to welcome back some
23 of our Canadian friends and others. Let's take a

1 quick look. It's very short, but I think it's
2 pretty cool.

3

4 (Whereupon, video footage was played.)

5

6 MR. VANECEK: So we thought that would be pretty
7 cool. That will be on our screens in the
8 terminal and just a welcome back so --

9 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Very good.

10 MR. VANECEK: You know, you can stand up again and
11 sing Oh, Canada (inaudible). So that's what I
12 have and I'm happy to answer anything else that
13 may be on people's minds.

14 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: Good information. It sounds
15 hopeful. Any questions?

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY: So what's the cost of the
17 terminal enhancement project? Is that like on
18 budget, over budget? What's the cost profile for
19 that project overall?

20 MR. VANECEK: I think I have the numbers in here,
21 John. I'll take a quick look to see where we're
22 at.

23 MR. SCHAFER: While you're getting the firm

1 numbers -- I'm sure they've got a report on it.

2 MR. VANECEK: Yeah. So the -- let's see what it
3 says. Terminal modification right now is -- what
4 we're showing, the current program budget is
5 about sixty-five million and change, encumbered
6 to date is actually pretty much that and then the
7 estimate to complete is about nine hundred
8 thousand.

9 MR. SCHAEFER: Right. And that's what I wanted
10 to just color, if you will. There's going to be
11 some -- especially with the big milestone that
12 we're excited about, getting these other two
13 carousels, you know, I will say we're making --
14 pulling all the stops out, making sure we have
15 the resources there, trying to expedite any and
16 all materials there, so there may be some
17 subtleties and as we get close to punch list and
18 finish-up items, there may be some subtle change
19 orders, but we don't expect anything, anything
20 significant, but there will be some as we start
21 to wrap up the project in the next six months.

22 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Listen, I find that to be
23 uncanny. The project started in 2015.

1 Throughout everything we've been through,
2 including the pandemic, when construction costs
3 we hear every day on the news are going through
4 the roof at all these places who have done these
5 projects, and we're coming at something that's
6 very close.

7 MR. SCHAEFER: Yeah.

8 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Right? I mean, am I missing
9 something or --

10 MR. SCHAEFER: Well, there's a piece that maybe isn't
11 so obvious to some others is we write our
12 contracts maybe a different way than others.
13 When you sign up for a contract for that price,
14 you sign up for the contract for that price. And
15 it's in fairness to ourselves, we're making a
16 commitment to funding, it's fairness to other
17 bidders saying this is what you signed up for.
18 So things like asphalt prices, for example, like
19 the DOT likes to write their contracts
20 differently, fluctuating, if any, on the oil
21 prices. We do not. With that you get risk money
22 in there, but we get a steady state of what that
23 commitment is.

1 So you'll hear -- and I think there was a
2 recent example like given on a small job about
3 a -- in fact, we're out to rebid it. It's
4 fencing -- perimeter fence out at the west end.
5 Small job. As we're ready for board award and
6 we're ready to award it, the contractor says, oh,
7 I can't do it, the prices went through the roof,
8 you know. We turned -- we opted not to turn it
9 into a fight because they aren't committed to it.
10 Talked to the second lowest, had the same
11 problem. Okay. We'll rebid it. Because once
12 they sign up, you're committed to doing it. So
13 that is a piece that will do that, sort of
14 holding the pricing that's there.

15 And we are when we do change orders finding
16 what the best value is. I will give a lot of
17 credit to our facility maintenance department.
18 So if something new came up and our facility
19 maintenance arm can do some of the work, nothing
20 dramatic, but if there's things that are in their
21 wheelhouse and it's a better, it's a better
22 value, we'll do it with our staff to help keep
23 the project moving. And they've done it a number

1 of times, come to the plate and handled it. So
2 those, those are two big items.

3 And I'd be remiss if I didn't give Pike a
4 lot of credit. During, during the onset of this,
5 there's a lot of contractors just used the term
6 COVID, expecting that the contract just blows up
7 and you can do what you want. We took a
8 different position, a more accurate position,
9 stuck to what the contract required. And if
10 there were reasonable reasons that came up
11 through the supply chain, for example, we'd
12 entertain those. Pike, on the other hand, did a
13 fantastic job working with Empire State
14 Development on finding out are we critical. I
15 mean, I could have told them, but they went
16 directly to Empire State Development, got that,
17 and some of the subcontractors would try to use
18 that same term and just blow up their subcontract
19 agreement. It's COVID, I can't be out there
20 indefinitely. They didn't stand for it. They
21 worked with ESD as well as the Association of
22 General Contractors to find ways to work out
23 they're in a safe environment and to move on. So

1 it is a great observation. It's not -- it's
2 pretty common when I tell them we're moving on
3 schedule and within budget, they look at me funny
4 and think I'm joking. But that is a good
5 observation that's not very common.

6 We're still holding our breaths on others.
7 We did have another favorable -- I'm sorry for
8 jumping the gun, but on that -- I'm excited about
9 it. I watch it all the time. In the surface
10 part, you'll see DL and W, I was kind of holding
11 my breath because there is a volatile market out
12 there. Those bids came in really well. And I
13 know we're in aviation, but the project -- our
14 discussion was about contracts. Another one that
15 came in well, very tight bids, very tight to our
16 estimate was (inaudible) and it worked out real
17 well. So it's a group effort, along with getting
18 with the right contractors that are on the same
19 page so --

20 MS. MINKEL: And so I just want to add -- because
21 John is being pretty modest, and I appreciate
22 that he's giving other people credit. But, we
23 have a capital budget of hundreds of millions of

1 dollars, an incredible amount of work. And
2 that's done by John and a very small engineering
3 team who are managing hundreds of millions of
4 dollars. And earlier Chris Ruminski, you know,
5 does that capital report, any projects over five
6 hundred thousand in terms of the deviation, and
7 you can see, you know, we're on the mark. Not
8 for every project, but overall, and that's
9 incredible. And really that's a testament to
10 John, to his team. You know, every dollar of the
11 Authority they feel is their own, so they're very
12 careful and reasonable. You know, we don't want
13 to put contractors out of business. We want them
14 to succeed. So really that's a testament to John
15 and his team, so thank you, John.

16 MR. SCHAEFER: Thanks, Kim. And since you brought it
17 up, the staff, we made it a point that we have --
18 I'm going to use this expression and people kind
19 of look at me funny when I use this. We choose
20 to use our smart-owner hat, and our dumb-owner
21 hat as we need to. Because my staff is able to
22 do that. We've got folks that have been --
23 twenty years' experience, and they'll use the

1 smart-owner hat to challenge our consultants, to
2 challenge the contractors on what kind of prices
3 are given, what kind of work is being offered.
4 And the dumb-owner hat is you signed up for it,
5 just provide us what we asked for.

6 So that's -- and we're able to use those
7 types of things. And I share that with the folks
8 there too. This isn't anything earth shattering.
9 I'll share that with the consultants that we --
10 this is what you signed up for. You know, if you
11 don't want to sign up for it then you don't have
12 to bid our work. But, they understand and they
13 recognize that they're going to be challenged,
14 and we have a pretty intelligent workforce to
15 keep them on their toes. So thanks, Kim.

16 MR. VANECEK: Kim, just one last thing. The
17 dedication plaque for the opening of the
18 terminals, absent the baggage carousels, that now
19 is in place. It's on the column as you would
20 walk into our administrative offices. It looks
21 great. Helen did a great job in getting it all
22 put together and up. So that is there showing
23 the dedication of all the board members and those

1 involved.

2 MS. MINKEL: So you can see your name next time you
3 go to the airport.

4 COMMISSIONER PERRY: Can we have my name removed,
5 please?

6 MS. MINKEL: It's too late.

7 COMMISSIONER PERRY: It's just amazing. Months early
8 and no major issues. Just amazing. And I
9 understand the contracting issue isn't a public
10 authorities issue, but that doesn't change this
11 great achievement for -- doesn't change the great
12 achievement that the staff has done over the
13 course of this project, design and
14 implementation. It's amazing.

15 MR. VANECEK: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER PERRY: And that's all we have for
17 aviation.

18 CHAIR SISTER ROCHE: And that's all we have for this
19 morning.

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