

NASSAU COUNTY BUS TRANSIT COMMITTEE

July 31, 2025

6:45 p.m.

PUBLIC MEETING

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

DAWN FALCO, Chairperson

JOEL BERSE, Member

GEORGE MARTINEZ, Member

BOBBY KALOTEE, Member

DANIEL ALTER, Member

JACLENE D'AGOSTINO, Member

SHAHRIAR VICTORY, Member

RICHARD CLOLERY, Member

PATRICK GALLAGHER, County Attorney

JACK KHZOUZ, NICE CEO

DEBRA SMITH, Court Reporter

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2 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Good evening,
3 everybody. Thank you so much for
4 coming. This is a very important
5 meeting, so I'm so happy that you are
6 all here. I appreciate you coming out
7 in this weather.

8 I'm Dawn Falco. I am the current
9 chairperson of the Nassau County
10 Transit Committee, and I am going to be
11 starting the meeting by calling it to
12 order. I'm going to introduce our
13 members with a roll call. We have some
14 new members also.

15 First we have existing member
16 Mr. Joel Berse, whose been with us a
17 very long time. He's actually, I
18 think, the OG here today.

19 Ms. AnnMarie Reardon. Mr. George
20 Martinez. Dr. Bobby Kalotee. Myself,
21 Dawn Falco. Good evening again.
22 Mr. Daniel Alter. Ms. Jaclene
23 D'Agostino. Shahriar Victory.
24 Mr. Richard Clolery.

25 MEMBER CLOLERY: Hi. My name is

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2 Richard Clolery. I used to be a member
3 of the Bus Rider's Union. I am honored
4 to be here. I am hoping I can make a
5 difference to the community. Not just
6 the community though, I served in the
7 public as well.

8 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Richard is a
9 new member.

10 Thank you for joining us, Richard.
11 We're so happy to have you.

12 We have county attorney,
13 Mr. Patrick Gallagher.

14 I'd would like for us just to
15 confirm that we have a quorum this
16 evening at this meeting.

17 MR. GALLAGHER: We do.

18 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Also, just
19 going to briefly review the agenda for
20 tonight's meeting.

21 First, we're going to be having a
22 presentation from Mr. Jack Khzouz, the
23 CEO of the Nassau County Transit Board.

24 I'm going to just ask him to
25 approach the podium in a few moments,

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at which point he's going to review the 2025 operating budget, present a capital plan review, a quarter one score card, which he presents every quarter, and then we're going to go to questions from the committee.

I am going to ask that we limit them. I know this is a big meeting, but there are a lot of us here and a lot of questions to be had, and we still have a lot to take care of afterwards, so we'll answer the top one or two questions, if possible. We will then open for public comments. I am going to ask that the public comments be limited to two minutes.

I am going to ask Dr. Kalotee, if you would be so kind, as to just time the public comments to two minutes, if you have the timer on your phone. Thank you so much.

Then we're going to actually have our voting this evening on approving the operating budget, the capital plan,

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2 as well as the Title VI plan.

3 Then lastly, we do have one last
4 order of business, and that is to
5 nominate and vote on a couple of new
6 committee members. We're really
7 excited to have you guys here for that
8 as well. And I think with that, we're
9 going to get started.

10 Mr. Khzouz, if you would please
11 take the podium. Thank you.

12 MR. KHZOUZ: Thank you. I thank
13 everybody here for being here in the
14 weather. It is an important meeting on
15 behalf of the 900 or so members of NICE
16 bus, the team.

17 We have a few of our directors in
18 top leadership here to listen, so we're
19 going to get right to it.

20 So, again, our agenda here on the
21 presentation, I'll talk about the
22 operating budget, the capital plan
23 review, the Q1 and Q2, score card, some
24 project updates, and then we'll get
25 through the approval request. So,

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2 operating budget and capital plan.

3 Just shortly, I will kind of
4 short-circuit the presentation by
5 saying, through the support of the
6 county, our federal government and our
7 state government, we have a balanced
8 budget with even service hours for the
9 year.

10 We're not seeing a lot of growth
11 in service hours but we are seeing at
12 least stable service hours that allows
13 us to set up for the future.

14 For Paratransit, for example,
15 again, Paratransit is a on-demand
16 service; we don't plan the service
17 hours. Paratransit is growing, so you
18 are going to see some additional
19 service hours there. 255,000 last
20 year, about 267 this year. We're
21 keeping a close eye on that.

22 On fixed route, you kind of see a
23 decrease in service, but I will explain
24 to you what that is. It's actually
25 flat.

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Last year, we did Cricket games, which was a lot of service, and we also did concert service. So, concert service has been under-ridden or paid for by Live Nation. This year, they decided not to go forward with that.

So, those hours are basically flat when you look at them, so we're not going to really see a change in our service patterns.

So, our operating budget for this year, we're looking at about a three and a half percent increase in operating budget. It's about \$171,780,000.

New York State funding is a lion's share of that, 74 percent, \$126 million. Nassau County, about \$2.5 million. The next two lines are federal funding, about \$8.5 million.

Passenger revenue continues to grow because our ridership continues to grow. We are fully recovered pre-Covid. We have full buses. You

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all know that.

It speaks to the efficiency of the system also because we've increased service frequency on some routes. So, again, that grows.

And nonuser revenue, which is the advertising on the side of the buses, and some other minor revenue around, it's about \$800,000. So, we see about 171, we're going to say \$172 million in operating budget this year allows to us keep service stable. That's what we want. That's what everybody wants.

The fees that are involved here, so, the rates and fees change a little bit. We are, just like everybody else, suffering from increased costs. We will get to that in a minute. But, again, it does not affect service.

So, we see about a \$200,000 increase in our monthly fixed fee. Monthly fixed fee goes to pay for fixed assets for the county, on behalf of the county. The costs grow over time.

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2 The variable rate is the hour or
3 the dollar per hour per vehicle, hour
4 out there. It has gone up a little
5 bit, 103 to 107 on the fixed route
6 side.

7 On the Paratransit side, it goes
8 from \$62 to \$64. Again, not massive
9 increases. They are in keeping with
10 the increases in inflation, the
11 increases in energy costs, the
12 increases in insurance and health care.
13 We're going to see that in a second
14 right here.

15 So, as you can see, these are our
16 line by line top end costs or
17 increases. We share this with detail
18 level with accounting. You will see
19 some pretty big numbers in there.

20 The cost of utilities, up
21 26 percent and continue to grow. So,
22 we rely on compressed natural gas to
23 run our buses. We rely on electricity
24 to run the pumps to pump those. So,
25 it's expensive.

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2 We have six electric buses, and
3 those will become more expensive to
4 charge. You know, lights and
5 everything else. That's a pretty big
6 jump in expenses. Casualty and
7 liability is a big, big expense line, a
8 9 percent increase in casualty and
9 liability.

10 Nationally for transit, that's a
11 little less than the national average
12 as percentage increase but it's a big
13 number. We talked about that a little
14 bit earlier. We talked about it last
15 year. And it continues to grow.
16 General services on things like
17 software has grown quite a bit.
18 Technology has gotten much more
19 expensive.

20 But in general, you can see the
21 increase at the bottom. It's about a
22 2.7 percent increase. That matches
23 what about our operating income grew.

24 So, we were able to, again, put
25 out the same level of service even

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2 though expenses have grown over time.

3 Capital plan. There are some
4 important things to understand in the
5 capital plan. If you visited Rosa
6 Parks, you can see that we are
7 basically done. It will be timed just
8 like painting the Golden Gate Bridge:
9 We're done, now we have to start all
10 over again.

11 Because there are so many people
12 that go through that station, it needs
13 a lot of updates all the time, but we
14 have finished the first round of
15 renovations. It looks great. I don't
16 think it's ever looked better. Every
17 new surface has been touched. New
18 floors, new walls, new doors, new air
19 conditioning, new signs. It looks
20 great.

21 We're going to go back and do some
22 other secondary spaces, utility rooms,
23 the supervisor room, and the driver
24 break room. And it's time to redo the
25 bathrooms again. So, that's happening

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2 all the time. But that was a
3 multi-year multi-million dollar
4 upgrade.

5 The battery electric bus charging
6 stations on the back side of this
7 property I understand are being
8 hopefully approved next week. They
9 should be in service within the month.

10 Currently, we're charging the
11 buses with portable chargers. They
12 look like little college dorm
13 refrigerators. And they're slow
14 chargers. These will be fast chargers.

15 The Paratransit vehicle purchased
16 15 new Paratransit vehicles. That's
17 complete. They were delivered earlier
18 this year. They're all in service now.
19 It's great for our clients.

20 We also delivered and all are in
21 service 41 new compressed natural gas
22 buses. They're great. They're
23 fantastic buses. We have one of the
24 newest fleets in the country.

25 Our average age of a vehicle is

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2 three years now, so it really helps us
3 deliver service the way we need to.
4 That's fantastic.

5 We're just beginning a compressed
6 natural gas fuel island upgrade. So,
7 as I pointed out, over here on the back
8 side of this fence, you will see buses
9 parked. On the other side of that is
10 the compressed natural gas fueling
11 station.

12 There's a apron over the top. A
13 bus pulls in, it gets fueled, and it
14 gets pulled around the back. That
15 whole contraption needs to be upgraded.
16 It will take a little bit, a while.
17 It's a very specialized kind of
18 service, but that's going to be redone.

19 And then in the facilities, there
20 is a major exhaust hose reel project
21 that's just being completed that had
22 never been done in the life of this
23 building since 1988.

24 So, when a bus comes in, sometimes
25 it needs to idle as the mechanic is

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2 working on it, and the mechanic will
3 put this exhaust vent on to the exhaust
4 and the exhaust will be vented out of
5 the building efficiently, and this will
6 help us do that.

7 On top of that, we're going
8 through and redoing the whole methane
9 detection system. We also did an
10 upgrade to the HVAC system on our
11 server room, which we have a whole
12 dedicated server room. So that got
13 completed.

14 So, some major projects got
15 completed in the last 24 months. There
16 are major projects coming up. They are
17 listed in the capital plan, as we see
18 here.

19 The majority of them are fleet
20 replacement. So, we have to plan out,
21 a bus lasts -- a fixer-up bus lasts 12
22 years if it's a compressed natural gas
23 bus. After that, we can retire it.
24 That's at the end of its useful life,
25 12 years.

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2 But it's a continuous process
3 because you can't replace your whole
4 fleet all in one swoop, so we replace
5 them throughout the many years to come,
6 30, 40, 50 at a time. So that takes up
7 a lot of funding and a lot of time and
8 effort. All of these are listed in
9 your detail.

10 Just to continue, it's the same
11 thing for Paratransit. They have to be
12 replaced all the time. The majority of
13 capital is spent on fleet by far.

14 There are some facilities costs
15 associated with this, things like in
16 the next few years -- not listed here,
17 but in the next few years, things like
18 a renovation at Rockville Centre that
19 will need it, and that will be a major,
20 major expense.

21 Again, we're going to have to put
22 Rosa Parks back on there for things
23 like all the other stuff we want to do.
24 There's a laundry list of things that
25 are on our to-do list.

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2 I am kind of running through these
3 kind of quickly, but they are kind of
4 just more housekeeping things as far as
5 the capital plan goes and as far as the
6 operating budget goes.

7 The other very important thing,
8 every three years we are required to
9 update our Title VI program plan.
10 Title VI program plan is basically --
11 I'm going to read you the statement
12 from the FTA:

13 No person in United States shall,
14 on the grounds of race, color, or
15 national origin be excluded from
16 participating in, be denied the
17 benefits of, or be subjected to
18 discrimination under any program or
19 activity receiving federal financial
20 assistance.

21 So, we have to show the FTA
22 through our everyday operations, our
23 allocations of vehicles, our
24 neighborhoods that we serve, how we
25 serve, how we speak to our clients,

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2 that we know who our clients are, who
3 our riders are.

4 So, we undergo a extremely large
5 survey of our clients, and it takes
6 almost a year. We put all the data
7 together. We understand who our
8 clients are, where they live, where
9 they go to. That's where we get a lot
10 of our data on what's important to our
11 riders.

12 So, we know everything down to the
13 route level. How many people pay on a
14 Metro card; how many people pay on
15 cash; how many people, you know, use
16 the bus every day, for what purposes.
17 So that's what the program plan is.

18 So, the FTA requires us to produce
19 a new report to prove that we are
20 equitably using resources and then we
21 are publishing the report to the Board,
22 to the county, and to the public so
23 that everybody understands that. So
24 that's what this Title VI plan is
25 about.

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2 So, we talk about our score card.
3 We're going to review score card Q1 and
4 Q2. Q1, we did not have a meeting for,
5 so I will review both of them at once
6 here.

7 Some good information, some good
8 performances, some performances I would
9 like to see get much better.

10 On time performance for fixed
11 route for Q1 was almost 92 percent.
12 Pretty proud of that. That was great.
13 We won an incentive.

14 It's not -- by the way, for the
15 board members, these are liquidated
16 damages or incentives but they aren't
17 actual money. This is really just
18 credits and debits. We've never seen a
19 dime. The county has never seen a
20 dime. We just continue to run this
21 ledger, maybe until I leave and then
22 you guys can pay out something.

23 On time performance, 91 percent.
24 Pretty darn good for a fixed route
25 service in this atmosphere running a

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million miles a month. Pretty good for Q1.

Q2 slid a little bit to 85, or 89. The reason that slides from Q1 to Q2 is because traffic gets heavier in Spring and all the construction starts, so we end up having a lot of construction delays throughout the service area. But it happens.

So, again, a bus can only move as fast as the traffic in front of it. Important to remember.

Missed pullouts are the number of buses that don't pull out on time for AM, PM, midday, everything else. We had about a one percent missed pullout in Q1. We cut that drastically to less than one third of one percent. So, very, very few buses missed their pullout time. It's not that they don't pull out, it's they miss the window for pullout. So, very important to remember.

Accidents on the other hand, Q1

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2 was a pretty good performance, 1.2
3 accidents per hundred thousand
4 operating miles.

5 Unfortunately for Q2, we saw a big
6 increase in that again. That tends to
7 happen every year from Q1 to Q2. More
8 traffic in Q2. More congestion. We
9 tend to have more accidents.

10 Those accidents are -- all the
11 accidents, they're not just our fault.
12 There may be someone rear-ended us or
13 side-swiped us. On the other hand,
14 maybe we side-swiped someone. So, a
15 little high. Much higher than I would
16 like.

17 So, we will drop down to
18 Paratransit. Call answered ratio high
19 in both scores. That's the number of
20 calls that were answered before a call
21 drops. A lot of people will call. We
22 don't get to all of them quick enough
23 in their minds and they'll just drop.

24 We have tried to get to every
25 call. There is no hold. We try not to

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2 have a hold time beyond two minutes.
3 Sometimes that's possible, sometimes
4 it's not possible, and we miss a few
5 calls.

6 On time performance, 83 in Q1,
7 about 83 -- I'm going to cheat and call
8 it 83 in Q2. Still not exactly where I
9 would like to see; I'd like to see that
10 on time performance go to 85, but back
11 to remember what our hours looked like?
12 Our hours of service has grown. Our
13 demand has grown. Our fleet hasn't
14 grown. Our head count hasn't grown.

15 So it is a little bit more
16 difficult to get to on time on that,
17 but we'll continue to work on that.

18 Missed pullouts, again, very, very
19 small in both cases. Accidents for the
20 first quarter very good, second quarter
21 doubled. But when we say "doubled" in
22 Paratransit, they literally went from
23 two to three or four total accidents in
24 Paratransit. And, again, those are
25 accidents that may or may not be our

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fault.

Then productivity is passengers per hour. That's the amount of people on a vehicle at any one time. About the same, not quite at 1.4 where we'd like to be but still pretty good.

And then our DOT pass rate for the quarter, we don't do this -- I am sorry, for the half year, we don't do it by quarter because we only get results from DOT twice a year. So, we post it up here.

Our pass rate is 90. It's very good. It's one of the highest in the state. And every vehicle gets inspected twice. We have a on-site inspector that lives here, and they inspect every vehicle twice. So, pretty happy with that inspection ratio.

So that's the score card. Again, we have a little bit of work to do here and there. We're never happy with where we are. We always think we can

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2 get a little better. So that's very
3 important to us.

4 Service updates from Q1 and Q2.
5 So, I will go through these pretty
6 quickly just to kind of recap this.

7 Mini Syosset was a pilot we
8 launched in Syosset. It was an
9 on-demand service. You hailed the
10 vehicle and it came to you and took you
11 somewhere else.

12 We tried it for a while. It did
13 not produce the results we wanted it
14 to. We discontinued it. It was
15 about -- Erika, eight months?

16 MS. RICHARDS: We launched
17 July 2024.

18 MR. KHZOUZ: It was about ten
19 months or so that we actually ran it.
20 We discontinued it earlier this year
21 again. We're very quick to pilot
22 things. We want to pilot things as
23 quickly as we can. Sometimes they
24 work, sometimes they don't. So we're
25 able to pull those back and use those

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2 resources somewhere else.

3 The new Jamaica terminal launched,
4 that has been a big advantage for us.
5 It's really worked out very, very well.
6 So, all the new service that goes into
7 Jamaica has got a new terminal. It's
8 much safer for pedestrians, much safer
9 for buses.

10 The weekday extension to UBS arena
11 was discontinued. Again, no one was
12 riding it. It was there, just wasn't
13 being taken advantage of, so we
14 discontinued that.

15 The N21 and 27, some coordination
16 issues more than anything else there.
17 The N22X express stops added. We added
18 some more stops on the express.

19 The N25 and the 58, again, they
20 were you kind of inter-combined.
21 Again, we're still trying to figure out
22 what the right combination there is and
23 when and where.

24 The 54/55 at Sunrise Mall, again
25 we're kind of bypassing the Sunrise

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2 Mall. We don't even know if the
3 Sunrise Mall is a mall anymore. But
4 the N79 express, the N79 is still
5 there. The express is not. We changed
6 those trips into regular trips.

7 And then Jones Beach service
8 started. It will go through -- right
9 now, actually, we're going to pull it
10 back over to September instead of
11 October. So, we'll pull it back to
12 September. We will see how that goes.

13 Then Live Nation -- I think I
14 talked about that earlier -- Live
15 Nation chose not to sponsor concert
16 service anymore, so there is no concert
17 service. Again, we continue to serve
18 the beach though.

19 So, that recaps my presentation.
20 Ms. Chairwoman, Ms. Falco, I don't know
21 if anybody has any questions that you
22 will allow me to answer?

23 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Yes, thank
24 you.

25 So, at this point in time, I am

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2 going to turn the floor over to the
3 committee members for any questions
4 that they may have.

5 This is a time for questions for
6 Mr. Khzouz. It's time for questions,
7 not debates.

8 I am going to start at the far end
9 with Mr. Berse, please.

10 MEMBER BERSE: I won't let you
11 down. You know that.

12 First question I would have is,
13 you said that the life expectancy of
14 the line buses are 12 years. What is
15 the average time for a Paratransit bus?

16 MR. KHZOUZ: Paratransit is seven
17 years.

18 MEMBER BERSE: Of the fleet, how
19 many line buses and also Paratransit
20 buses are held in reserve during
21 operating times?

22 MR. KHZOUZ: So, the FTA allows us
23 to have 20 percent of the total fleet
24 in reserve. So, in general, on the
25 fixed route side, that ends up being

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2 about 68 buses on the fixed route side.
3 On the Paratransit side, it ends up
4 being 20 vehicles. A little less than
5 that, really, on Paratransit.

6 MEMBER BERSE: But knowing how
7 this place operates, have you reached
8 that capacity of what you're allowed or
9 have you not had to do that?

10 MR. KHZOUZ: No, we do that. We
11 have to follow that.

12 MEMBER BERSE: I thought maybe
13 that you were allowed 68, but let's say
14 you have 65.

15 MR. KHZOUZ: At any one time,
16 buses are rotating in and out of
17 service, so at any one time, we may
18 have five or six extra above the spare
19 ratio demand.

20 The FTA doesn't like for you to
21 hoard vehicles, obviously because they
22 pay for them, and so you have to show
23 that you are staying within the
24 guidelines.

25 MEMBER BERSE: Is Paratransit

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2 still subcontracting, like with cars
3 and things like that?

4 MR. KHZOUZ: Yes.

5 MEMBER BERSE: How much of the
6 work is going that way?

7 MR. KHZOUZ: About 20 percent.
8 Twenty percent of the work is
9 outsourced. We manage the contractors
10 but they're outsourced.

11 MEMBER BERSE: My last one that I
12 can think of right now is how is the
13 bypassing of Sunrise Mall, which is not
14 a mall, and it's not going to be a mall
15 again, how is that affecting the
16 schedules that are either on Sunrise
17 Highway or on the roads coming down
18 Carmans Road?

19 MR. KHZOUZ: All of the schedules
20 have been reassessed. So, without a
21 stop, your bus can run faster, right?
22 That doesn't mean that there's not
23 people to service along Sunrise in that
24 area. So, we did eliminate the stop
25 and we did adjust all the time points

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2 up and down the route.

3 MEMBER BERSE: All right. I guess
4 that's what I got out of my notes while
5 you were speaking. Thank you.

6 I will pass the buck.

7 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you,
8 Mr. Berse.

9 Ann Marie, do you have any
10 questions?

11 MEMBER REARDON: I do not. Thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Sure. No
14 problem. Thank you.

15 Mr. Martinez, any questions?

16 MEMBER MARTINEZ: I do have a
17 couple of questions.

18 How is the fringe rate down
19 seven percent although the wages
20 increased?

21 MR. KHZOUZ: I am sorry?

22 MEMBER MARTINEZ: The fringe rate,
23 you said it's down seven percent where
24 the wages, they've increased?

25 MR. KHZOUZ: Well, it's mostly

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2 due to -- and, you know, Juwad (phon)
3 is here, and he can help me answer this
4 question, but mostly that's due to the
5 cost of -- or the head count, number
6 one, managed over time, or number two.

7 MEMBER MARTINEZ: Okay. All
8 right.

9 And then I guess I got another
10 question in regards to the
11 revitalization of the Hempstead
12 terminal, how it affects -- will it
13 affect the Rosa Parks and their
14 projection for increased need of
15 maintenance?

16 MR. KHZOUZ: Yes. So, currently
17 what we did -- and Sadesh (phon) is
18 here, and Sadesh managed that process
19 throughout. He really focused in on
20 low maintenance touch points, you know,
21 because we get 20,000 people through
22 there a day.

23 We do have a contractor that helps
24 keep the place clean, and they've
25 really done a great job, but we need to

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2 keep on top of it. They are on a PMI
3 schedule so that we keep on top of it.
4 But most of those surfaces are low
5 maintenance surfaces for high public
6 traffic areas.

7 So, good question.

8 MEMBER MARTINEZ: That's it from
9 me. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

11 Dr. Kalotee, any questions?

12 MEMBER KALOTEE: I have no
13 questions because I'm listening to the
14 wonderful questions.

15 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you so
16 much.

17 I just have a couple of questions,
18 Mr. Khzouz.

19 Regarding discontinuation of the
20 stops at the Sunrise Mall, in the event
21 that there is something else placed
22 there, is that something that can be
23 revisited in terms of re-adding that to
24 the route?

25 MR. KHZOUZ: Definitely, and we

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2 react very quickly.

3 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

4 Just one more question. So, just
5 to confirm, with the exception of the
6 pilot express service being
7 discontinued, the UBS Arena service
8 being discontinued, all else remains
9 the same, no other cuts and no fair
10 increase, is that right?

11 MR. KHZOUZ: So, I will say this.
12 The MTA has announced yesterday that
13 they are potentially putting a fare
14 increase in January. We have not
15 discussed this with anyone yet. We
16 will have to keep an eyeball to see
17 what they do, but in order to keep the
18 free transfer between us and the MTA in
19 place, we've got to follow the MTA
20 pricing policy or we break the transfer
21 and all those people that are
22 transferred to Queens buses, some have
23 to pay a second fare.

24 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: A full second
25 fare?

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2 MR. KHZOUZ: A full second fare.

3 So, we've got to balance
4 everything, right? We're not there yet
5 though. I think what we need to do is
6 continue to keep our ears open and see
7 what they do, and then in our fall
8 meeting, we can discuss and go from
9 there.

10 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: It will not
11 affect any of our votes taking place
12 today?

13 MR. KHZOUZ: Right.

14 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

15 Mr. Daniel Alter, any questions?

16 MEMBER ALTER: I have just one,
17 and thank you.

18 When it comes to the Northwell
19 Jones Beach, did you say that it was
20 valued underutilized or --

21 MR. KHZOUZ: No, Jones Beach, the
22 actual beach service has continued to
23 grow year over year over year. It
24 continues to be very, very -- it's our
25 one service that's a lot of fun, right?

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2 We love providing it and it's still in
3 place and will continue to be in place.

4 MEMBER ALTER: For the concerts?
5 I know the Live Nation pulled out.

6 MR. KHZOUZ: We're not going to
7 have concert service at all.

8 MEMBER ALTER: It's not getting
9 replaced?

10 MR. KHZOUZ: It's not getting
11 replaced until Live Nation comes to us
12 for that. And the reason being is,
13 that is a single sole private
14 proprietor benefiting from public
15 transit.

16 We wanted them to help pay for it,
17 right? And we agreed with them very
18 early on. It's the only reason it
19 really came back.

20 It's very expensive for us to run
21 because it has to be on overtime, and
22 it's a lot of buses, and very late at
23 night too. So, it becomes a challenge
24 operationally to run, and that's why we
25 agreed to run it with their support.

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2 But without their support, it becomes
3 very difficult to do. We'd have to end
4 up cutting other services.

5 MEMBER ALTER: That has not
6 occurred?

7 MR. KHZOUZ: No, not at all.

8 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Jaclene, do
9 you have any questions?

10 MEMBER D'AGOSTINO: No, I don't
11 have any questions.

12 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Mr. Clolery?

13 MEMBER CLOLERY: Hi there. My
14 name is Richard Clolery. Yes, I have a
15 couple of questions.

16 OMNY, you said it was going to be
17 implemented during the first quarter of
18 next year. Are there any specific
19 dates?

20 MR. KHZOUZ: Not yet. So, we took
21 for the public -- we talked about OMNY
22 before the public came in.

23 OMNY is a MTA product. We will be
24 the first ones to basically license it
25 to use here in Nassau County, but it's

1 Transit Committee Meeting
2 their product under their timeline and
3 their guidelines. So, they are still
4 figuring out OMNY in the city and --

5 MEMBER CLOLERY: I've heard
6 stories about that as well.

7 MR. KHZOUZ: But we have been in
8 talks with them for a year and a half
9 and now it's really coming down to,
10 okay, let's get going. And so we hope
11 to launch it in Q1 but we're still
12 going through the process.

13 MEMBER CLOLERY: Question number
14 two. Concerning mini, I know it was a
15 disaster back in Syosset, and that
16 grieves me a little because to be
17 honest, I definitely see potential, you
18 know, supplementing for bus lines that
19 are lost, like the M50 and M47, N73,
20 74, I know a lot of people that would
21 benefit from having it implemented here
22 in Nassau, in East Meadow and in
23 Hicksville.

24 I know it's a bit of an oddball
25 and I know your budget is a bit

1 Transit Committee Meeting
2 unusual, but it's just that I miss
3 those buses. I miss them because --

4 MR. KHZOUZ: And completely
5 understand --

6 MEMBER CLOLERY: I know it was
7 underutilized. I respect the reason it
8 was cut even though I'm angered.

9 And I'm sure that everyone knows
10 me, many instances of me coming here
11 over the years. I was hoping against
12 hope that you would maybe see reason to
13 restore it, and also pressuring you
14 guys to help increase something from
15 Nassau County. I'm hoping that maybe
16 my presence here can help.

17 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Okay. Thank
18 you, Mr. Clolery.

19 MEMBER CLOLERY: I know that you
20 guys think I'm just one of the people
21 that use N50, but given the
22 opportunity, especially now given
23 what's happening -- well, I'm sure
24 you've read the Newsday, the headlines
25 about road troubles.

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2 I personally think this is an
3 opportunity that this could be used as
4 a marketing tool. We can encourage
5 people to reduce pollution, increase
6 their use of the buses. I know how
7 that must sound. It sounds what it
8 is --

9 MR. KHZOUZ: Excellent points, and
10 I will tell you with Erica backing me
11 up on this, we continue to study other
12 solutions specifically for that area.

13 We have to figure out what's going
14 to be efficient for the service and
15 efficient for the county to ensure that
16 we're not stealing resources from other
17 already highly unified services, but
18 what we have to do is kind of figure
19 out where we're going to land for '26
20 and then we can start planning again.
21 But great points. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: The committee
23 understands it is a delicate balancing
24 act.

25 We're just asking questions at

1 Transit Committee Meeting

2 this point.

3 MEMBER CLOLERY: I'm sorry.

4 MEMBER BERSE: A point of
5 information. Just so that you know,
6 the MTA has been distributing the OMNY
7 cards to their people that have
8 disability credentials. I didn't know
9 if you were aware.

10 MR. KHZOUZ: We are aware.

11 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

12 At this point, I am going to ask
13 Mr. Victory if you have any questions
14 for Mr. Khzouz?

15 MEMBER VICTORY: Thank you, Madam
16 Chairman. A couple of quick questions.

17 First of all, thank you very much
18 for a beautiful presentation. A lot of
19 information. Extremely useful.

20 Have you ever done a study of
21 whether it's a good idea to make some
22 of the buses smaller in the
23 neighborhoods that have one lane roads?
24 Like my neighborhood, these huge buses
25 on a one lane road.

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2 MR. KHZOUZ: Yes. That's a great
3 question. Yes, we do assign smaller
4 buses to routes that are more
5 efficient.

6 For example, Elmont Flexi is a
7 smaller bus. Roads that are narrower,
8 we can't turn a bus around anywhere in
9 the neighborhood, so we have to use a
10 smaller bus.

11 Sometimes it's operationally
12 complex to put one trip with a big bus
13 and then the second trip with a smaller
14 bus, so we tend not to do that, but we
15 do assign smaller vehicles where it's
16 appropriate. But good point.

17 MEMBER VICTORY: Also, you
18 mentioned non-rider income. I know
19 there are services like Motorola where
20 they install the LTRs on a lot of
21 commercial vehicles and they collect
22 information, unregistered stolen
23 vehicles and all of that, and they pay
24 these companies. Have we ever looked
25 into --

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2 MR. KHZOUZ: On the LTR issue,
3 yes, we've been approached by that. We
4 tend not to do that on public transit
5 but we can certainly look at that
6 again.

7 In public transit, the way it
8 worked -- this was a while ago -- was
9 they would broadcast advertising inside
10 the vehicle for their service.

11 Sometimes it gets in the way of
12 automatic passenger counters and other
13 technology annunciators. Things like
14 that. It's complex. Technology is
15 changing so much. We should revisit
16 that.

17 But that's a great point,
18 Mr. Victory.

19 MEMBER VICTORY: Thank you very
20 much.

21 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.
22 Thank you.

23 So, at this time, we're going to
24 open the floor up for public comments.

25 While there are a lot of members

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2 here from the public today, I would
3 like for this to run in some sort of an
4 orderly fashion.

5 I'm going to ask that when you do
6 speak, you do reach the podium, and
7 please state your name very clearly
8 because this is being recorded, the
9 meeting.

10 In addition to that, please
11 identify where you are from. And if
12 you are representing an organization,
13 please state the name of the
14 organization that you are here on
15 behalf of, or if you are speaking on
16 behalf of yourself.

17 The reason why that's really
18 important is because the bylaws do
19 permit for certain specific time limits
20 or possible time extensions based on
21 how you identify yourself and/or your
22 organization that you are here
23 presenting.

24 Yes, ma'am, would you like to
25 start? Please state your name at the

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2 podium. Welcome. Thank you. Just
3 speak slowly so that it can all be
4 recorded.

5 MS. SIMPKINS: My name is Alisha
6 Simpkins. I'm from Franklin Square. I
7 am here for myself.

8 I just wanted to know why all
9 these X buses -- why they keep adding X
10 buses. It looks like they increased
11 even before they decrease or go out
12 completely. So what's the purpose of
13 the X buses, all those X buses coming
14 out? That's it.

15 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Oh, thank you
16 so much. You can sit down.

17 MEMBER BERSE: All of the
18 questions will be answered at the end.

19 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: At the end, I
20 am going to ask the CEO of NICE to
21 return to the podium, at which point he
22 will address all of them. Thank you.

23 Yes, sir? Please state your name.

24 MR. KEMPER: Good evening,
25 everyone. My name is Matt Kemper, and

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I am here on behalf of Passengers United.

So, I'm here to just get some things on behalf of our president and CEO Charles D'Souza, who unfortunately could not make it tonight.

Some of the questions have already been answered regarding OMNY, but one of the things that I really want to know is, there used to be a MetroCard machine at Hempstead Transit Center.

I am very curious if there is any consideration for an OMNY machine to be installed there. I know that's an MTA decision, and I understand that, but a lot of riders really love the fact that they have a MetroCard machine right there at Hempstead train center so they don't have to go all the way to Queens or the subway system or whatever to be able to refill their MetroCards.

Obviously that would be a huge benefit to all of the riders if they're able to have an OMNY machine right at

1 Transit Committee Meeting
2 Hempstead train center.

3 And if there is a possibility of
4 having some other designated major
5 locations where maybe an OMNY machine
6 could be installed. For example, maybe
7 Nassau County, there could be, you
8 know, retail shops that could sell OMNY
9 cards. That way they don't have to go
10 all the way to New York City. Things
11 like that. That's something I would
12 really love to see.

13 One of the other concerns we have
14 is regarding the reduced fare EZ pay,
15 which was discontinued. Now, one of
16 our -- one of my colleagues has raised
17 concerns regarding that specific issue,
18 and that they have to use the NICE bus
19 stop because they can't use their
20 reduced fare EZ pay system to be able
21 to pay for their rides. So, that's one
22 of the other things that was a concern.

23 Then I appreciate the concerns
24 from the board members regarding -- I
25 actually live in East Meadow

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2 specifically, and I used to ride the
3 N51 all the time.

4 I loved having that convenience,
5 being able to go from Roosevelt Field
6 right to my house right off of Merrick
7 Avenue. And I would love to see, like
8 one of the other members, Richard, had
9 said earlier, having maybe, like, an
10 East Meadow Flexi or Merrick Flexi,
11 something like that may be considered
12 in the future.

13 So that's really all I have to
14 say. Thank you so much.

15 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.
16 Thank you so much.

17 Yes ma'am?

18 MS. NICKS: Good evening. My name
19 is Olena Nicks. I am legislator for
20 the second legislative district.

21 So, I did just have two questions.

22 The first is, I saw that there was
23 an increase in the marketing budget, so
24 just wondering where that marketing is
25 going, which avenues are being used,

1 Transit Committee Meeting
2 and whether it's an increase because of
3 social media focuses.

4 The second question is just to
5 piggyback off of one of the board
6 member's questions about the downtown
7 revitalization within Hempstead.

8 I am sure as many of you know,
9 Hempstead is going through a downtown
10 revitalization, which Rosa Park is
11 included within that.

12 So, wondering if there will need
13 to be an increase for maintenance and
14 repairs in that area since there is an
15 expected of increased traffic, there
16 will be new apartments going up, and
17 things of that nature.

18 So, thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

20 MR. TORCIVIA: Joe Torcivia,
21 Levittown, representing myself.

22 Dawn, I would just like to
23 formally request a few extra seconds
24 because my comments address some of
25 the --

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2 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: I can provide
3 you with three minutes.

4 MR. TORCIVIA: Thank you very
5 much. That's much appreciated.

6 I don't have much to complain
7 about beyond the usual intolerable
8 90-minute service gaps on the N49 on
9 Saturdays. Let's reduce that to a more
10 traditional pre-NICE 60 minutes,
11 please. So good job overall.

12 With all of the experiments that
13 NICE is implementing -- the pilots, the
14 N19X, the now canceled 79X and such --
15 why not consider something I've brought
16 up in the past: A loop that follows
17 the N49 south from Hicksville Railroad,
18 turns east on Hempstead Turnpike, and
19 follows the long gone N73 up Jerusalem
20 Avenue back to Hicksville railroad?

21 Back when I had proposed it, I
22 think Jack said something about turning
23 the bus around, but with a loop,
24 there's no need to do that; it can
25 alternate direction and start down

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2 Jerusalem and back up Newbridge,
3 allowing anyone to get on at any point
4 and reach Hicksville, Walmart, and
5 connect with other Hicksville and
6 Hempstead Turnpike lines, maybe even
7 extend that loop as far as North
8 Jerusalem Road between Newbridge Road
9 and Wantagh Avenue and cover some of
10 the NICE mini territory with a fixed
11 route and restore service once covered
12 by the N47 and N50, N73, N74. But I
13 will realistically settle for the
14 Hicksville Levittown loop.

15 Unlike running a mostly empty, by
16 my admittedly limited observation, bus
17 on Sunrise Highway, which never had a
18 straight line service before and is
19 parallel to many LIRR stations for
20 riders to use instead, this would serve
21 areas formally covered by NICE, the
22 MTA, and even the old private carriers.

23 And thank you very much for
24 listening.

25 Thank you, Dawn.

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2 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

3 Have we completed this side of the
4 room? Sir, did you have comments?

5 Anyone on this side of the room?

6 Is that all for public comments?

7 Mr. Khzouz, could you please take
8 the podium once again to address some
9 of the questions of the public
10 concerns?

11 MR. KHZOUZ: Express buses on
12 Franklin Square, a lot of those have
13 gotten converted from locals to
14 expresses to speed up travel along the
15 turnpike.

16 You know, the buses stop almost
17 every quarter mile. It takes a lot of
18 time and effort to do that. That's why
19 there are expresses.

20 We balance expresses versus locals
21 so we can balance that by trip. So, as
22 we go forward, if we need to pull back
23 expresses, we will do that. It's
24 fairly easy to do.

25 Very, very good question. Thank

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you.

MS. RICHARDS: I just want to add that for our summer schedule, we actually reduced the number of expresses that were running and converted those trips to local buses. So, it is better than it was in the winter.

MR. KHZOUZ: Mr. Kemper, having an OMNY machine at Hempstead Transit Center, currently there is no plans for that currently. We're going to see how it goes. Our issue is the expense and down time of those machines, but we have to figure it out as we go forward.

OMNY is already -- I've already seen them currently available at local retailers here, so it's growing. It will grow much more once we announce it's coming. So that's on the horizon.

But excellent points. Excellent points there.

Legislator, we do understand the revitalization of downtown. We're

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2 continuing to look at that and see what
3 we need to do as we go forward. This
4 is really the schedule -- the expenses
5 for this year.

6 You know, future, we will have to
7 look and see what we need to do. How
8 we need to manage traffic in and out is
9 going to be a challenge, but we'll do
10 that. There is a bus pulling in and
11 out every six minutes, so it's going go
12 be a challenge, but we'll continue to
13 do that.

14 Our marketing expenses grew a
15 little bit and will grow a little bit
16 as we go forward as we do more in the
17 way of outreach with our different apps
18 and things like that.

19 There's also many more outreach --
20 Erika and her team of three, including
21 her, does about 30 outreach events a
22 year, so that does hit us with some
23 expenses there too. So, that's where
24 that comes from.

25 Joe, my best friend, and

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2 Mr. Clolery, good points. I hear you
3 on that East Meadow Hicksville south
4 thing. We'll continue to look at it,
5 as I said before. It's going to take a
6 little bit of study.

7 Our solution might be phased in.
8 In other words, it may only be this big
9 to start with, but maybe if we get
10 ridership, it will grow. I can't
11 commit to anything at this point.
12 We'll continue to look at things.
13 Maybe there is a possibility in 2026.

14 MR. TORCIVIA: I'm only thinking
15 of, like, supplementing weekday
16 service. You know, no early morning,
17 no late at night.

18 MR. KHZOUZ: That's how we would
19 do it.

20 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you so
21 much.

22 At this time, I'm going to ask the
23 committee who we have here today to
24 vote on the proposed operating -- the
25 operating budget and capital plan,

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2 Title VI plans.

3 As you know, we do need to have a
4 majority vote in order for it to pass,
5 so I will ask the members -- we are an
6 independent body from NICE, for those
7 of you who are not sure how we run --

8 MEMBER BERSE: I make a motion.

9 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: I am going
10 to -- Yes. Go ahead, Joel.

11 MEMBER BERSE: I make the motion
12 that we accept the plans as they were
13 discussed for us.

14 MEMBER KALOTEE: I second.

15 MR. GALLAGHER: The motion ought
16 to be to approve the plan.

17 MEMBER CLOLERY: I approve the
18 motion.

19 I'm sorry.

20 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: We're going to
21 start -- we will work our way down
22 there.

23 Mr. Berse, you want it unanimous?
24 Is that what you were making the motion
25 for?

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2 MEMBER BERSE: Sure. That's
3 probably the easiest way.

4 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Is there
5 anyone who disagrees with a unanimous
6 vote to pass the budget for 2025?

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: We all agree?

9 MEMBER BERSE: We're all in favor.

10 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: We have
11 another fantastic year.

12 With that, we do have some new
13 items to address.

14 MR. GALLAGHER: One more thing. I
15 think you need to make a motion to
16 authorize staff to send the Q1 and Q2
17 score cards to the legislature and the
18 county executive.

19 MEMBER CLOLERY: I do have one
20 thing, though. I need a more complete
21 book. I noticed there were some pages
22 missing from mine.

23 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Are you sure?

24 MEMBER BERSE: They just didn't
25 fill them in yet.

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2 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: They may not
3 be in order.

4 MEMBER BERSE: There are dividers
5 but there aren't things to put in them
6 yet.

7 MEMBER CLOLERY: I'm sorry.

8 MEMBER KALOTEE: I make that
9 motion that you just suggested, so we
10 need a second.

11 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: The quarter 1
12 and 2 score cards.

13 MEMBER MARTINEZ: I second that
14 motion.

15 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Okay. With
16 that, I am going to be stepping down as
17 the chairperson of the committee.

18 I appreciate all of the time and
19 assistance that I've received from
20 everybody, so thank you for that during
21 my tenure, but at this point in time, I
22 am going to be making a motion to
23 nominate a new chair, and I am making a
24 motion to appoint Mr. Bobby Kalotee.

25 MEMBER ALTER: I would like to

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2 second that.

3 MEMBER MARTINEZ: Second that.

4 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Okay. With
5 that, Mr. Kalotee, thank you.

6 MEMBER KALOTEE: I thank you, the
7 chair. I am very humbled. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

9 MEMBER KALOTEE: It is going to be
10 very difficult to fill your shoes but I
11 will try to do my very best to be
12 united and serve why we are here, why
13 we are here to show our support to the
14 management, but our priority always is
15 and will be, at least to me, and I'm
16 sure the members feel the same, in the
17 public we are serving.

18 Individually, I want to say to
19 every board member, thank you for your
20 trust. Thank you for your respect.
21 I'm a 24/7 available person. I don't
22 sleep. I believe sleeping is for dead
23 people.

24 So, if any one of you have any
25 issues, please call so we can work

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2 together without any grandstanding for
3 any other reason than to serve the
4 public. And I thank you. Please do
5 not hesitate to call me.

6 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: With that, I
7 would also like to ask the committee if
8 there are any nominations for a vice
9 president chair.

10 MEMBER KALOTEE: Yes. I am making
11 a motion for my very dear friend for a
12 long time I known to him, a
13 hardworking, a great gentleman who care
14 for the public, my friend Daniel Alter
15 to be the vice chair.

16 MEMBER ALTER: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: I'll second
18 that.

19 MEMBER KALOTEE: All in favor?

20 (The members respond in the
21 affirmative.)

22 MEMBER KALOTEE: Also, I would
23 like to make a motion for the
24 secretary, my new friend, even though I
25 known her a long time, AnnMarie

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2 Reardon, to be the secretary. We would
3 love to have you as the secretary, so I
4 make the motion. We need a second.

5 MEMBER ALTER: I will second that.

6 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: All in favor?

7 (The members respond in the
8 affirmative.)

9 MEMBER KALOTEE: Thank you so
10 much.

11 MR. GALLAGHER: As a procedural
12 matter, we need to approve the capital
13 program and the Title VI as separate
14 motions.

15 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: They can't be
16 covered under one?

17 MR. GALLAGHER: No.

18 MEMBER KALOTEE: All right.

19 MEMBER BERSE: I now make a motion
20 to accept the capital plan.

21 MEMBER KALOTEE: All in favor say
22 "Aye." We need a second.

23 MEMBER REARDON: Second.

24 MEMBER KALOTEE: With the second,
25 all in favor say "Aye."

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2 (The members respond in the
3 affirmative.)

4 MEMBER KALOTEE: Abstention?

5 (No response.)

6 MEMBER KALOTEE: All good.

7 Unanimous. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: The title VI
9 plans.

10 MEMBER BERSE: I make a motion to
11 accept the Title VI as presented.

12 MEMBER ALTER: I second it.

13 MEMBER KALOTEE: All in favor say
14 "Aye."

15 (The members respond in the
16 affirmative.)

17 MEMBER KALOTEE: Opposed?

18 Abstention?

19 (No response.)

20 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: With that, I
21 am going to request a motion to adjourn
22 this meeting.

23 MEMBER KALOTEE: Before I make a
24 motion, I again want to say thank you,
25 the team. I know you many, many, many

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2 years, even though we didn't recognize
3 each other on the name.

4 And thank you to you, Madam Chair,
5 for the service to the public.
6 Everyone that I spoke, they spoke very
7 highly of you.

8 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: Thank you.

9 MEMBER KALOTEE: I am very humbled
10 to follow in your footsteps. I thank
11 you, thank you, and thank you, and all
12 the members who already previously
13 serving and continue serving, thank you
14 being the team.

15 And the new one, welcome, God
16 bless, and thank you.

17 Now we need a motion to adjourn.

18 MEMBER REARDON: So moved.

19 CHAIRPERSON FALCO: I second.

20 MEMBER KALOTEE: All in favor say
21 "Aye."

22 (The members respond in the
23 affirmative.)

24 MEMBER KALOTEE: Abstention?

25 (No response.)

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MEMBER KALOTEE: Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 7:42 p.m., the
meeting concluded.)

* * * *

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED THAT THE FOREGOING IS
A TRUE AND ACCURATE TRANSCRIPT OF THE
STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES OF THIS MEETING



Debra Smith
Court Reporter

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