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NASSAU COUNTY  
TRANSIT Committee

JULY 09, 2014  
2:00 P.M.

BEFORE: SHELDON SHRENKEL, CHAIRMAN

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**A P P E A R A N C E S :**

- CHAIRMAN SHELDON SHRENKEL
- VICE CHAIRMAN LAWRENCE BLESSINGER
- BOARD MEMBER KATHY ANN COMERFORD
- BOARD MEMBER JEAN DUROSEAU
- BOARD MEMBER LIVIO TONY ROSARIO
- SAMUEL LITTMAN - EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COUNTY
- ATTORNEY AND COUNSEL FOR TRANSIT Committee
  
- MICHAEL SETZER - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, VEOLIA
- TRANSPORTATION
  
- MARTY LILLY
- JOHN MICHNO
- NANCY DWYER
- VICTORIA DAZA
- KATHLEEN HANNON
- ANITA HALASZ
- REIN NEGRONI
- BRETT LANDAU
- YUKI ENDO
- EILEEN LILLY
- MATT DELOVICH

1 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Good afternoon, everyone.

2 Welcome to Nassau County Bus Transit  
3 Committee. I am Sheldon Shrenkel, I am the  
4 Chairman of the Committee.

5 By virtue of a rollcall, I will  
6 introduce some of our members. To my far right,  
7 Jean Duroseau. To my immediate right, Mr. Tony  
8 Rosario. To my left, Mr. Larry Blessinger, to my  
9 far left is Ms. Kathy Comerford; and to my very  
10 far right, I would like to thank our General  
11 Counsel of the Committee, Mr. Samuel Littman.  
12 And thank you Donna, for taking our notes.

13 This afternoon, our agenda -- well,  
14 before we get to that, I would like an  
15 acknowledgment of receipt of the transcript from  
16 the meeting held on May 14, 2014, that you  
17 received it and read it; please raise your hand  
18 if you have.

19 (At this time, all Committee Members  
20 unanimously raised their hands)

21 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Please note the  
22 record accordingly, that we have acknowledged  
23 consent of everyone receiving the transcript.

24 To get on with our agenda, we will first  
25 hear a presentation by the NICE CEO, Mr. Michael

1 Setzer, thank you.

2 MR. SETZER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,  
3 members of the Committee. I have got a few  
4 slides here that I would like to use to set the  
5 stage for the public discussion as well as your  
6 deliberation.

7 If you recall, we have had several  
8 meetings on the 2014 budget, this was a slide we  
9 used earlier, if you wanted to reduce the budget  
10 deliberations to a single though as this, that we  
11 have to have some additional funding this year in  
12 order to maintain service levels, because our  
13 operating costs are rising and the demand for  
14 Able-Ride service is rising.

15 Do you remember we -- I won't go over it  
16 in detail, but remember we discussed the three  
17 percent wage increase that is in our labor  
18 contract, that took effect April 1st, we  
19 discussed the rise in the cost of the natural  
20 gas, which we use both as a utility, energy  
21 source here in our facility, and also as a motor  
22 vehicle fuel.

23 Thirdly, we discussed the increase and  
24 the cost of healthcare provided to NICE  
25 employees.

1           And fourthly, all though it is not a  
2 price increase, it does affect our costs, the  
3 demand for Able-Ride trips is rising and I think  
4 that you are probably aware of that.

5           Per Federal Law, we have no discretion  
6 but to serve every eligible trip request from  
7 every eligible person on Able-Ride. But it all  
8 comes out of the same funding source, so when the  
9 demand for Able-Ride goes up, it has an impact on  
10 the total budget.

11           We also talked about or had those kinds  
12 of increases destroyed the economies that we have  
13 managed to achieve, and we use this slide, you  
14 saw this at our last meeting.

15           The first column represents the cost per  
16 hour for fixed route service, during the last  
17 year of Long Island Bus' operation, the year of  
18 2011, it is \$151.37.

19           NICE Bus' first year, the cost per hour  
20 on the same basis -- by the way, that comes from  
21 numbers that the MTA reported to the Federal  
22 Government. NICE's costs, the first year, it  
23 went down to \$123.11, it actually went down a few  
24 pennies more per hour the next year, because we  
25 added some service, but our overhead cost did not

1 go up. And then this year has gone up by about  
2 three percent to \$126.64.

3 Today service is still being provided on  
4 a unit basis, on an hour of service basis, for  
5 about seventy-five to eighty percent of the cost  
6 that it would have been -- that you would have  
7 incurred if Long Island bus was still operating,  
8 because of our lower cost structure. We are  
9 still enjoying some significant economies, but  
10 nonetheless, there is a need for some additional  
11 revenue.

12 Quick history, especially for the  
13 audience, in March the Committee met, and you  
14 gave conditional approval to 122 million dollar  
15 budget for the period of time of April 1st of  
16 this year, to the end of March of 2015. It was  
17 conditional, if you remember, because the biggest  
18 single source of revenue is the State transit  
19 operating assistance program. At the March  
20 meeting, they had not finished the budget and so  
21 we did not know what that final amount would be.  
22 We had hopes that it would be sufficient that  
23 there would be no change in service level and no  
24 change in fares; well, that did not happen. So  
25 on May 14th you convened again and you amended

1 that budget.

2 One important change that is really  
3 completely separate from the rest of the  
4 discussion, is that the County asked that the  
5 transit budget move to a calender-year basis, so  
6 that it was consistent with all the other County  
7 budgets. So the result of that was that this  
8 years is only nine months long for budget  
9 purposes, it is April 1st through the end of  
10 December of this year. So now the total budget  
11 amount changed to \$91,782,000 for the nine-month  
12 period that ended December 31st, and that left us  
13 with a 2.67 million dollar funding gap.

14 At that time we asked you to consider an  
15 adjustment to the cash fare, which is a process  
16 that we will continue today, as part of a  
17 three-part plan to balance the budget to close  
18 that gap. We also ask that you begin to receive  
19 public input prior to making a decision on the  
20 fares, and that process is finishing up today and  
21 we will finish up in a few moments, as you take  
22 testimony from individuals.

23 You also have in front of you, a list of  
24 eighteen comments that we received by phone or  
25 e-mail here at the office, between that date and

1 this morning, it's possible that there would be  
2 another one are or two, but that is all that we  
3 have received so far.

4 The three-step plan to close the budget  
5 gap included these things: The first step was  
6 for the County to provide an additional 1.87  
7 million dollars and the County government has  
8 agreed to do that. The third step was for  
9 Veolia, the private partner in NICE Bus, to agree  
10 to provide another \$400,000 and they have agreed  
11 to do that.

12 So the remaining piece, the second  
13 piece, in order to bring that deficit down to  
14 zero, was to raise the cash fare, to raise  
15 \$400,000 by raising the cash fare of \$2.25 up to  
16 \$2.50.

17 Now you probably remember that in March  
18 of last year, when MetroCard rates were raised by  
19 the MTA to \$2.50, you elected to follow suit on  
20 MetroCard fares. The Nassau County MetroCard  
21 fare went up to \$2.50, just as the MTA did, but  
22 to keep cash fares at \$2.25. So in effect, you  
23 provided, since March of last year, a \$0.25  
24 discount to cash fare payers; what we are  
25 proposing today is that discount cannot be



1 maintained any longer.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Veolia was  
3 not required by contract to put in \$400,000; is  
4 that correct?

5 MR. SETZER: That is correct. So, the  
6 question before you today is whether or not to  
7 end that discount on cash fares.

8 The entire -- this would be the new fare  
9 table and I think it's worth taking a minute on  
10 this; the proposal, if you approve it, will leave  
11 the MetroCard rate unchanged from today's fares,  
12 it would leave the Go Mobile, the smart phone  
13 payment fare at \$2.50, just as it is today, that  
14 would remain unchanged, the cash fare would go  
15 from \$2.25 to \$2.50.

16 There are a couple of other fares that  
17 we really do not need to spend too much time on,  
18 but they are related to the cash fare. There is  
19 a student fare for elementary and secondary  
20 school students, used very, very infrequently, it  
21 is \$2.10 just for the sake of consistency, we  
22 think that should go up to \$2.25. And then per  
23 Federal law, we provide half-fare programs for  
24 people who are eligible by virtue of disability  
25 or by virtue of age being sixty-five or more.

1 And presentation of documentation, their fare  
2 today is \$1.10, we are proposing for  
3 consistencies sake that both of those fares go to  
4 \$1.25, still within the Federal requirement.  
5 Able Ride fares are not proposed to change, they  
6 remain at \$3.75 as they are today.

7 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Mr. Setzer,  
8 have we launched the Go Mobile now; is it  
9 working?

10 MR. SETZER: Yes.

11 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: We have people  
12 using it?

13 MR. SETZER: We do. Jack, do you want  
14 to respond?

15 MR. KHZOUZ: Briefly, we launched Go  
16 Mobile the week of June 7th, to date we have  
17 4,000 downloads, and that is picking up speed.  
18 So it is still in its infancy, but it is gaining  
19 popularity as school gets back in session in  
20 September. With NCC and colleges, we will expect  
21 to grow dynamically for the next few weeks.

22 MS. COMERFORD: Well, I think 4,000 out  
23 of the box is --

24 MR. SETZER: Yes, we are very pleased  
25 with it.

1 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: -- very  
2 substantial.

3 MR. SETZER: We expect that to continue  
4 for a while.

5 So one last bit of information that  
6 might be interesting to you, we looked at what  
7 other MetroCard acceptors in this region are  
8 charging, the MTA, of course, is charging \$2.50,  
9 there is no separate cash fare. Westchester  
10 County, which is probably the most analogous to  
11 Nassau county, went up when MetroCard went to  
12 \$2.50 -- pardon, MTA went to \$2.50, they followed  
13 suit, raising them both, their MetroCard and  
14 their cash fare to \$2.50 last March.

15 New Jersey Transit, they have an  
16 entirely different fare system, they have  
17 distance based fares, meaning, the number of  
18 zones you go through determines your fare. A  
19 very, very short ride inside the New Jersey, not  
20 crossing the river into New York, start at \$1.50  
21 for a Zone 1, which is a very short ride. It  
22 goes to \$2.35 for Zone 2, still a very, very  
23 short ride. Then beginning with Zone 3, all the  
24 way up to Zone 38, it is \$2.90 and above. So  
25 most NJ transit riders are already paying

1 considerably more than NICE Bus riders are. We  
2 are under no obligation to match anybody else's  
3 fare policy, but it might be worthwhile just to  
4 take note of what similarly situated agencies are  
5 doing.

6 That is the end of my presentation, and  
7 I think the public input is next, but I would be  
8 happy to answer any questions, if you have any.

9 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I just want to  
10 make one acknowledgment, I always seem to have  
11 the acknowledgement, but I do not know if anybody  
12 -- you know that Nice Bus has donated time for  
13 the game for the physically challenged and other  
14 events, it was just -- I just read that they have  
15 now donated a vehicle for the all the senior  
16 veterans activities throughout the Nassau County  
17 and they will be transporting them for free; I  
18 just want to say thank you again for partnering  
19 and going above and beyond, because that is not  
20 necessary, and I know the veterans and the  
21 seniors, it would be a very big help to getting  
22 them to all these different activities that the  
23 County is having.

24 MR. SETZER: Thank you.

25 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Thank you.

1 MR. LITTMAN: Mr. Chairman, can I ask a  
2 question?

3 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Certainly.

4 MR. LITTMAN: Actually two items. One,  
5 I ask you to comment on the Title 6 Analysis, the  
6 fare equity analysis that was done. And  
7 secondly, if this Committee decides not to vote  
8 for this \$0.25 cash fare increase, are there  
9 alternatives being prepared by the Nice Bus.

10 MR. SETZER: Two very good questions.  
11 First, you received, I think a couple of weeks  
12 ago, the Title 6 fare equity analysis. It is  
13 several pages long, but the bottom line is that,  
14 while the group effected -- the group that we  
15 used as the cash fare payment method include many  
16 of the groups identified in Title 6.

17 Title 6 is the part of the civil rights  
18 act that makes sure that federal assisted  
19 programs are provided in a non-discriminatory  
20 way. It requires that we a do an analysis and  
21 that you consider that prior to fare changes or  
22 prior to major service changes. So what it says  
23 is, that some of the target groups will in fact  
24 be impacted by the cash fare adjustment, but that  
25 they are also the groups who would be most

1 impacted by the alternative, which is  
2 Mr. Littman's second question.

3 The alternative would be to reduce  
4 service beginning in probably the fourth quarter  
5 of this year, to balance the budget. At this  
6 stage, we have been trying to make services as  
7 efficient as possible, by reallocating it to  
8 places where it is used sparingly, to places  
9 where there is more demand. We have been doing  
10 that for about three years now, so there are no  
11 painless service adjustments left, the very group  
12 that Title 6, pays attention to also may be the  
13 group most likely effected by service reductions  
14 we used to balance the budget; does that respond  
15 to your question.

16 MR. LITTMAN: Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Are there any other  
18 questions for Mr. Setzer from any Committee  
19 members?

20 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I am sorry, I  
21 have one. When would the route changes go into  
22 effect?

23 MR. SETZER: If we had to redo service?

24 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Yes.

25 MR. SETZER: Well, it takes a while to

1 do that, so September 1st would be the very  
2 earliest and even that would be --

3 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: When colleges  
4 are going back.

5 MR. SETZER: The problem with this is  
6 because of timing, the later in the year it is  
7 done, the deeper it has to go to meet the cost.

8 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Okay. Thank  
9 you.

10 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: At this time we are  
11 going to give the public an opportunity to make  
12 comments, suggestions, criticisms, what may be to  
13 Mr. Setzer.

14 What I would like you to do is raise  
15 your hand, come up to the podium, identify  
16 yourself, tell us the town you live in. If you  
17 are representing a group, for example, Nassau  
18 Community College or some institution, please let  
19 us know that. Thank you.

20 With that, sir, you may be first.  
21 Please understand that anyone who speaks at the  
22 podium, we request a three minute time limit.

23 MR. LILLY: I don't have really any  
24 comments. I had a question about the Go Mobile  
25 service -- by the way, I'm Marty Lilly from Long

1 Beach, New York. So I'm not really familiar with  
2 it.

3 MS. COMERFORD: You just need somebody  
4 to explain the Go Mobile.

5 MR. SETZER: Okay. Jack, maybe you  
6 could meet with this gentleman?

7 MR. KHZOUZ: Right afterwards.

8 MR. SETZER: Okay. He will provide all  
9 the information you want.

10 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: In a nutshell,  
11 it is on your iPhone, on your smart phone, and  
12 you put it on, and it is a scanning capability  
13 instead of having to carry a MetroCard, or pay  
14 cash, or things like that.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Carry change.

16 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Yes.

17 MR. LILLY: Very good, thank you.

18 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: You are  
19 welcome. But they can give you all the details.

20 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Sir, you can go.

21 MR. MICHNO: Hello, my name is John  
22 Michno, I live in Westbury; I'm going to keep an  
23 eye on my watch here. The reliability issues, I  
24 am very concerned about. There has been a lot of  
25 breakdowns lately going on, especially the older



1 buses -- - the summer, you know, the heat and  
2 all. I just hope that, and I am going to urge  
3 NICE to try to do -- maybe do a better job at  
4 maintenance as you can to maintain these buses,  
5 especially in the summer, because there have been  
6 a lot of breakdowns and it impacts the  
7 reliability of the service.

8 The other thing that I want to talk  
9 about is what they did with the N87, it now goes  
10 to Freeport. And I understand that was done as a  
11 cost-saving measure, but I think that sending the  
12 N73 or 74 to Jones Beach would have made much  
13 more sense then having the route go all the way  
14 to Freeport, because now it is always late all  
15 the time, like a half an hour late or more. It  
16 gets stuck -- Sunrise Highway, particularly on  
17 weekdays, it is bumper to bumper traffic, so it's  
18 really, really bad, and that is a real situation.

19 There are other measures that I think  
20 NICE buses should take with the -- in regards to  
21 the N22, when they got rid of the N22L from  
22 Hicksville, they cut a lot of the service from  
23 Hicksville in the rush hours, and now the buses  
24 are very crowded. A lot of people in New Castle,  
25 it's a very poor area, New Castle, Westbury, that

1 use the bus, and they need more frequent service,  
2 they rely on that route a lot.

3 And the other thing is the N27, six  
4 o'clock -- between 6:00 and 7:00, there used to  
5 be a bus every half an hour, and they got rid of  
6 the bus at 6:25 and now there is a lot of  
7 crowding going on. And that is a real concern of  
8 mine too, because it's sometimes quicker for me  
9 to take the train because of what they did.

10 I cannot completely rely on the train, I  
11 need NICE bus, because the train stations aren't  
12 always close by, especially in the summer, I  
13 can't walk the same distance because it's too  
14 hot.

15 The last thing that I want to talk about  
16 is the strike of the Long Island Railroad, I want  
17 to know, this is more of a question, what NICE  
18 plans to do, because there are going to be  
19 additional riders that are going to be going onto  
20 the buses, and how they are going to be able to  
21 handle that; perhaps maybe enhance service on  
22 those routes that go to Queens, make some  
23 temporary changes.

24 I just want to lastly thank NICE, I do  
25 depend on the N35 at night, keep that running at

1 night, because Westbury has issues with safety,  
2 and I do depend on that route, it drops me off  
3 much closer to my house.

4 Thank you very much for your time, I  
5 really urge you to vote for this cash fare, it  
6 makes sense from a standpoint. As Mr. Setzer  
7 said, we don't need anymore service reductions,  
8 we need better service, not less of it. Thank  
9 you.

10 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: John, thank you. I  
11 know before, you have always offered the  
12 Committee some insightful ideas. Thank you,  
13 again.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Mr. Setzer,  
15 is there a contingency plan if the railroad goes  
16 on strike?

17 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: That is an  
18 excellent question.

19 MR. SETZER: That is a very good  
20 question. The answer is not much of a  
21 contingency plan. We expect, if the railroad  
22 goes on strike, that two things are going to  
23 happen to us, traffic is going to get much worse  
24 going east, west, obviously, and 300,000 people  
25 no longer using the train on the weekday. So

1 that is going to slow our operation down. We  
2 will have more people trying to board NICE buses,  
3 especially on the east, west routes, which will  
4 also slow it down. We expect it to have a very  
5 negative affect on service.

6 As many additional buses as we can  
7 muster, we will use to enhance regular service,  
8 we will put them on those heavy routes, but it  
9 will not be sufficient to keep them on time, I do  
10 not think, nor to provide everybody enough room.

11 So if there is a strike, I am very sure  
12 it would be very difficult for us. We have not  
13 responded to the railroad -- we discussed it with  
14 them, the railroad's requested to put in some  
15 supplemental service to shuttle people into  
16 Queens, we told them that we just do not have the  
17 resources to do that.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Do you plan  
19 on putting anymore vehicles on the road if this  
20 occurs?

21 MR. SETZER: At best, it would be a few  
22 more vehicles.

23 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Is that because  
24 we do not have enough, or maintenance, or  
25 drivers?

1 MR. SETZER: It is because we do not  
2 have enough. We are, as Mr. Michno has pointed  
3 out, we struggled, especially with the older part  
4 of the fleet, to get enough buses to make service  
5 on a normal -- especially a hot summer day. Heat  
6 does affect the reliability of the buses, so I do  
7 not want to creat the impression that we will be  
8 able too do much in the face of the strike.

9 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Okay. Thank you.

10 Yes, ma'am. Go ahead.

11 MS. DWYER: Good afternoon. My name is  
12 Nancy Dwyer, I live in Valley Stream. Anyone who  
13 has driven around on Long Island over the past  
14 several decades, can see that the traffic builds  
15 day to day, extremes now on the highways and the  
16 parkways. Damaged road services have surely  
17 increased, and now carbon footprint has worsened.  
18 To build additional roads would be incredibly  
19 costly, so do we just live with the situation as  
20 it is, or do we just sit and watch it get worse.

21 In business, when they want to make more  
22 money, they do not say, oh, let's jump the price,  
23 rather they say, let's attract more business,  
24 let's sell more product. The product you're  
25 selling is bus seats, the more seats you sell on

1 a bus, the more money you make on that bus. I  
2 suggest you reach out to attract people who are  
3 not riding the bus, but could.

4 One category, a population you should  
5 certainly talk to, would be senior citizens. As  
6 the traffic congestions have worsened person and  
7 volumes in age, driving is a lot less fun than it  
8 used to be. Yes, unless we are going to sit in  
9 the corner and quietly deteriorate, I say we --  
10 because I'm eighty years old, another means of  
11 transportation must be made available.

12 There is a lot of senior citizens in  
13 Nassau, and lots and lots more coming along in  
14 the decades just ahead. Add a good percentage of  
15 us to the pool of bus riders and you have got a  
16 nice business. Instead of riding on the bus, by  
17 us, by workers, by teenagers, by household, with  
18 civil adults and two new cars -- there's a lot  
19 more of those today than there used to be, and  
20 you have another increased category of household  
21 using the bus.

22 Offer coupons, we love coupons; you buy  
23 four rides and you get the fifth bus ride for  
24 free. Get elected officials to ride the bus, or  
25 film stars. By the way, you folks don't ride the

1 bus, right?

2 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I have.

3 MS. DWYER: Okay. You have promotional  
4 things, make it interesting, be active, sell your  
5 product, don't price it out of reach for working  
6 families. Money spent to incentivize bus riding  
7 will be money well spent, resulting in savings  
8 and road maintenance, traffic congestions, and  
9 problems caused by pollution. It will make  
10 Nassau a more attractive place to live, so I ask  
11 you to please consider it.

12 BOARD MEMBERS: Thank you.

13 MS. DAZA: Hi, my name is Victoria and I  
14 live in Freeport. The closest bus routes to me  
15 are the N36 and the N4 --

16 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I am sorry, can you  
17 please state your last name for the record.

18 MS. DAZA: Daza, D-A-Z-A. I live in  
19 Freeport. The closest buses to me are the N36  
20 and the N4. The N4 is more than a half a mile  
21 away. As a basis for discussion, I just want to  
22 promote the fact that I believe in things like  
23 healthy food, access to healthcare, and access to  
24 education and employment are basic necessities  
25 for all people, and I hope we're all on the same

1 page on that.

2 The closest grocery store to me is a  
3 mile away, and the closest store to organic food  
4 is more than two and a half miles away. These  
5 distances are not accessible roundtrip walking  
6 distances for someone whose pregnant, or  
7 accessible for seniors, especially not when  
8 hauling grocery bags.

9 A proposed fare hike with have an impact  
10 on my accessibility to these things, because it  
11 will impact how many trips to the grocery store  
12 someone like me can make. It will impact peoples  
13 mobility on doctors appointments, to work, to  
14 school, a lot of students depend on the bus  
15 system to go to school. Personally, I work in  
16 Suffolk County and I live in Nassau, and it is a  
17 forty-five minute commute to my job with a car  
18 and it is two and a half hours of a commute via  
19 bus, so that is five hours roundtrip per day. No  
20 worker should have to be subject to more than a  
21 five hour commute per day in order to make a  
22 living.

23 So I'm of the opinion that the fare hike  
24 will not be helpful to the people that --  
25 allegedly it's supposed to be helping people with



1 disabilities, people with senior citizens. It  
2 will only help to stratify the access that  
3 communities like Roosevelt, like Freeport, and  
4 Hempstead have to healthy food, employment, and  
5 things that are often far away from our  
6 communities; that is all I have.

7 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you.

8 At the end of the comments, please  
9 incorporate in the minutes that the Committee  
10 received, and you have listed these E-mail  
11 comments received between June 10th and July.

12 Okay. Ma'am in the back of the room.

13 MS. HANNON: Good afternoon. My name is  
14 Kathleen Hannon, H-A-N-N-O-N. I am sure your  
15 customer service is probably well familiar with  
16 my name, as well as other people who I've seen at  
17 meetings in the past.

18 This a meeting where they are going to  
19 discuss the fare hikes and --

20 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Excuse me, sorry to  
21 interrupt you. This is for everyone here, we  
22 have a second meeting after this meeting and  
23 there will be additional public comments at that  
24 second meeting. So within the context of this  
25 meeting, there will be no motion brought up,

1       okay.

2                   MS. HANNON: I know, okay. I'm fine  
3 with that, I'm just making my comments.

4                   CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I just want everyone  
5 to know that, because some people may think that  
6 is going to happen, but I just want to make  
7 everyone aware that there is a second meeting.

8                   MS. HANNON: Yeah, I know.

9                   CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I am sorry to  
10 interrupt you, we will not take that away from  
11 your time.

12                   MS. HANNON: I'm talking for the general  
13 public who have to take off time from work to get  
14 here. I work in Manhasset on Community Drive, I  
15 got out of work at 12:30, I just barely made it  
16 here at 2:00. That's two buses and a walk from  
17 Roosevelt Field, because there is no bus that  
18 gets here at this time.

19                   You have people who are trying get to  
20 work, the young lady -- your five hour commute  
21 roundtrip, I will stop complaining, mine is only  
22 three. I live in Elmont, if somebody drives me  
23 to work, I'm at work in twenty minutes. If I  
24 take the bus in the morning and then I take the  
25 bus home at night, it's anywhere between an hour

1 and a half to two hours, depending on whether or  
2 not I can make that connection. Most of that  
3 time I cannot make that connection, because my  
4 bus is stuck at a light and my other bus is  
5 sitting there at the other traffic light, and he  
6 can't get across the street -- I'm over on  
7 Hempstead Turnpike and Franklin Avenue, where  
8 they had the accident last week because somebody  
9 was trying to catch the bus... why, because she  
10 needs to get to work on time and the N6 is  
11 packed; and if you don't get on that N6 that  
12 stops in front of you, you may not get on for  
13 another two or three buses.

14           You have the expresses and you have the  
15 locals, which means that if you're not getting on  
16 at New Hyde Park Road or Meacham Avenue, then  
17 basically you are out of luck, because those  
18 buses are too crowded to pick up all the people  
19 in the middle. On taking the N25, I'm trying to  
20 make a connection to that, it's almost  
21 impossible. It's almost impossible at that time  
22 at night to make those connections because we're  
23 stuck at those traffic lights, because those  
24 drivers don't wait for us when they see us.

25           Someone else here made a comment, not

1 all of you people up there take the bus. I would  
2 really like to see -- if you could all raise your  
3 hands please; how many of you people take the bus  
4 to work on a regular basis?

5 (At this time Board Member Comerford  
6 raised her hand.)

7 MS. HANNON: Just you?

8 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I take the Long  
9 Island Railroad.

10 MS. HANNON: Well, I am not interested  
11 in -- why can't you take a bus?

12 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Well, I cannot  
13 take a bus, so I take the Long Island Railroad.

14 MS. HANNON: Why can't you take a bus?

15 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Because I take  
16 the Long Island Railroad.

17 MS. HANNON: Is there no bus near your  
18 area?

19 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I do not know.  
20 I am in Bethpage, and I take it to the mall, I  
21 take it to other places. I still commute an hour  
22 and a half each way on the Long Island Railroad,  
23 so I understand what you are saying about the  
24 commute, but it is not just on the bus, it is on  
25 the trains and everything else. We are

1 overcrowded, I stand a lot of times on the Long  
2 Island Railroad and I pay three hundred dollars a  
3 month to do it.

4 MS. HANNON: And now their talking about  
5 raising the fare, and talking about getting this  
6 new Go Mobile thing. We don't need the Go Mobile  
7 thing, what they're trying to do is get people to  
8 buy tickets, they're trying to get people to take  
9 the bus. If you want people -- if you want to  
10 make it easy for people to take the bus, and you  
11 want to make it easier for people to not have to  
12 carry around a sock full of change, let us get  
13 the MetroCard, let us be able to buy the  
14 MetroCard someplace other than a subway, other  
15 than in Hempstead, because right now, that's the  
16 only place you can get it. There is no legal  
17 stores that carry them anymore, most of the  
18 stores that did carry them stopped when you guys  
19 took over.

20 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: That is the  
21 MTA.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Mr. Setzer,  
23 is that not because of the MTA? And the MTA  
24 would have to provide the machines to sell them?

25 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: That has

1 nothing to do with us.

2 MR. SETZER: That is correct.

3 MS. HANNON: If the MTA was still in  
4 charge, then we would still have MetroCards and  
5 we wouldn't be having issues with the MetroCards.

6 Keep the MetroCards it works, make a  
7 deal with the MTA. You had the little --

8 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: We have the  
9 MetroCard.

10 MS. HANNON: Yeah, I know.

11 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: We are keeping  
12 it.

13 MS. HANNON: You can't buy one anywhere,  
14 you can only get it in Hempstead. I have to go  
15 to Hempstead once a month to get a thirty-day  
16 unlimited, I can't get a thirty-day unlimited  
17 anywhere else.

18 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I understand  
19 what you are saying, but what we are trying to  
20 explain is that we cannot change that. We have  
21 gone down that road, Mr. Setzer's gone down that  
22 road, we tried to get other terminals. They are  
23 going to change the MetroCard, they are not  
24 investing in new equipment for the MetroCard,  
25 because they are going to change the way you do

1 that. It is probably going to be on your iPhone,  
2 or swipe, or something, so they are not  
3 investing, they are not building those new  
4 machines. As soon as they changeover to whatever  
5 they are going to do, then --

6 MS. HANNON: Then changeover to what  
7 they're doing.

8 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: We will have to  
9 change --

10 MS. HANNON: Well --

11 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Could you let  
12 me finish now, I let you finish. I said that we  
13 will changeover, we will have to changeover. And  
14 then, at that time, when their new equipment is  
15 available, then we can petition even harder to  
16 have them put in other places. But right now,  
17 there is no equipment to do it, so no matter what  
18 we say, it is an antiquated system which is going  
19 to be phased out.

20 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Okay.

21 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I am just  
22 trying to explain.

23 MS. HANNON: I really do not think you  
24 people understand what it's like to have to get  
25 up at 5:00 in the morning and leave your house at

1 6:30, so that you can be on time for a twenty  
2 minute ride in a car -- to be on time at work for  
3 8:30. I start at 8:30, if I leave my house any  
4 later than 6:30, I may not get to work on time.  
5 Between the N6 with the locals and the expresses  
6 and the crowds, and I can't get on the bus and I  
7 wind up having to walk Meacham; I am lucky, I can  
8 walk to Meacham, it's not that much further. But  
9 there are a lot of people, like I said, they're  
10 stuck in the middle, they're in the middle of  
11 those stops and nothing stops for them because  
12 it's too crowded.

13 I have to plan on leaving my house at  
14 least three buses earlier than I would normally  
15 take if the buses ran longer.

16 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Take another ten  
17 seconds.

18 MS. HANNON: Okay. Whoever it is -- you  
19 are in charge, sir? You're destroying our --  
20 you're destroying -- you're destroying Nassau  
21 County, you're destroying the economy, and you're  
22 destroying our mass transit. And I just pray  
23 that I win the lottery, so that I can just buy  
24 out your contract and takeover myself.

25 If you people don't take the buses, you



1 have absolutely no right to sit up there and make  
2 comments; take the bus and then we'll talk.

3 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Good afternoon,  
4 Ma'am.

5 MS. HALASZ: Good afternoon. My name is  
6 Anita Halasz. I am the director of Long Island  
7 Jobs of Justice, I have spoken before many of you  
8 before. I also work very closely with the Long  
9 Island Bus Riders Union, which I am sure many of  
10 you are also familiar with. Thank you for the  
11 opportunity for allowing us to speak today.

12 I do have some serious concerns that I  
13 come here with today, I think that many of the  
14 folks who had spoken before me have touched upon  
15 them, especially the individual prior to me. I  
16 too, share the concern that these meetings are  
17 made completely inaccessible to the folks who are  
18 going to be deeply impacted by whatever decision  
19 is made. I find it very hard to believe that  
20 2:00 P.M. and 5:00 P.M. are the only times that  
21 can be offered in public hearings. Many people  
22 work at 2:00 P.M. and many people get off of work  
23 at 5:00 P.M., they will not be able to get to  
24 this meeting by 5:00 P.M.

25 The location is also of concern, it is

1 not accessible. This room is meant to hold --  
2 I'm not sure what the capacity is -- what, fifty,  
3 sixty. I think that in a county that has a  
4 ridership of one hundred and ten thousand, to  
5 offer a space like this as a public hearing is  
6 not particularly public, nor is it very  
7 democratic, and I do not think it is particularly  
8 respectful to riders. So making this more  
9 accessible is something I would really urge you  
10 to do in the future. This is something that we  
11 have been calling for, for years at this point,  
12 of making public hearings more accessible.

13 We only found out at Jobs of Justice  
14 about this public hearing last week, on Monday,  
15 and we had that through just happening to go onto  
16 the NICE Bus website and seeing that there was  
17 something new on there.

18 Two weeks notice is not enough notice  
19 for a public hearing and we have also been saying  
20 that for many years. I am actually not surprised  
21 that there were only eighteen comments that were  
22 submitted online, and that is because that was  
23 not advertised anywhere. How are people supposed  
24 to know that there is a venue to make public  
25 comments when there is not anyone out there

1 letting people know that this exists.

2 I am not shocked that it's eighteen and  
3 quite frankly, it's quite atrocious. Again,  
4 ridership of one hundred and ten thousand, I  
5 highly doubt that only eighteen people and those  
6 who have attended these meetings are the only  
7 ones who want to make a public comment about  
8 this, so that's my one particular concern.

9 This space needs to be created for bus  
10 riders, not for employees of companies and, you  
11 know, this is for bus riders and for bus riders  
12 to voice what they are feeling.

13 The other concern here is also a fare  
14 increase, it is particularly concerning --

15 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Take another fifteen  
16 seconds.

17 MS. HALASZ: I might take a little bit  
18 more. I do apologize, it's very important.

19 It is very concerning that there is a  
20 fare increase, partly because the underlying  
21 message here is that bus riders have to pick up  
22 the slack of a corporate deficit, that is not  
23 what fare increases are meant for, fare increases  
24 are meant to increase service and to create  
25 better transit, this is not doing that. So those

1 two options of a fare increase or bus cuts,  
2 that's absolutely atrocious.

3 I think that at this point in our bus  
4 service and in this contract, to say that those  
5 are our only two options indicates that this is  
6 failing, something that is not happening, this is  
7 not good. So to say that bus riders have to pay  
8 this deficit, I think is extremely disrespectful  
9 to riders and the efforts that they have to go  
10 through just so they can get to work, just so  
11 they can go to the doctors and say, now you have  
12 to pay more, but you're still going to get the  
13 same service that you had before, I think is  
14 atrocious.

15 We've been calling on Nassau County to  
16 find better avenues of funding the service. We  
17 were saying that in 2011, that this is not going  
18 to work with the amount of money that the County  
19 is putting into the buses; and here we are today,  
20 showing you that this not working. To have a 3.3  
21 million dollar deficit, which is now bleeding  
22 into 2015, is not working, this is not working.  
23 We can't see another fare increase, we saw one in  
24 2013, we're going to see one in 2014, we're most  
25 likely going to see another one in 2015, and yet

1 the funding is not there, the service is not  
2 there, and bus riders will continue to have to  
3 pay for it.

4 It is not appropriate to ask the poorest  
5 of the poor to fill this deficit. We need to  
6 think of better long term planning, this is bad  
7 long-term planning, and we know that we're going  
8 to see this happen again. We can't continue to  
9 come back year after year asking bus riders to  
10 fill the deficit.

11 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I am going to have  
12 to ask you to cut it in ten seconds.

13 MS. HALASZ: I'm done. Thank you very  
14 much. I hope that at the end of the day you will  
15 really think about what this will do to bus  
16 riders, and really think about encouraging the  
17 County to think about long-term planning as  
18 opposed to constantly filling gaps by bus riders  
19 money. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you.

21 Is there anyone else who would like to  
22 address the Committee?

23 This gentleman here, please state your  
24 name.

25 MR. NEGRONI: Hi, My name is Rein

1 Negrone.

2 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I am sorry, I did  
3 not get that.

4 MR. NEGRONI: First name R-E-I-N. Last  
5 name N-E-G-R-O-N-I. I came from Baldwin, New  
6 York. I just want to -- just want to ask this  
7 question, just a one-part question. For the Long  
8 Island Railroad -- just want to ask you a  
9 question, if in event of a strike -- I don't know  
10 what's the date set for, but should be it  
11 possible that it could be like a destination spot  
12 for all bus riders to take one, buy one,  
13 transportation as needed in effect of a strike?  
14 Just want to ask that question.

15 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Mr. Setzer, would  
16 you please address him.

17 MR. SETZER: The MTA has published some  
18 advertising, I saw some today that describes some  
19 shuttle bus service from both Suffolk and Nassau  
20 County there. They will contract to have  
21 operated -- I do not have that information with  
22 me, but it is available from the MTA, I am sure  
23 it is on their website.

24 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I also think they  
25 are still in the process of revising this

1 contingency plan even though it is pretty close  
2 to the deadline, I am not saying that is good or  
3 bad.

4 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I think July  
5 20th is the day.

6 MR. NEGRONI: Oh, July 20th.

7 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Yes.

8 MR. NEGRONI: Just, you know, let me  
9 state the fact, you know, for the Long Island  
10 Railroad riders, including me, because I used to  
11 take it. Even if I'm on -- the weekday, I go to  
12 Port Washington to Bayside, it's like roundtrip  
13 or something, and coming back here is going to be  
14 a little, you know, it's going to be a hard thing  
15 to do if it's effective on the 20th. It should  
16 be like alternative ways for NICE passengers, for  
17 Long Island Railroad passengers to cross on the  
18 -- from Long Island Railroad to NICE buses. I'm  
19 not sure if they had tickets or something, but I  
20 just wanted to find out about that.

21 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I think they  
22 will have to pay. If you are at the Long Island  
23 Railroad, you cannot use their pass, they will  
24 have to buy a MetroCard or cash just like  
25 everybody else. It is not like they are going to

1 ride free because they have their monthly ticket,  
2 they are going to have to purchase a ticket just  
3 like anyone else who uses the NICE Bus.

4 MR. NEGRONI: Okay. Thank you very  
5 much, I appreciate your question (sic) -- I will  
6 accept for the cash fare increase, but I just  
7 want to say that NICE is a very good company. I  
8 know these riders for a long time and you've been  
9 doing a great job for a long time. Just want to  
10 say, keep it up and see what happens from there.

11 BOARD MEMBERS: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Sir, with the blue  
13 shirt.

14 MR. LANDAU: My name is Brett Landau  
15 (phonetic), I am from Queens. I used to commute  
16 on the bus, on the N20. But since then, it  
17 stopped showing up on time and sometimes it just  
18 doesn't show up, so I just started driving to  
19 work.

20 I really believe that Veolia has done  
21 more with the money that they have than the MTA  
22 did, and they can make more out of less. But I  
23 think that some of the changes that they made  
24 don't make sense, and now you're just losing  
25 ridership.



1           The first year NICE took service, I  
2           noticed that ridership dropped from one hundred  
3           thousand down to ninety-three thousand; and the  
4           second year, I think it dropped even more. I  
5           think mostly this is because of the N6, because  
6           you guys took away the Limited, and the Express  
7           just took over the Limited service and it just  
8           isn't working. The buses are full, people just  
9           don't want to take the N6 because the bus is  
10          full. They're either going to walk or find  
11          another motor transportation; I think the N6  
12          Limited needs to be brought back.

13                 I've studied the bus system since before  
14          NICE was even thought about or before the MTA  
15          even decided to leave. So I have my own website,  
16          it's "BretNYC.com," I have listed a list of  
17          proposals that I have come up with, studying  
18          ridership data, opinions of riders, I participate  
19          in many forums on the internet. I know John  
20          talked about the N87, you guys could be saving a  
21          lot of money just by extending the N73, N74 to  
22          Jones Beach; the N87 runs empty and so does the  
23          N73, 74, you merge those two routes and you have  
24          more ridership on less buses.

25                         BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Do you have a

1 copy of what you have, for us?

2 MR. LANDAU: I have one copy of it.

3 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: At the end, can  
4 we have that, or Mr. Setzer can have that?

5 MR. LANDAU: I'll write my name and  
6 information on it.

7 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Great.

8 MR. LANDAU: I tried contacting NICE on  
9 several occasions, and I will give props to them  
10 for having a Facebook page and a Twitter,  
11 something the MTA never did. They reach out to  
12 riders a lot more than the MTA did. But I come  
13 to know NICE's route designers or whoever designs  
14 the proposals, and I have reached out to them on  
15 several occasions and I've gotten no response.

16 A lot of people -- I've posted these  
17 online to forums, and suggestions where riders  
18 give their opinions, and many of them have gotten  
19 positive feedback on these, they make a lot of  
20 sense, at least in any opinion. Another one I've  
21 had, I don't think getting rid of the N22 Limited  
22 was a good idea either. That brought more  
23 ridership for the N22 and you guys designed the  
24 route at the beginning of 2012, when you guys  
25 first came into service and then you got rid of

1 it. That was one of the better changes that NICE  
2 made and then you guys dropped it.

3 I am not going to go through every  
4 change on this list, but I think that NICE could  
5 be doing a lot better with the money they have,  
6 and if you have more money from ridership that  
7 makes sense, then I think you have more money for  
8 maintenance -- more money for maintenance,  
9 meaning, that more buses are showing up, and  
10 honestly, I think drivers will be happier as  
11 well; I think that this a win/win if NICE just  
12 looks at these and takes them into consideration.

13 I timed myself, that's the three  
14 minutes.

15 BOARD MEMBERS: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Can we get a copy of  
17 that? I think Mr. Setzer needs it more than we  
18 do.

19 Please, understand that there is two  
20 issues here. There is the issue of cutting  
21 service, there is the issue of raising fares, and  
22 one is pulling against the other; and certainly  
23 we are hearing a lot, that cutting the service  
24 would be pretty dreadful.

25 Are there anymore comments for the

1 Committee?

2 Mr. Endo is here.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: I also think  
4 it needs to be stated that the County is  
5 contributing to the situation.

6 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: For the people who  
7 came in late, that was in Mr. Setzer's  
8 presentation. Nassau County is putting up 1.8  
9 million dollars, and NICE has contributed  
10 \$400,000 for this shortfall and, of course, the  
11 proposal of the differential would come from a  
12 fare hike.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: And Veolia is  
14 not required to do that.

15 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Right. Neither is  
16 Nassau County.

17 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Is it one page  
18 Mr. Endo?

19 MR. ENDO: Yes.

20 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Mr. Endo, would you  
21 like to introduce this and have Ms. Comerford  
22 read it like we have done in the past.

23 MR. ENDO: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Okay. How about you  
25 read the first paragraph.

1 MR. ENDO: My name is Yuki Endo, of  
2 Jackson Heights, Queens, and a member of the Bus  
3 Riders Union. I have both opinions on fare  
4 increase. I support cash fare increase on  
5 September 1st if NICE Bus takes passenger's  
6 complaints seriously. If not, I do not support  
7 their increase of NICE Bus cash fare because I  
8 had a horrible day on the following days:

9 June 8, 2014, at Jamaica Center, around  
10 8:55, 9:00, the N34 Freeport Number 1845 refused  
11 to open the bus door for me when I was trying to  
12 get on until regular passenger got on bus.

13 He is also being really rude to a  
14 sleeping teen passenger who was listening to  
15 music loud. I know it is against the law to  
16 listen to loud music on any public  
17 transportation, but he harassed the passenger by  
18 touching him to wake him up twice; a few bus  
19 stops before Freeport station.

20 Also, on days I boarded the 1001 N88  
21 Jones Beach, number 1870, and my thirty-day  
22 MetroCard wouldn't read.

23 Also, Jones Beach West Bathhouse around  
24 11:00 A.M., the N88, Freeport, refused to return  
25 and I was forced to wait for the 10:30 N88, Jones

1 Beach; 11 N88, Freeport, number 1870, because of  
2 the new bus operator's mistake, and my MetroCard  
3 wouldn't read it again even though eighteen  
4 minutes expired.

5 I had no proof from the M60 SBS receipt  
6 that the MetroCard I used was collected. When I  
7 used my MetroCard on the 12:20 N for Jamaica;  
8 1760, it worked.

9 On June 8th on 12:20, the N for Jamaica  
10 1760, new male bus driver almost gave wrong  
11 information to passenger, and almost ended up  
12 waiting for the N8 Green Acres Loop, which does  
13 not run on Sunday.

14 July 1st, when I was on Flushing Main  
15 Street at 10:55 or 11:15, N20 Hicksville, the  
16 1744 bus, was sixteen minutes behind schedule.  
17 While most N20 Roslyn and N21 Glen Cove are  
18 mostly on time.

19 Most people would not buy mobile phone  
20 to use NICE Go Mobile, because they cannot afford  
21 it. Nobody on the N20 or N21 are not using the  
22 NICE Go Mobile because the majority of the bus  
23 riders are Asian, mostly Chinese, who don't speak  
24 English well.

25 BOARD MEMBER BLESSINGER: Mr. Endo,

1 would you like Ms. Comerford to read the rest of  
2 it?

3 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Why don't you let  
4 her finish it, so we can give you your time  
5 better.

6 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I am going to  
7 read the second part.

8 If you want to increase fare on cash  
9 fare, you need to improve the following service:  
10 N21 bus needs to return on weekends. There are  
11 many Glen Cove passengers and communities of Glen  
12 Cove and Sea Cliff that are complaining about  
13 connections between the N20 and the N27 buses.

14 Most of the N20 and N21 riders were  
15 unaware that it changed to NICE Bus from the Long  
16 Island Bus, since some riders had old MTA Long  
17 Island Bus schedules on the N20 and N21 bus.

18 Change policy on the summer bus route  
19 N87, 88, Jones Beach bus, because most bus  
20 drivers go directly from the East Boathouse to  
21 the Freeport station and it should change to a  
22 big bus, so that the bus drivers wouldn't have to  
23 serve Jones Beach three bus stops in an orderly  
24 fashion twice.

25 Similar to LaGuardia Airport, where the

1 M60, Q48 and the Q72 buses loop around LaGuardia  
2 Airport before going on their regular route.

3 Most drivers change destination signs as they  
4 enter LaGuardia Airport.

5 For the N87, 88 Jones Beach drivers,  
6 they could change destinations signs to Freeport  
7 or Hicksville stations at West Bathhouse, drop  
8 off/pick up at the same time. Then same at  
9 Central Mall at East Bathhouse and return to  
10 Freeport station, then N87 following its regular  
11 route to Hicksville.

12 For this year, lots of N87, 88 Jones  
13 Beach riders are not satisfied because you didn't  
14 make printed schedules of the N87, 88 bus, so I  
15 made organized schedules to help make sure that  
16 Jones Beach riders wouldn't miss their buses back  
17 to Freeport station.

18 Central Mall doesn't have N87, 88 daily  
19 schedules. On Sunday, July 6th, 2014, when I  
20 went to the park information office at Central  
21 Mall, one of the Jones Beach goers were  
22 complaining that they have no MetroCard vending  
23 machines.

24 NICE Bus should also send out Go Mobile  
25 team from Flushing, Main Street, Far Rockaway



1 station, on Beach 21st Street, Mott Avenue, 33  
2 bus stop, 31, and 32 bus stops and Long Beach  
3 station. Thank you for your cooperation.

4 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Mr. Endo, thank you  
5 very much. Ms. Comerford, thank you for helping  
6 reading this.

7 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Thank you very  
8 much, Mr. Endo.

9 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Ma'am, did you have  
10 a comment?

11 MS. LILLY: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: We did not forget  
13 you.

14 MS. LILLY: My name is Eileen Lilly and  
15 I am from Long Beach. At the beginning of the  
16 meeting, this gentleman gave us reasons why the  
17 fares have to be raised, and one of those  
18 reasons, if I recall correctly, was that there is  
19 an increase in the Able-Ridership and that costs  
20 more money; and while I appreciate that the  
21 Able-Ridership is a very necessary part of your  
22 public transportation, I don't think that it  
23 should be funded by the working people who ride  
24 the regular buses.

25 If extra money has got to be put

1 forward, it shouldn't come from the people that  
2 are just trying to get to work and get home at  
3 night, it should come from the County. There  
4 should be other sources for these people to use  
5 the Able buses, but it should not come off the  
6 backs of the working people. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Let me just clarify  
8 a couple of things that you said; and I know you  
9 were not at the last meeting, but that is not the  
10 only cause for cost increases. Cost increases  
11 have occurred due to salaries and wages, health  
12 benefits and fuel. So those are the considerable  
13 and higher expenses than I believe Able-Ride is,  
14 and that has to go into the equation.

15 As far as the funding again, there has  
16 been contributory funding here in this proposal.  
17 Nassau County has contributed 1.8 million, after  
18 the state and the federal government have put in  
19 what they are going to put in, and NICE  
20 contributed \$400,000.

21 In any of these situations, what we sit  
22 here for is, there has to be a fiscally balanced  
23 budget. If you know what the expenses are going  
24 to be here, the revenue has to meet those  
25 expenses. You cannot go ahead and run this thing

1 without the balanced budget. Thank you.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Mr. Setzer,  
3 do you know what the increase percentage was in  
4 Able-Ride; how much it has gone up since you have  
5 taken over?

6 MR. SETZER: I do not have that number  
7 off the top of my head, but I think on a peak  
8 day, we have over thirteen hundred reservations  
9 for Able-Ride; Wednesday is typically the  
10 heaviest day. Probably, that is another three  
11 hundred rides since years ago, since 2012, I am  
12 guessing, but it is something in that order of  
13 magnitude.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: A low  
15 estimate would be at least a \$0.25 increase?

16 MR. SETZER: I think so, yes.

17 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Are there any other  
18 comments for the Committee to hear?

19 Sir, I cannot see you, but please come  
20 forward.

21 MR. DELOVICH: Hi, my name is Matt  
22 Delovich. I'm a social worker, I work in a --  
23 for the past four years I have worked in a group  
24 home with people with disabilities. My brother  
25 is also a person with disabilities and lives in a

1 group home; and he's a patron of Able-Ride. He  
2 is, you know, he is able to take fixed routes,  
3 but he choses not to, because they're not --  
4 because the service is really not up to par, he  
5 prefers to spend about twenty dollars on a cab  
6 instead.

7 I just want echo some of the comments  
8 from before. I think that the times that this  
9 public hearing were set for do not make the  
10 hearing very public. From what I understand, the  
11 meetings with other committees are open to the  
12 public, so I'm not sure what makes this different  
13 from a committee meeting.

14 Also, the fare increases have -- has  
15 been a trend that exists for a while. When MTA  
16 took over, the ridership began to decreased, but  
17 the fare increase continued as well. So I just  
18 wanted to ask you, what plan do you have in place  
19 to stop fare increases in the future? Who NICE  
20 has working on this problem? When, if you do  
21 have these plans, when are the progress and  
22 results reported for this?

23 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Are you asking  
24 questions?

25 MR. DELOVICH: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I am not too sure I  
2 understood the question, when MTA took over; do  
3 you mean when NICE took over for the MTA?

4 MR. DELOVICH: No, I was just commenting  
5 on fare increases. This is a problem that you  
6 guys have known -- the County has known about for  
7 a long time. It existed under MTA and it  
8 continues to exist under NICE's stewardship, and  
9 there doesn't seem to be an end in sight, fares  
10 are continuing to rise.

11 When MTA took over, ridership rose, you  
12 know, after -- before they took over, it took a  
13 big dip and rose back up again, yet fares  
14 continue to rise. So this is an old problem,  
15 it's a big problem, and I am wondering how you  
16 are addressing it.

17 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Well, I know one  
18 thing, in my lifetime, I do not recall fares ever  
19 going down anywhere, whether it be the MTA, the  
20 old subway, service transportation, or what have  
21 you, we live in an inflationary world where costs  
22 go up, health benefits go up, and fuel is an  
23 major expense for any transportation industry.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: And it is  
25 very unpredictable.

1 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: I do not think there  
2 is a panacea to this problem, you know, the way  
3 commodities are, the way salaries are, and the  
4 way health benefits are.

5 Now, Mr. Setzer, would you like to add  
6 anything to what I said?

7 MR. SETZER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

8 I think the basic economics of this  
9 transit system and the MTA, and every other one  
10 in the United States at least, that the riders  
11 pay some portion of the cost of the service and  
12 the taxpayers pay the rest. The limitation  
13 typically is how much tax dollars can be  
14 allocated to operating transportation service,  
15 that is besides the service level. In our case,  
16 we have a system that is very heavily used.

17 I think some comments that were meant as  
18 criticism, they are also recognition that service  
19 like the N6 is very heavily used, it is one of  
20 the most heavily used bus routes anywhere in the  
21 country; the riders are covering a good portion  
22 of the cost of that route. But the only way to  
23 have more service, is for there to be more tax  
24 dollars available, and that is a decision that  
25 elected officials make.

1 Reducing fares reduces the amount of  
2 service available, just as reducing the tax part.  
3 So that would be nice for all of us to have  
4 everything we like at a lower price, I think that  
5 is a very unlikely prospect for the future.

6 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: I have one  
7 question.

8 When is the next time you will get a new  
9 influx of buses? I know they have to rotate  
10 miles, years.

11 MR. SETZER: Yes, that is right. There  
12 is a bid going out in a few days for the next  
13 forty three or forty-five buses, so we would  
14 receive those probably about twelve months later.

15 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Then we will  
16 cycle out the older --

17 MR. SETZER: Yes, we will be able to  
18 take some of the older -- and I think several of  
19 the speakers, they recognized that the condition  
20 on the oldest part of the fleet is not very good,  
21 but that is the way we inherited it. It is also  
22 an expense, driving, we have to put a lot of  
23 money into those buses to keep them working.

24 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: That was my  
25 next point. If we have newer buses, we will have

1 lower maintenance.

2 MR. SETZER: Yes.

3 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Do you know  
4 about how many of the really old buses we have in  
5 the fleet?

6 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: How many are  
7 left from the MTA?

8 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: From the MTA,  
9 right.

10 MR. SETZER: The only buses we bought  
11 were the forty-three that we got last year, all  
12 the rest were inherited from the MTA.

13 By older bus, you probably mean the  
14 standard ones, the ones that have not been  
15 repainted --

16 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Right.

17 MR. SETZER: That is still about half  
18 the fleet. I do not know the exact number, but  
19 it is about half of the fleet, yes.

20 So they will be around for years to  
21 come. They have been purchased in groups over  
22 the years, the federal government participates in  
23 the cost, so we are required to keep them for no  
24 less than twelve years and half a million miles.

25 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Okay. I knew



1 it was a formula. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN SETZER: Is there anyone else  
3 who would like to address the Committee?

4 Didn't you have three minutes?

5 MR. LILLY: No, I didn't have three  
6 minutes.

7 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: No, but he just  
8 asked a question.

9 MR. LILLY: I just asked a question.

10 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: He just asked  
11 about the Go Mobile.

12 MR. LILLY: I would just like to say a  
13 couple of things.

14 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Three minutes.

15 MR. LILLY: Starting now. Marty Lilly,  
16 Long Beach. I ride the bus infrequently, when I  
17 do, it is because I have no choice, and I've  
18 always had a good experience. I take the N15 --  
19 and some of the things I heard here -- by the  
20 way, I have to say that the folks who spoke here  
21 today are unbelievable; really, I mean, this your  
22 customer -- these are your customers, and I'm a  
23 customer occasionally.

24 I did ride the N15 once, and the woman  
25 driving the bus was just wonderful. She was

1 interacting with some of her regulars, safely,  
2 and one young fella got on and he was very  
3 disabled, he could barely walk, and he paid -- I  
4 can't remember if he paid the full fair that  
5 time, because he didn't have a card with him -- a  
6 disabled card. And she said to him -- she said  
7 to him, why did you put so much money in, you are  
8 disabled, aren't you, and he said, I didn't bring  
9 my card. He did that because on a previous run,  
10 apparently, the driver made him get off because  
11 he didn't have his card with him and he didn't  
12 have enough to make up the full fare, so the  
13 driver made him get off at the next stop and  
14 didn't give him back his money. So the woman  
15 gave him some ideas on how to handle that next  
16 time, and I thought that was very nice of her.

17 But the other thing I would say is, when  
18 you folks hear about this N6, I hope some of you  
19 and you, and I'm sure you have the driver -- the  
20 people who ride the bus just for quality  
21 assurance, experience those runs. I would also  
22 suggest that you take at heart, maybe you have  
23 already, the person who made the recommendation  
24 of a coupon to give the riders a break, even  
25 though they are going to be paying more; well,

1        gee wiz, if I get a free ride once a month or  
2        something, it makes them feel better about the  
3        money they spent.

4                The other thing is that the train, I  
5        believe, coming into Long Beach gives a special  
6        rate. If you're coming into Long Beach, you get  
7        a ticket to the beach at a reduced rate; I don't  
8        know if that would fit into your system or not,  
9        but that's something else to consider.

10               There has got to be ways to make up  
11        money from the ridership that doesn't cost the  
12        riders that much more. And I do appreciate the  
13        fact that's it's a no win situation, there is  
14        always got to be cost increases, I understand  
15        that. I really appreciate the bus system,  
16        because when I use it, it's really good, from my  
17        experience; anyway that's just a few ideas.

18               BOARD MEMBERS: Thank you.

19               CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Is there anyone else  
20        who would like to address the Committee?

21               (At this time there was no response)

22               CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Any questions from  
23        Committee members for Mr. Setzer?

24               (At this time there was no response)

25               CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Any other questions

1 or comments from Committee members to any of the  
2 comments that they heard, that they would just  
3 like to make a statement?

4 (At this time there was no response)

5 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: With that, I would  
6 like to request that someone make a motion to  
7 adjourn our meeting.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Motion to  
9 adjourn our meeting.

10 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Anyone want to  
11 second that motion?

12 BOARD MEMBER JEAN DUROSEAU: I second  
13 it.

14 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Counselor?

15 MR. LITTMAN: No, no, Tony was asking  
16 what time the next meeting is.

17 So five o'clock will be the next  
18 meeting. And at that meeting, we will take a  
19 vote on this proposed \$0.25 cash fare increase.

20 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: And review the  
21 Title 6 as well.

22 MR. LITTMAN: Yes, as well as the Title  
23 6 review, and as well as taking additional public  
24 comments.

25 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Okay. We were in

1 the middle of our motions here. We had a motion  
2 to adjourn our meeting, and we had someone second  
3 it --

4 BOARD MEMBER JEAN DUROSEAU: I second  
5 it.

6 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: With that, I would  
7 like to thank you for coming. The meeting is  
8 adjourned.

9 (Whereupon, the Nassau County Bus Transit  
10 Committee was concluded. Time noted: 3:15 P.M.)

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25 **Public Comments Regarding Sept 1st Proposed Cash**

1 **Fare Increase:**

2 DATE CHANNEL COMMENT

3 6.19.2014 Phone: I am a bit confused on the fare  
4 pricing. The site says \$2.25 for cash but then  
5 it says it follows the MetroCard fare pricing.  
6 Which is it?

7 6.23.2014 E-mail: If you insist on raising the  
8 fares that you need to provide better service,  
9 you lowballed your bid and now you're  
10 complaining that you can't run the service on  
11 that amount. Whose fault is that, certainly not  
12 the riders.

13 6.30.14 E-mail: I think it completely unfair  
14 that we riders may have to deal with a fare hike  
15 because NICE and the County cannot find  
16 sufficient funds for the NICE system, especially  
17 when the MTA will be implementing a fare hike in  
18 2015. Instead of constantly depending on riders  
19 to fill their deficit maybe NICE and Nassau  
20 County should sit down and find a better, more  
21 concrete funding stream for the buses because  
22 this is getting ridiculous.

23 6.30.14 E-mail: It is important that public  
24 transportation remain affordable for all users.  
25 Taxes are the most equitable way to fund public

1 transportation after waste has been eliminated  
2 and economies achieved.

3 6.30.14 E-mail: It's unfair to place the cost of  
4 public transportation on the backs of those most  
5 in need of that service and who have the  
6 greatest difficulty meeting those increased  
7 costs. Public transportation benefits us all by  
8 reducing pollution, decreasing road traffic and  
9 ultimately getting us all a better transport  
10 grid accustoming us to use p.t. instead of  
11 private autos Keep the fares as they are Seek  
12 additional funds from other public sources.

13 6.30.14 E-mail: I am opposed to an increase in  
14 bus fares for Nassau County riders. They are  
15 our most vulnerable citizens who can least  
16 afford such an increase.

17 6.30.14 E-mail: Many of our staff at the Long  
18 Island Council of Churches, as well as most of  
19 the people whom Nassau County asks us to assist,  
20 depend on the bus. I am concerned about both  
21 potential service cuts and also huge fare  
22 increases. And I am deeply troubled that  
23 hearing on this proposal have been scheduled for  
24 a location not accessible by NICE. If you  
25 really wanted to help NICE, you'd try to get

1 more people to ride it, everyone they get...

2 7.1.14 E-mail: I had really hoped to be able to  
3 attend the July 9th meeting but I've been called  
4 to jury duty. Federal Court in Brooklyn.  
5 Instead of having this little box I really need  
6 an email address where I can attach my thoughts  
7 as well as some photos I've taken of issues that  
8 are ongoing. As far as the fare increase-gee  
9 what a surprise you can't run the company on  
10 what you told us you could. And now you're  
11 asking for more money for unnecessary route  
12 extensions (NCC) and smart phone apps. Is it  
13 any wonder you're not to budget.

14 7.2.14 E-mail: It saddens me that again and  
15 again Management finds itself in a pinch and all  
16 they can do is to fall back on abusive practices  
17 of raising riders fees primarily to people who  
18 that already are going with less. NICE  
19 need/must make better efforts to schedule this  
20 meeting at a better time and at a convenient  
21 location for folks that are potentially impacted  
22 by this request.

23 7.8.14 E-mail: I use the N33, N15, and the N49  
24 religiously and I appreciate the service  
25 provided by NICE. But pleas do not add another



1 fare hike. I see the community that rely on the  
2 buses to take them to work and school and it  
3 already is a financial stretch for many of them.  
4 Thank you.

5 7.8.14 E-Mail: What budget cuts is NICE making  
6 to save money?

7 7.8.14 E-mail: The bus riders should have been  
8 notified at least 30 days before hearing and  
9 hearing should be in a central location at a  
10 reasonably convenient time, before or after work  
11 hours.

12 7.8.14 E-mail: No fair hike this year! This is  
13 a game with privatization. Low ball the  
14 contract and ask them for fare hikes when the  
15 contract is won!

16 7.8.14 E-mail: There can be no justification for  
17 attempting to fill budget gaps at the expenses  
18 of financially vulnerable population. This  
19 group relies on public transportation to get to  
20 work, to secure health care and a myriad of  
21 other services.

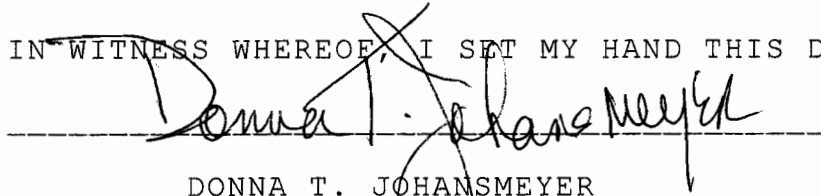
22 7.8.14 E-mail: Inexpensive travel costs are very  
23 important to the economy and family stability.  
24 Not being able to get a job is terrible.

25 CERTIFICATE BY COURT REPORTER

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I, DONNA T. JOHANSMEYER a Professional Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing testimony taken in the matter of the JULY 09, 2014 Nassau County Bus Transit Committee consisting of pages 1 through 66 inclusive is an accurate transcription of my cryptic notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I SET MY HAND THIS DAY.



DONNA T. JOHANSMEYER

CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER

NORTH SHORE COURT REPORTERS

NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF NEW YORK

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**COPY**

**NASSAU COUNTY  
TRANSIT COMMITTEE**

**JULY 09, 2014  
5:00 P.M.**

**BEFORE: SHELDON SHRENKEL, CHAIRMAN**

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**A P P E A R A N C E S :**

CHAIRMAN SHELDON SHRENKEL

VICE CHAIRMAN LAWRENCE BLESSINGER

BOARD MEMBER KATHY ANN COMERFORD

BOARD MEMBER JEAN DUROSEAU

BOARD MEMBER LIVIO TONY ROSARIO

SAMUEL LITTMAN - EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COUNTY

ATTORNEY AND COUNSEL FOR TRANSIT COMMITTEE

MICHAEL SETZER - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, VEOLIA  
TRANSPORTATION

YUKI ENDO

RICHARD CURRY

ANITA HALASZ

1 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Good evening.  
2 Welcome to the second public hearing of the  
3 Nassau County Bus Transit Committee.

4 I am the Chairman, Sheldon Shrenkel. I  
5 will do a roll call. I would like to introduce  
6 our membership.

7 To my far left, we have Ms. Kathy  
8 Comerford. To my immediate left, we have  
9 Mr. Larry Blessinger. To my right we have  
10 Mr. Tony Rosario and Mr. Jean Duroseau. To my  
11 extreme far right, we have our General Counsel,  
12 Samuel Littman.

13 MR. LITTMAN: Good afternoon, everyone.

14 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Donna, we would like  
15 to thank you again, for taking the minutes two  
16 times today.

17 Our agenda is as follows. We are going  
18 hear a presentation by the CEO of NICE  
19 Transportation, Mr. Michael Setzer. After that  
20 time, we will have the opportunity again, to hear  
21 public comments.

22 With those public comments, we will be a  
23 looking to review resolutions regarding the  
24 equity analysis and, of course, possibly a  
25 resolution regarding a fare structure or a

1 decrease in service. In any case, why don't we  
2 start our meeting with Mr. Michael Setzer, CEO of  
3 NICE Transportation.

4 MR. SETZER: Thank you very much,  
5 Mr. Chairman and the members of the Committee.  
6 Good evening.

7 I have a little bit of information for  
8 us to go over before we get started. I call this  
9 a Balanced Budget Proposal for 2014. I want to  
10 go over a little bit of the background.

11 When we first presented the budget back  
12 in March we summarized it, as it shows on the  
13 screen, that in order to stabilize the current  
14 level of service, we did discuss why there was a  
15 value in keeping service levels stable and  
16 predictable, but some additional funding was  
17 required.

18 The reason for the additional funding is  
19 that our costs have gone up, particularly in  
20 three areas, and we went over those in some  
21 details, but just as a refresher, we had a wage  
22 rate increase built into our labor contract of  
23 three percent and that was in effect as of April  
24 1st of this year.

25 Secondly, we saw an increase in natural

1 gas costs, which for us is very significant  
2 because we use it both as a utility energy source  
3 and we also use it as a motor vehicle fuel.

4 Thirdly, like almost every other  
5 employer, we experienced increases in health  
6 insurance costs for our employees. On top of  
7 that, we also are experiencing a steady increase  
8 for the demand of Able-Ride trips. As you know,  
9 under the Americans with Disability Act, we must  
10 serve all eligible man with Able-Ride trips. Any  
11 eligible person, who eligible by way of a  
12 disability, who asks for a trip within the  
13 eligible area, must be served; we cannot say that  
14 we have no more capacity. So as that has been  
15 said, Able-Ride will be placing a bigger demand  
16 on our overall budget.

17 We then looked at what effects are we  
18 still enjoying in the economy and the cost of  
19 service. This is what you saw in May, I think,  
20 last time we met. The first column represents  
21 the cost per hour, the Fixed Ride service, which  
22 is ninety percent of our budget under Long Island  
23 Bus during their last year of service here, which  
24 is \$151.37 an hour. That is all costs including  
25 variable costs like fuel, tires, and all of the

1 overhead costs to go with this.

2 On the same basis, back in 2012, the  
3 first year of NICE Bus, that cost per hour had  
4 dropped to \$122.11; it actually went down a few  
5 more cents in 2013 because this is per hour and  
6 we added some more service in 2013, so the cost  
7 per hour went down a little.

8 This year its gone up a little because  
9 of the reasons that I just discussed. It has  
10 gone up about three percent which is consistent  
11 with the labor costs. The way I look at it is,  
12 even though we are experiencing some cost  
13 increases, we are still seeing a twenty to  
14 twenty-five percent difference in the unit cost  
15 in an hour of service, compared to the last year  
16 of Long Island Bus. Another way of saying that  
17 is, for the same amount of money, the bus riders,  
18 NICE customers, have twenty to twenty-five  
19 percent more service available to them then they  
20 would if the old cost structure was still in  
21 place.

22 Just to review the history very quickly,  
23 for the audience particularly. On March 27th,  
24 the Committee reviewed the budget and gave  
25 conditional approval for twelve months, beginning



1 April 1st through the end of March of 2015, it  
2 was for a total of almost \$122 million.  
3 At that time, we all shared the hope that we  
4 could have no change in fares and no reduction in  
5 service. The reason that it was still a hope at  
6 that time, and the reason your approval was  
7 conditional, was that the biggest part of our  
8 revenue budget comes from the State of New York,  
9 and the Legislator had not adopted a 2014 budget  
10 at that point. Our hope was that when they did,  
11 there would be a sufficient increase to  
12 completely fill that gap, but unfortunately, that  
13 is not what happened; we got a smaller increase  
14 from the Legislator. All of the downstate  
15 systems, other than the MTA, got a small increase  
16 and it was insufficient to completely close the  
17 gap.

18 Then in May, the Committee met again.  
19 We did a couple of things -- on a completely  
20 independent track, having nothing to do with the  
21 budget issue, the County asked that we change the  
22 transit budget to correspond to the calendar  
23 year; all of the other County budgets were on a  
24 calendar year, basically.

25 You agree with that, and we made a

1 budget presentation based on a nine-month-year,  
2 since the last fiscal year ended in March, so now  
3 we want to extend it to December, so it was a  
4 nine-month-year from April 1st to December 31st  
5 in the amount of money that changed to  
6 \$91,782,842 for that nine-month-period. That  
7 meant that there was a \$2,670,000 gap that was  
8 closed at that point.

9 We proposed a budget balancing scenario  
10 that included three elements to it. One of which  
11 is the fare adjustment that we are going to  
12 consider this evening, and we also suggest that  
13 we begin this public input process that is  
14 culminating this evening.

15 Before you begin, you have a list of  
16 eighteen comments that were received by phone or  
17 e-mail prior to tonight. Earlier today you heard  
18 some more comments from the public and you will  
19 hear more in just a few minutes, I think.

20 The proposal that included the fare  
21 adjustments is the one that you see on the screen  
22 here, this is the same slide that you looked at  
23 in May. The first part of the solution of the  
24 \$2,670,000 gap was an additional \$1,870,000 from  
25 the County, to which Nassau County has agreed.

1           The third element was a \$400,000  
2           contribution from Veolia, to which Veolia has  
3           agreed. The remaining fee is, the second bullet  
4           point there, raising another \$400,000 by  
5           increasing the cash fare to catch it up to the  
6           MetroCard fare to \$2.25 to \$2.50 that is,  
7           effective on September 1st.

8           The important thing to point out here is  
9           that the majority of our riders are using a  
10          MetroCard today. If you proceed with this fare  
11          change, it has no affect on two-thirds of the  
12          riders. It only affects the smaller number who  
13          currently pay their fare by cash.

14          The actual proposal would be, as  
15          described on this table, MetroCard fares would  
16          remain unchanged, so that the majority of riders  
17          would experience no change; the Go Mobile fare,  
18          which is the fare that you could pay using your  
19          smart phone app that started in June, also  
20          remains unchanged, we set that the same as the  
21          MetroCard; \$2.50.

22          The cash fare would rise from \$2.25 to  
23          \$2.50; if you approve that. There are a couple  
24          of smaller affairs that go along with the cash  
25          fare, there is a \$2.10 student fare that is

1 available to elementary and secondary schools.  
2 It is very rarely used, but we would suggest it  
3 go up just to maintain the internal consistency  
4 of \$2.25. It is still a little bit of a discount  
5 for the younger students, but it does not affect  
6 college students.

7 We also have, for the federal law, \$0.50  
8 fares for people who are eligible either because  
9 of disability or because of age. Those fares are  
10 set today at a \$1.10. The federal rule is that  
11 it can be no more than fifty percent of the base  
12 fare. We are recommending that it go from a  
13 \$1.10 today, to a \$1.25; the same as the senior  
14 citizen fare from \$1.10 to \$1.25.

15 The other category of fares are  
16 Able-Ride fares, which are \$3.75, we are not  
17 recommending any change in those fares today.

18 It might be worth-wile for you to be  
19 aware of other similar affairs in this area. I  
20 have shown on the screen here some other transit  
21 agencies in the metro area that are also  
22 accepters of MetroCards. The MTA raised their  
23 fares across the board to \$2.50 in March of last  
24 year; this is no cash discount for MTA riders.

25 In Westchester County, which is very

1 similar to Nassau County in some respects,  
2 similar in size, and that accepts MetroCards  
3 also, followed suit when the MTA raised their  
4 fares in March, they raised all there fare to  
5 \$2.50 also; they had no cash discount.

6 The third largest agency in the area, of  
7 course, is NJ Transit. They have a completely  
8 different fare system that is based on distances,  
9 but almost all of their fares, except for Zone 1  
10 and Zone 2, which are very short fares, there are  
11 thirty-eight different fares in their interstate  
12 table; and thirty-six of those are already at  
13 \$2.90 or more, so they are already beyond what we  
14 are proposing to do.

15 That is our proposal and that is the one  
16 in which we will be hearing comments from the  
17 public; and I would be happy to respond to any  
18 questions that you have.

19 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: The filled gap, if  
20 we vote for a fare increase, we will also have to  
21 vote for the \$0.15 for the students, the disabled  
22 and the senior citizens?

23 MR. SETZER: That is all included in our  
24 proposal. Of course, you could change that, if  
25 you wish.

1 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: It would take that  
2 amount of money plus the twenty-five percent cash  
3 fare to fill in the \$400,000 gap; is that  
4 correct?

5 MR. SETZER: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: So therefore, then  
7 we have a balanced budget?

8 MR. SETZER: Yes.

9 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Can I ask a  
10 question on the Go Mobile? Do we have any idea  
11 where those 4,000 people, in the demographics,  
12 were they already MetroCard users, were they cash  
13 users that have converted to the --

14 MR. JACK KHZOUZ: Unfortunately, it does  
15 not capture where that conversion comes from. We  
16 will know that through the very unscientific  
17 study at the end of the year, assuming a small  
18 growth rate service, and seeing where those  
19 people migrated from, based on our total. It is  
20 very unscientific and unfortunately that is  
21 really where we are going to probably see it.

22 Our gut instinct right now, is that it  
23 is coming mostly from MetroCards; the conversion.  
24 But again, it is a little early to tell and that  
25 is all we have.

1 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Okay. Thank  
2 you.

3 MR. SETZER: One comment that you have  
4 raised out of the Go Mobile. If you remember,  
5 the origin of the Go Mobile project started with  
6 some issues that were brought to you about the  
7 unavailability of MetroCards.

8 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Correct.

9 MR. SETZER: MetroCard machines are not  
10 readily available in Nassau County and number of  
11 vendors seems to be less. And if you remember,  
12 in that discussion, we told you that we have met  
13 with the MTA and talked about the possibility of  
14 wider availability of MetroCard machines, but  
15 they have no more, they do not intend to buy  
16 anymore, they are in the process of migrating  
17 away from the MetroCard, so they do not want to  
18 make any further investments in that.

19 I do not think that our riders  
20 understand that we have no MetroCard machines.  
21 The MetroCard system is an MTA system and we have  
22 no ability to make those more available; we did  
23 pursue that issue, at least, with the MTA.

24 MR. LITTMAN: My same question from this  
25 afternoon. Fare equity analysis, please comment

1 on that; and what the alternative is to a fare  
2 increase.

3 MR. SETZER: Thank you for that. A  
4 couple of weeks ago you received a fare equity  
5 analysis, that is a federally required process.  
6 Under Title 6 of the Federal Rights Act, any  
7 federally assisted programs has to do this sort  
8 of analysis whenever a fare increase or a  
9 significant service change is being considered;  
10 increase or decrease.

11 We performed the analysis and provided  
12 it to you. The bottom line of the analysis is  
13 that the same group of people who would be  
14 affected by this fare increase, if you approve  
15 it, would be severally affected by the  
16 alternative; that is your second question.

17 The alternative is to reduce service.  
18 In order to close that gap without the additional  
19 fare revenue, then we have to find it someplace  
20 else, and the only someplace else to find it --  
21 we showed you -- we think that we found most of  
22 the efficiencies that we can. We think that we  
23 have taken out service that is not really being  
24 used. A further budget process that involves  
25 reducing service, would have a significant impact



1 on many of the same people.

2 So our recommendation is based on the  
3 Title 6 analysis. The fare adjustment is the  
4 better alternative, when compared to the service  
5 reduction. We would have to accomplish these  
6 savings in the later part of the year. And the  
7 service cut would have to be deeper than if we  
8 did it at the beginning of the year.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: If the fare  
10 increase was not approved, would the County and  
11 Veolia still intend to contribute that money?

12 MR. SETZER: I believe so.

13 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: But you still would  
14 not have a balanced budget?

15 MR. SETZER: Correct.

16 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you.

17 MR. SETZER: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: At this time, during  
19 this public hearing, we welcome any comments from  
20 anyone here.

21 When you come up to the podium, please  
22 state your name, whether you represent an  
23 organization, or state your name and the town  
24 that you live in. All comments, we just ask are  
25 kept to a limit of three minutes. What we will

1 ask you to do is frame, design, and think about  
2 your thoughts before you come up to the podium.

3 Mr. Endo, we know you spoke earlier and  
4 I think what we are going to ask you to introduce  
5 yourself, and then what we will ask you to do --  
6 and you said you have no objections, is that  
7 Ms. Comerford would read those comments.

8 MR. ENDO: Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: And at the same  
10 time, those comments, all of your written and  
11 specific comments, will be properly and duly  
12 recorded in the minutes of this hearing.

13 MR. ENDO: My name is Yuki Endo, of  
14 Jackson Heights, Queens, and a member of the Bus  
15 Riders Union.

16 BOARD MEMEBER COMERFORD: I am going to  
17 read Mr. Endo's exact words.

18 I have both opinions on fare increase.  
19 I support cash fare increase on September 1st if  
20 NICE Bus takes passenger's complaints seriously.  
21 If not, I do not support their increase of NICE  
22 Bus cash fare because I had a horrible day on the  
23 following days:

24 June 8, 2014, at Jamaica Center, around  
25 8:55, 9:00, the N34 Freeport Number 1845 refused

1 to open the bus door for me when I was trying to  
2 get on until regular passenger got on bus.

3 He is also being really rude to a  
4 sleeping teen passenger who was listening to  
5 music loud. I know it is against the law to  
6 listen to loud music on any public  
7 transportation, but he harassed the passenger by  
8 touching him to wake him up twice; a few bus  
9 stops before Freeport station.

10 Also, on days I boarded the 1001 N88  
11 Jones Beach, number 1870, and my thirty-day  
12 MetroCard wouldn't read.

13 Also, Jones Beach West Bathhouse around  
14 11:00 A.M., the N88, Freeport, refused to return  
15 and I was forced to wait for the 10:30 N88, Jones  
16 Beach; 11 N88, Freeport, number 1870, because of  
17 the new bus operator's mistake, and my MetroCard  
18 wouldn't read it again even though eighteen  
19 minutes expired.

20 I had no proof from the M60 SBS receipt  
21 that the MetroCard I used was collected. When I  
22 used my MetroCard on the 12:20 N for Jamaica;  
23 1760, it worked.

24 On June 8th on 12:20, the N4 for Jamaica  
25 1760, new male bus driver almost gave wrong

1 information to passenger, and almost ended up  
2 waiting for the N8 Green Acres Loop, which does  
3 not run on Sunday.

4 July 1st, when I was on Flushing Main  
5 Street at 10:55 or 11:15, N20 Hicksville, the  
6 1744 bus, was sixteen minutes behind schedule.  
7 While most N20 Roslyn and N21 Glen Cove are  
8 mostly on time.

9 Most people would not buy mobile phone  
10 to use NICE Go Mobile, because they cannot afford  
11 it. Nobody on the N20 or N21 are not using the  
12 NICE Go Mobile because the majority of the bus  
13 riders are Asian, mostly Chinese, who don't speak  
14 English well.

15 If you want to increase fare on cash  
16 fare, you need to improve the following service:  
17 N21 bus needs to return on weekends. There are  
18 many Glen Cove passengers and communities of Glen  
19 Cove and Sea Cliff that are complaining about  
20 connections between the N20 and the N27 buses.

21 Most of the N20 and N21 riders were  
22 unaware that it changed to NICE Bus from the Long  
23 Island Bus, since some riders had old MTA Long  
24 Island Bus schedules on the N20 and N21 bus.

25 Change policy on the summer bus route

1 N87, 88, Jones Beach bus, because most bus  
2 drivers go directly from the East Boathouse to  
3 the Freeport station and it should change to a  
4 big bus, so that the bus drivers wouldn't have to  
5 serve Jones Beach three bus stops in an orderly  
6 fashion twice.

7 Similar to LaGuardia Airport, where the  
8 M60, Q48 and the Q72 buses loop around LaGuardia  
9 Airport before going on their regular route.  
10 Most drivers change destination signs as they  
11 enter LaGuardia Airport.

12 For the N87, 88 Jones Beach drivers,  
13 they could change destinations signs to Freeport  
14 or Hicksville stations at West Bathhouse, drop  
15 off/pick up at the same time. Then same at  
16 Central Mall at East Bathhouse and return to  
17 Freeport station, then N87 following its regular  
18 route to Hicksville.

19 For this year, lots of N87, 88 Jones  
20 Beach riders are not satisfied because you didn't  
21 make printed schedules of the N87, 88 bus, so I  
22 made organized schedules to help make sure that  
23 Jones Beach riders wouldn't miss their buses back  
24 to Freeport station.

25 Central Mall doesn't have N87, 88 daily

1 schedules. On Sunday, July 6th, 2014, when I  
2 went to the park information office at Central  
3 Mall, one of the Jones Beach goers were  
4 complaining that they have no MetroCard vending  
5 machines.

6 NICE Bus should also send out Go Mobile  
7 team from Flushing, Main Street, Far Rockaway  
8 station, on Beach 21st Street, Mott Avenue, 33  
9 bus stop, 31, and 32 bus stops and Long Beach  
10 station. Thank you for your cooperation.

11 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Mr. Endo, thank you  
12 for those comments, and Ms. Comerford, thank you  
13 for reading those.

14 I do want to mention and note that in  
15 our prior meeting, we did receive some e-mail  
16 comments to NICE transportation, which was passed  
17 on to the Committee. In the prior meeting, we  
18 incorporated those e-mail comments into the  
19 minutes.

20 Counsel, do you recommended that we put  
21 them into this hearing's minutes as well, so in  
22 case someone just peeks into these minutes, they  
23 are there?

24 MR. LITTMAN: Yes, I do.

25 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Would you mind also

1 repeating those within your minutes, thank you.

2 **Public Comments Regarding Sept 1st Proposed Cash**

3 **Fare Increase:**

4 DATE CHANNEL COMMENT

5 6.19.2014 Phone: I am a bit confused on the fare  
6 pricing. The site says \$2.25 for cash but then  
7 it says it follows the MetroCard fare pricing.  
8 Which is it?

9 6.23.2014 E-mail: If you insist on raising the  
10 fares that you need to provide better service,  
11 you lowballed your bid and now you're  
12 complaining that you can't run the service on  
13 that amount. Whose fault is that, certainly not  
14 the riders.

15 6.30.14 E-mail: I think it completely unfair  
16 that we riders may have to deal with a fare hike  
17 because NICE and the County cannot find  
18 sufficient funds for the NICE system, especially  
19 when the MTA will be implementing a fare hike in  
20 2015. Instead of constantly depending on riders  
21 to fill their deficit maybe NICE and Nassau  
22 County should sit down and find a better, more  
23 concrete funding stream for the buses because  
24 this is getting ridiculous.

25 6.30.14 E-mail: It is important that public

1 transportation remain affordable for all users.  
2 Taxes are the most equitable way to fund public  
3 transportation after waste has been eliminated  
4 and economies achieved.

5 6.30.14 E-mail: It's unfair to place the cost of  
6 public transportation on the backs of those most  
7 in need of that service and who have the  
8 greatest difficulty meeting those increased  
9 costs. Public transportation benefits us all by  
10 reducing pollution, decreasing road traffic and  
11 ultimately getting us all a better transport  
12 grid accustoming us to use p.t. instead of  
13 private autos Keep the fares as they are Seek  
14 additional funds from other public sources.

15 6.30.14 E-mail: I am opposed to an increase in  
16 bus fares for Nassau County riders. They are  
17 our most vulnerable citizens who can least  
18 afford such an increase.

19 6.30.14 E-mail: Many of our staff at the Long  
20 Island Council of Churches, as well as most of  
21 the people whom Nassau County asks us to assist,  
22 depend on the bus. I am concerned about both  
23 potential service cuts and also huge fare  
24 increases. And I am deeply troubled that  
25 hearing on this proposal have been scheduled for



1 a location not accessible by NICE. If you  
2 really wanted to help NICE, you'd try to get  
3 more people to ride it, everyone they get.....

4 7.1.14 E-mail: I had really hoped to be able to  
5 attend the July 9th meeting but I've been called  
6 to jury duty. Federal Court in Brooklyn.  
7 Instead of having this little box I really need  
8 an email address where I can attach my thoughts  
9 as well as some photos I've taken of issues that  
10 are ongoing. As far as the fare increase-gee  
11 what a surprise you can't run the company on  
12 what you told us you could. And now you're  
13 asking for more money for unnecessary route  
14 extensions (NCC) and smart phone apps. Is it  
15 any wonder you're not to budget.

16 7.2.14 E-mail: It saddens me that again and  
17 again Management finds itself in a pinch and all  
18 they can do is to fall back on abusive practices  
19 of raising riders fees primarily to people who  
20 that already are going with less. NICE  
21 need/must make better efforts to schedule this  
22 meeting at a better time and at a convenient  
23 location for folks that are potentially impacted  
24 by this request.

25 7.8.14 E-mail: I use the N33, N15, and the N49

1 religiously and I appreciate the service  
2 provided by NICE. But please do not add another  
3 fare hike. I see the community that rely on the  
4 buses to take them to work and school and it  
5 already is a financial stretch for many of them.  
6 Thank you.

7 7.8.14 E-Mail: What budget cuts is NICE making  
8 to save money?

9 7.8.14 E-mail: The bus riders should have been  
10 notified at least 30 days before hearing and  
11 hearing should be in a central location at a  
12 reasonably convenient time, before or after work  
13 hours.

14 7.8.14 E-mail: No fair hike this year! This is  
15 a game with privatization. Low ball the  
16 contract and ask them for fare hikes when the  
17 contract is won!

18 7.8.14 E-mail: There can be no justification for  
19 attempting to fill budget gaps at the expenses  
20 of financially vulnerable population. This  
21 group relies on public transportation to get to  
22 work, to secure health care and a myriad of  
23 other services.

24 7.8.14 E-mail: Inexpensive travel costs are very  
25 important to the economy and family stability.

1 Not being able to get a job is terrible.

2 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Sir, in white shirt,  
3 thank you. Please state your name and try to  
4 keep it to three minutes, please.

5 MR. CURRY: I will. Hi, my name is  
6 Richard Curry. I am one of the members of the  
7 Long Island Bus Riders Union. I oppose to the  
8 fare increase. My reason is reliability of  
9 busses; or should I say, lack thereof.

10 For example, up until June of this year,  
11 I could always count on the 5:38, N38 bus, to  
12 pick me up at the bus stop at South Service Road  
13 and Newtown Road. Then in June, it was like that  
14 pick-up time never existed; what's up with that?

15 Anther example is this, at the bus that  
16 goes to South Service bus stop, one of the  
17 reasons that I leave early is so that I can get  
18 onto the bus earlier, which means that I can  
19 catch the N78 bus, which meant that instead of me  
20 leaving 5:08, I'm leaving at 4:20 to catch a 4:58  
21 bus.

22 Do you know what? It worked. However,  
23 next week, or I should say, last week, I had to  
24 catch an early bus to go to my job, which meant  
25 that I had to catch, rather -- 8:10, N78 bus, I

1 had to catch a 7:10. But that week -- and you  
2 know what, the 7:10 never showed. When I asked  
3 the bus driver that showed up later, he told me  
4 that the N78 should have left Hicksville Station  
5 at 7:10, and that I would have to wait for the  
6 next one at 8:10.

7 Explain to me how this is fair? Now, if  
8 NICE is raising the fare for repairs, then maybe  
9 we could talk.

10 Personally I think that things can  
11 personally be a hell of a lot better. This is  
12 why I don't support the fare increase.

13 Thank you, you have been a great  
14 audience.

15 CHARIMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you. If you  
16 had a choice, would you vote for a fare increase,  
17 or would you vote for a cut in service?

18 MR. CURRY: Like I said, if this was to  
19 improve some service, then yes, I would certainly  
20 vote for it. But the way things are right now, I  
21 wouldn't.

22 Let me ask you this, let me ask you a  
23 question. If you were me and you suddenly have  
24 to -- you see, lately I have been noticing that  
25 it is problem, either buses show up late or not

1 at all, which means that I have to wait for the  
2 next one, which can risk me being late or really  
3 cutting it close.

4 You know what? This isn't just not fair  
5 for me, it isn't fair for other people who have  
6 to deal with this problem almost on a regular  
7 basis; explain that to me.

8 I mean, I would vote for the increase,  
9 definitely, if they could improve bus service,  
10 reliability or whatever.

11 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: All right. Thank  
12 you.

13 MR. CURRY: Your welcome. Good day.

14 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Is there anyone else  
15 who would like to make a comment?

16 MS. SAGET: Hello. My name is Kimberly  
17 Saget. I live in Valley Stream and I take the  
18 N4, N16, N15, N72, I take a whole bunch of buses;  
19 I take them to school, I take it to my two jobs,  
20 I take it everywhere; I depend on NICE Bus a  
21 whole lot.

22 I oppose of this fare increase because  
23 if it was increasing the bus service, no problem.  
24 I would give the extra \$0.50 if I can get to work  
25 on time, with no headaches, no stress, and no

1 problems. I know that's not the case, so I  
2 oppose it.

3 I really oppose it because I'm filling  
4 for your gap. I'm filling something that was  
5 supposed to be handled by you, and I don't think  
6 that it is fair for us who take the bus. I feel  
7 like there should be better research on the  
8 ending times of the grants or the money that you  
9 receive from the County; you match it up and you  
10 know, move on from there.

11 Either way, if you guys don't do that,  
12 we're going to continue to have this problem and  
13 we'll have another \$0.25, and another \$0.25 for  
14 the same service; I'm still going to be late for  
15 work, I'm still going to be on an over crowded  
16 bus.

17 Think about it, you guys work long  
18 hours, would you want to wait for a bus, wait  
19 thirty minutes because it's late and then you  
20 come to the bus and it's packed and full. Who  
21 wants to stay on the bus like that? Nobody wants  
22 to. And you want me to pay \$0.25 more to sit on  
23 a crowded bus? I don't think so. That's not  
24 fair at all.

25 I feel that if you guys do more

1 research, if you ask the County for funding  
2 instead of the people who are giving \$2.50 or  
3 \$2.25 for the cash --

4 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: The County is  
5 already taking in another \$1,800,000, Veolia is  
6 kicking in another \$400,000, which they do not  
7 have to do.

8 MS. SAGET: I understand that. If you  
9 are always targeting the people who are already  
10 paying the \$2.25 and \$2.50, what more do you want  
11 from us? Do you want us to pay \$5.00? It's  
12 going to keep on increasing, and increasing, and  
13 increasing if you guys do not do the research and  
14 don't ask the County for more money for funding.

15 I understand that you guys have  
16 \$1,800,000 from the County, but if you can say  
17 that you need more money for added service to  
18 make them dependable.

19 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Can I just  
20 clarify something, the County already puts in two  
21 million.

22 MR. SETZER: \$2,600,000.

23 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: And now another  
24 \$1,800,000?

25 MR. SETZER: Yes.

1 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Okay. I have  
2 another question about the fare if it goes up.  
3 Everybody knows that gas prices have jumped,  
4 drastically.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Just in the  
6 last two months.

7 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Yes. Do you  
8 know what percentage of the cost of your fuel has  
9 gone up? Is it over twenty percent of your total  
10 usage?

11 MR. SETZER: It is very volatile right  
12 now, and has gone up and down. It had gone up as  
13 much as forty percent in the first quarter  
14 because of the winter weather. It has come down  
15 some, but, I'm sorry, I don't know what the  
16 percentage on average is.

17 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: That impact --  
18 never mind the salary increase and the benefits,  
19 but the cost of fuel is definitely driving the  
20 cost up.

21 MR. SETZER: Yes.

22 MS. SAGET: I understand that. But  
23 nothing ever goes down. But it all goes with  
24 planning and asking the town, because, you know  
25 what, the gas prices have risen, I think you



1 should at least ask for an additional \$500,000.

2 I understand that they already gave  
3 money, but if you ask for more and plan wisely,  
4 and match up all of the numbers together, you  
5 wouldn't have to keep asking us for another \$0.25  
6 or another \$0.50 for my fare.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: If the County  
8 did not kick in \$1,800,000, we could be looking  
9 at a bigger fare increase or a bigger reduction  
10 in service. The County has stepped up to the  
11 plate on more than one occasion this year.

12 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Ms. Saget, I know  
13 you ride a lot of our busses, but my only  
14 question to you is, do you pay a cash fare or do  
15 you have a MetroCard?

16 MS. SAGET: I do both. I also take  
17 Suffolk County buses.

18 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Do you use a  
19 MetroCard?

20 MS. SAGET: Sometimes, I use the  
21 MetroCard and also I use cash. It all depends on  
22 what I have in my wallet.

23 MR. KHZOUZ: The app is \$2.75 for a  
24 single ride, just a like a MetroCard single ride  
25 is \$2.75. Just like if you buy a MetroCard, the

1 price drops just like app does. It drops as you  
2 buy more.

3 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Mr. Setzer,  
5 do you know the numbers since you took over, on  
6 an on-time basis; where you were when you first  
7 took over, to where you are now?

8 MR. SETZER: We do not actually have  
9 that information, directly. What we do have are  
10 the reports from the mystery riders who ride the  
11 bus and record a lot of things. Their scores on  
12 on-time performance had steadily improved. We  
13 will soon be able to tell you what the numbers  
14 are, but not yet.

15 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: With GPS?

16 MR. SETZER: Yes. But we think it is  
17 around eighty percent, which arrives within a  
18 five-minute window.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: That is  
20 currently right now?

21 MR. SETZER: Yes.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: Where do you  
23 think it was when you first took over?

24 MR. SETZER: It was certainly something  
25 less than that. Particularly just before we took

1 over, there was a very high frequency of trips  
2 that were not operating at all. The Long Island  
3 Bus had too few of employees and too few of  
4 serviceable buses, so they would miss as many as  
5 ten percent of scheduled trips.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: A day?

7 MR. SETZER: A weekday. Not a weekend.

8 BOARD MEMBER ROSARIO: Did you say that  
9 there was an interest in getting an app for the  
10 ridership to get at that location as to when the  
11 busses were coming?

12 MR. SETZER: Yes.

13 BOARD MEMBER ROSARIO: Is that in  
14 conjunction with the GPS? Is that system up and  
15 running with the GPS?

16 MR. SETZER: It is not currently  
17 available. By the end of this year the basic GPS  
18 system will be in place and about that time,  
19 people should also be able to get the actual  
20 location of their bus regardless of what the  
21 schedule said.

22 BOARD MEMBER ROSARIO: I am assuming  
23 that the GPS would also help the bus drivers  
24 themselves as to moving up when there is a bus  
25 missing in the route, and then GPS control could

1 call them and tell them: Okay. You need to move  
2 up in ten minutes because there is a bus missing,  
3 and that would help with the ridership of knowing  
4 when the buses were coming for that location; am  
5 I right?

6 MR. SETZER: Well, it would work  
7 through the command center, which is here. When  
8 there is a gap, because the bus has fallen behind  
9 or there was an accident, we will be able to see  
10 that on the screen immediately, and we will also  
11 see where the other buses are on that route so  
12 that we can move somebody up or hold somebody  
13 back, so that we can deal with that.

14 BOARD MEMBER ROSARIO: Is that going  
15 to be impacted by the money that you are going to  
16 be receiving for the GPS?

17 MR. SETZER: That is already funded  
18 with a federal grant.

19 BOARD MEMBER ROSARIO: Then that  
20 would definitely help the service that is going  
21 to be determined?

22 MR. SETZER: We expect that we will  
23 be able to answer the question about how on-time  
24 we are, and we will also be able to improve the  
25 performance when we can see everything in

1 realtime.

2 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: To confirm,  
3 that does not come out of the ridership, because  
4 that is a federal grant?

5 MR. SETZER: Correct, yes.

6 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Kimberly,  
7 can I ask you a question?

8 MS. SAGET: Yes.

9 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: You have  
10 used the Go Mobile app?

11 MS. SAGET: Yes.

12 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: So you have  
13 chose to do a single ride instead of pay cash?

14 MS. SAGET: Yes, because sometimes,  
15 I will admit, that the mobile app is convenient  
16 because there is not that many stores that  
17 dispense MetroCards, or because I don't have time  
18 to get one, or don't have enough money on my  
19 card.

20 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: But it  
21 works effectively?

22 MS. SAGET: Yes. You don't scan  
23 anything, you just blink it. You guys are losing  
24 money with that, too. If I want to ride five  
25 thousand busses in two and a half hours, I can.

1 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: So it does  
2 not allow you one or two transfers, it is just  
3 unlimited?

4 MS. SAGET: Yes.

5 BOARD MEMBER DUROSEAU: I did not  
6 know that. Good to know.

7 MS. SAGET: It is good to know  
8 because this is why you are losing money, because  
9 it is not being monitored.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: NICE is  
11 trying to accommodate the riding public. Because  
12 they cannot get any more MetroCard machines from  
13 the MTA, so it looks like they are doing an  
14 alternative; am I correct?

15 MR. SETZER: Yes.

16 BOARD MEMBER COMERFORD: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: In reference to  
18 some of the comments going back and forth. I  
19 would like to say a member of the committee, Tony  
20 Rosario, who has asked and raised some insightful  
21 points, Mr. Rosario has been driving a bus for  
22 fifteen years and continues to do so. So he sees  
23 the day-to-day action and I thought it was  
24 important to mention that.

25 Are there anymore comments for the

1 public before we move on?

2 MS. HALASZ: Yes. Hello, my name is  
3 Anita Halasz from the Long Island Jobs for  
4 Justice, I also advocate on behalf of the bus  
5 riders union. I just want to clarify a couple of  
6 things. I'm not going to say the same things  
7 that I said before, I do commend the County and  
8 Veolia to putting in the additional money to fill  
9 in this gap, I really do. I think it is  
10 something that needs to happen and I think it was  
11 really great that they did that. But again, I  
12 can't help but feel that the point is being  
13 missed today, in that the bus riders are being  
14 forced to fill this gap. This is money that  
15 should have been put in a long time ago.

16 Years ago, the County was paying over  
17 twenty million dollars to subsidize the buses. I  
18 think it is great that we are still continuing to  
19 subsidize it, and I know that they got the  
20 \$2,500,000, well, let's compare that to over  
21 twenty million.

22 This is why this is happening now,  
23 because we are not funding the buses enough, and  
24 when we're not funding the buses, the riders have  
25 to pay for it.

1 I don't think it is appropriate to pose  
2 the question to riders of, "Would you rather pay  
3 an extra \$0.25 or see a cut in service?" I don't  
4 see that as choice at all. Either one of those  
5 selections puts riders in a terrible position.  
6 They are either paying more for the same service  
7 without seeing an increase, or they are seeing  
8 cuts in their services. I don't think that it is  
9 appropriate to ask riders that question; it puts  
10 them in a bind.

11 So again, I think the point here is that  
12 there isn't enough funding for the buses. And I  
13 don't think that riders should be the ones  
14 subsidizing the buses when they are already  
15 subsidizing enough for service that they are not  
16 getting. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you. Are  
18 there any other comments from anyone who has not  
19 spoken yet?

20 (Whereupon, at this time there was no  
21 response.)

22 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Are there any  
23 comments from the committee members in reference  
24 to some of these comments or to Mr. Setzer, that  
25 they have not asked him before.



1 (Whereupon, at this time there was no  
2 response.)

3 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Would like to ask  
4 any committee member to please make a motion  
5 regarding the resolution regarding the fare  
6 equity analysis.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: I make that  
8 resolution.

9 BOARD MEMBER ROSARIO: I second it.

10 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you. We will  
11 now take a vote that the Committee has been made  
12 aware, and a motion now to adopt a resolution  
13 regarding NICE fare equity analysis.

14 We now come to an important issue of  
15 hearing various information to public hearings, a  
16 meeting before this, where we had time to think  
17 and research. We have before us now a resolution  
18 to maintain service level of NICE  
19 transportation.

20 However, would anyone want to bring a  
21 motion for a resolution regarding NICE fare  
22 structure of a fare increase for a \$0.25 increase  
23 for passengers that use cash, and then a \$0.15  
24 for students, disabled, and senior citizens.

25 With that, that would fill a \$400,000

1 gap required to balance this budget for this  
2 period; does anyone want to bring a motion.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: I will  
4 bring that motion.

5 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Do I hear anyone  
6 else that wants to second that motion?

7 BOARD MEMBER ROSARIO: I do.

8 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: We now have  
9 before us the resolution of NICE fare structure  
10 in effective as of September 1st of 2014,  
11 regarding a fare increase. With a show of hands  
12 and a say of "aye" for those members who would  
13 agree to a fare increase, please raise your hand  
14 and say "aye."

15 BOARD MEMBERS: "Aye."

16 CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: We have a  
17 unanimous vote. Please note and reflect the  
18 minutes accordingly, that the committee has taken  
19 up and approved the motion for a resolution  
20 regarding NICE fare structure increase on  
21 September 1st of 2014, for \$0.25 only for cash  
22 customers and, of course, the \$0.15 for students,  
23 disabled, and senior citizens.

24 I think this public hearing and the  
25 Committee has fulfilled the business for today.

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We want to thank you for coming. We also want to thank you for your opinions and your thoughts. I want to thank you for the ideas that you have given Mr. Setzer and NICE transportation.

With that, I make a motion to adjourn this meeting. Would someone please make a motion to second that.

VICE CHAIRMAN BLESSINGER: I second that motion.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: The meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much for coming.

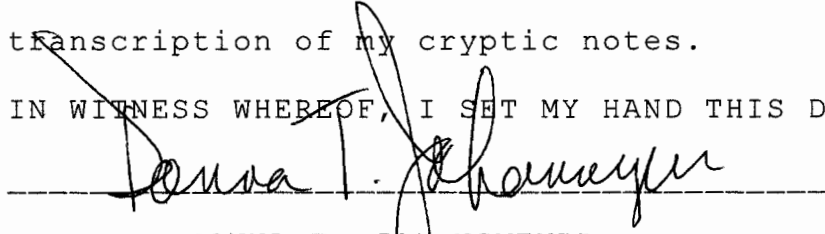
(Whereupon, the Nassau County Bus Transit Committee was concluded. Time noted: 5:45 P.M.)

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CERTIFICATE BY COURT REPORTER

I, DONNA T. JOHANSMEYER a Professional Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing testimony taken in the matter of the Nassau County Bus Transit Committee consisting of pages 3 through 42 inclusive is an accurate transcription of my cryptic notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I SET MY HAND THIS DAY.



DONNA T. JOHANSMEYER

CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER

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