NASSAU COUNTY
BUS TRANSIT COMMITTEE
MEETING

Nassau Inter-County Express
700 Commercial Avenue
Garden City, New York 11530

September 28, 2017
6:00 PM

BEFORE: SHELDON SHRENKEL, CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SAMUEL LITTMAN, ESQ.
JEAN DUROSEAU
LIVIO TONY ROSARIO
DAWN FALCO
KATHY COMERFORD
CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Good evening.

Welcome to the Nassau County bus transit committee. I'm Sheldon Shrenkel. I'm chairman of the committee. I would like to introduce our members and act as a roll call. To my immediate left is Dawn Falco and this is Kathy Comerford to my far left. Jean Duroseau, Tony Rosario and counsel for the board, Mr. Sam Littman (indicating).

Our agenda today, before I get to that, I would like to take an acknowledgement of receipt of a transcript from the meeting held on June 22, with a show of hands if everyone received it.

(All raise hands.)

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Miss Anderson, note in the minutes accordingly, everyone has received it.

Our agenda today is we are going to hear a presentation from the CEO of NICE Transportation, Michael Setzer. After that we will follow up with public
comments. The rules generally are, we keep our comments to three minutes per person, you come up to the podium and identify yourself or whether you're representing an organization and in some cases, we can get an answer to your question and in other cases, the comments get noted as part of the public hearing. I would also like to request that everyone, if you have not done so, please turn your phones off to a silent mode. With that I would like to introduce chairman, CEO of NICE Transportation, Mr. Michael Setzer.

MR. SETZER: Good evening. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening to the committee.

This evening we have a pretty economical agenda and I am happy to tell you we are not going to ask you to do anything difficult, unlike the last several meetings we had. We have no action items that will ask for your action. We do have several information
items, some that are regular ones and
some that are special reports. I always
like to give you, at the September
meeting, to give you sort of a look ahead
to what next year's budget looks like
based on what we know today, and what we
know today will change over time. Let me
work up from the bottom on this one.
Right now we have a deficit of about
$2,000,000 between that figure of 132
million which represents our estimated
cost for maintaining exactly the same
service as today for a full 12 months in
2018, and the line above that is 130
million, that's what we can identify as
available revenue as of right now.

We have some water here.

(Pause)

MR. SETZER: So right above that the
130 million, that represents what we know
about available revenues for next year as
of today. And as I am sure you remember
from previous years, a lot of things
change. A lot of things will be
different than what we know today. If I can just take you through it very briefly. There's only a couple of points in that column that are worth your attention. If you look at the top line, New York State Operating Assistance, which you remember is half of our budget, as of right now we are making, for purposes of this, we are making assumptions that there won't be an increase. Last year there was an increase of a million-three, so that could very well go up, but there's, since the legislature is not even in session at this point, we are just using a very conservative assumption there, so the two million dollar deficit assumes that nothing happens, nothing is added in Albany and so it's a pretty conservative assumption, but for purposes of what we are doing right now, I think that's a reasonable thing to do. The second line, the required STOA match, that's the same as last year because it's required. The
third line is really the big story here for right now. The county budget, which at this point is the administration's recommendations to the legislature, has $7.3 million dollars in discretionary county funding. That's a bigger amount than we've seen in a long time. There are several steps. The legislature will act on this budget in October, if they meet their own budget schedule, so that could change in the legislature and then, if you recall, then it goes to NIFA. Last year it went to NIFA twice, sent it back, went to them again, more cuts were made, so there are several steps still to go. This is just the first step, but nonetheless it starts out at a much more favorable amount than we saw last year certainly, so that's good news and let's hope that persists throughout the whole process. The next three lines are federal, no change in those. Passenger revenue, you see that goes down a little bit, and that goes
down, it's a combination of two things. There was a little fare increase last spring, but we also, in April, cut a lot of service. Remember we cut almost ten percent of the platform hours, so when you cut service you also lose fare box revenue, so the two just about offset each other, so in the end there is just a very small difference in the fare box revenue. Nonuser revenue, that's advertising, also at this point, stays the same. So there are some pretty conservative assumptions here. If the county budget, if the administrative recommendation holds and that's what the final budget is like, then we have a much more manageable challenge than we did last year. At the end of last year, that $2,000,000 number, as we look forward, last year after NIFA, that was 12 million, so this is much more, it would be nice if it was 0, but it's a much more comfortable, manageable thing. The other thing I would like to point out, there
are things we could do last year, like close a garage, that we can't do again, that will still be a little bit of a challenge. For September, 6 months before you have to act on a budget, it's not a bad place to be.

Any questions about that? This is all just a forecast. Any questions?

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: So the 7335 is a plug number?

MR. SETZER: Yes, it's the administration's recommendation to the legislature. It's not a plug number, it's an actual number that's in the administrative budget. That was the Nassau County legislature, so it's real, but it's subject to change.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Okay.

MR. SETZER: Any other questions on budget forecast? Okay.

One more page of numbers and then we will get onto less dense stuff.

So every quarter we give you a score card, these are the performance
indicators that are included in the contract, this is for the period of April, May, June, second quarter of this year. Fixed route, the top three lines are fixed route performance indicators, on-time performance slipped a little bit in the second quarter largely because that's when we put the service reductions in. They went in beginning of April, we took ten percent of the platform hours off the street, and ridership went down by five percent, so in other words, five percent found another way to stay with us. That translates to more crowded buses, longer, little slower boarding, you have more people at bus stops and we think that's the effect of that. We will keep working on it and we will try to push that number back up over 70 percent as we did in the first quarter before the service cuts, we were almost at 75 percent.

Missed pullouts, less than one percent. We had some challenges in May
when the weather turned hot, we missed a few pullouts then, that number should be 0, but it's still pretty close to 0. In neither case is there a county due liquidated damages to Transdev due or Transdev to, an incentive payment from the county. And accidents per hundred thousand miles, we did have a poor quarter, which I'm glad to tell you has now been turned around completely. The second quarter was a poor quarter, our goal is 1.2 accidents for a 100,000 miles and we are actually at 1.45. I just want to remind you, accidents don't mean collisions, it means any preventable kind of contact, so it might be backing into another car or a little bumper contact or brushing a mirror, and a sign post or something like that, but any kind of negligence that is preventable is counted in this standard, so this not a sign of things being terribly unsafe, it is just a sign we were a little less attentive than we wanted to be. So as a result,
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that's what that more than the five -- or

ten percent variance from the goal, so we

owe the county $5,000 liquidated damages

payment for the second quarter for

accidents per hundred thousand miles.

The next five indicators relate to

Able-Ride, so calls answered ratio, we

also fell short here, we had a staffing

issue there which we are in the process

of correcting, but answered 90 percent of

the calls and we only got 72 percent of

them. That means people hung up and

called back later because they didn't

want to wait any longer, so we owe the

county a $5,000 liquidated damages

payment for that. But in on-time

performance in the next line, we greatly

exceeded the goal, getting up close to 80

percent, so there is a $5,000 inventive

payment, and they offset each other.

Missed pullouts, again, this is a -- that

should be 0, but that's under one percent

is pretty good, that means we didn't have

a vehicle or a driver ready at exactly
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the right time. In this case those trips were all accommodated by another vehicle that was already in service, it's not leaving passengers without a trip, but still that's an important performance indicator, but it's within the ten percent plus or minus, so there is no incentive payment or no damages.

Accidents per hundred thousand miles, unlike fixed route, where we did extremely well, the goal is 1.2 for a hundred thousand miles, we had under one for a hundred thousand miles, so we are very pleased with that. We are on a very good pace for year to date, almost through to the end of the third quarter. We think we are going to hit the goal. The average for the whole year we'll hit the goal unless something goes wrong, so knock on wood.

And the last goal productivity, 1.3 passengers per hour, in the first quarter we did 1.37 and in the second quarter we did 1.4. That's a reflection of hard
work on the part of staff at Able-Ride as well as increasing demand for Able-Ride. The number of requests for service is kind of steadily creeping up, so we're able to be a little more productive. Altogether that means then that there's a $5,000 incentive net, incentive to Transdev, but that's not paid in cash, that's paid in credits and we can bank for awhile the payoff, any liquidated damages that we owe the county in the future. So that's the regular quarterly update on the performance indicators.

Questions on any of those things?

(No response.)

MR. SETZER: All right, I will move on, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Yes, please.

MR. SETZER: There are four projects I would like to update you on. This is just informational items, updates that I think you may be interested in. When we cut service in April we eliminated the 88, the Jones Beach service, except for
weekends. And then when the season came around and the state realized how many of its employees depended on that service, they contacted us and said, oh, you got to put it back and we're willing to pay. So we worked out a deal with the state, New York State DOT where they provided another $100,000 in funding. We were able to reinstate the route 88 pretty much as it operated the year before, seven days a week. Again, for the employees who need transportation every day, whether it's raining or the sun is shining. So that actually raised our total contract amount a little bit. Stop me if you have any questions.

Also, I just want to give you an update on the not for profit that we put in place in the beginning of the year, Everyone Rides NICE. Perhaps you remember, this is a not for profit, it was part of the negotiations with Nassau County to extends Trandev's contract, required that we set up and fund a not
for profit that provided transportation to individuals for whom -- generally economically disadvantaged individuals for whom transportation costs were a significant challenge. So Everyone Rides NICE, it was funded with a $1.25 million grant from Transdev. It's in full operation now. We have -- we started with six public service agencies that you see along the right side there. Plus the United Way. United Way is our operating partner. They help qualify the agencies, select and qualify the agencies. They happen the actual distribution, so we deliver the Metro Cards to United Way and they distribute them to these agencies which take care of distributing them to their individual clients. United Way then also performs a record-keeping function, so we have a record of how these things were distributed, who got them, that will be available to whoever might need to see it in the future. Since that time, United Way added eight
new agencies, I'm sorry I don't have a list of all the new agencies, including Nassau selected students at Nassau Community College. Students who are enrolled at the college, but are also connected to some other programs, so these would be economically disadvantaged students. In some cases, students who also work and as part of their educational experiences. So some -- every student at Nassau doesn't get a free MetroCard, but selected students in these programs that are connected to some of these agencies and others can also get free transportation to and from the campus. I think that it's good for the students, it's also good for NICE bus in that those young people are potential lifelong bus riders, so it's almost like marketing and creating some future demand. The agencies who use these reported that they're very pleased with the results. They are using them sparingly, so there aren't people going
back and forth every day to work, but people who need it to get to say a food pantry, once in awhile, they're the ones who are getting these cards. So United Way and the partner agencies are being careful about how they use them, which is exactly how we hoped it would happen. So far so good, 21,500 cards have been distributed to the agencies, a little over 1,200 individuals in Nassau County who are using these cards right now, the cards themselves are basically a round trip card within Nassau County. They're Metro Cards but they don't have the free transfers to MTA. We would like to have them, but that's just not something we can handle with the fare payment system today. Nonetheless 1,200 people have gained a little advantage of meeting the expenses of getting to work or getting to programs or getting their education.

The other thing I would like to report on, that we are very proud of, Metro Magazine is a magazine that serves
the public transportation industry and
every year they select one program for
their innovation award. This year they
selected the Aware program that we
implemented this year. Aware is an app
on a smart phone that helps a visually
disabled person negotiate their way
around. So far Hempstead Transit Center.
If you've been to Hempstead Transit
Center, you know it is very busy, 25,000
people go through it every day. There
are 18 different bays where buses park,
so if you're visually impaired, making
sure you get to the right bus isn't so
easy. The audio cues that you might
ordinarily rely on, there's a lot going
on there sometimes, so this allows you to
put in your earphones and have your phone
get you to exactly the right bus stop or
to the office or to the restrooms or to
whatever other services you might need
there. Hempstead Transit Center today,
eventually will probably expand it to
Mineola and some other places, but Metro
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magazine thought enough of it to award
NICE bus with this award, and this is
really Jack's project, so I think the
trophy is on your desk, as it should be.

MR. KHZOUZ: Yes, this week.

MR. SETZER: The last thing I would
like to talk about is, we always talk
about the technology project here where
we instrumented all of us, actually we're
in our third year now, and the last few
times we talked about it, we talked about
on-time performance and managing the
on-street operations. There's also an
element to it for managing maintenance
called AVM, so what this does, is there
are sensors on board the bus that are
recording the condition of various things
like temperatures and pressures and fluid
levels in real time and sending it back.
So in the maintenance department out
here, our maintenance managers can
actually be monitoring the condition of
the fleet while it's in service, and they
can get special warnings if certain -- if
an engine begins to overheat, if it rises above a certain preset temperature, the maintenance manager gets a message and can go in and look at it and decide either to stop that bus right now because it's in danger, it's hot enough that it's in danger of damaging the engine or telling the driver, I will meet you at the mall and we will trade buses there, or it's low enough we can bring it in and we will just inspect it when it gets in here. So we think this will eventually help us head off some interruptions in service due to mechanical breakdowns.
The data also goes into a big database, so when the bus is back in here, and they're doing their maintenance planning, they can pick out buses that need to go on the inspection line right away or buses that need certain kinds of repairs. Additionally, it will also give the mechanic a work order right out of the computer, telling him what the codes are, what came in, what's wrong and what's the
suggested diagnostic order of things, what you should look at, what repair comes next, if you get a certain kind of code. So we think this will ultimately give us an ability to head off service interruptions that would be a problem for a customer as well as manager, makes maintenance more scientific. This is another big data approach to managing the day to day operations. It also includes a thing called, as you can see over on the right side there, Smart Yard, which is basically a realtime map of the whole facility here that tells you where every bus is, and the color codes on those different buses tell you which ones need attention right now. You wouldn't think you could lose a 40 foot bus, but in a yard where you have 250 of them, you can, not lose it, but it can take you a long time to find it and that's an important part of managing logistics, especially since we stuffed some more buses in here when we closed the Rockville Centre
garage in the spring. So we're pretty excited about what this will do for us in the future and do for our -- more importantly -- do for our passengers in the future, as far as reliability of service. This is the same slide you see every quarter, we are still a good bargain. For all of our challenges, we are still a good bargain for the taxpayers of Nassau County and the bus riders of Nassau County.

That's all I have to present. I will be happy to answer any questions you have or hear any comments.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Any member have comments?

MS. FALCO: I just have a question. Just regarding the cards that were distributed to United Way, what's the value of the card, it's just a round trip, one round trip ride?

MR. SETZER: Yes; correct, so.

MS. FALCO: $5.50.

MR. SETZER: Yes, two $2.75 fares,
yes.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Any other questions for Mr. Setzer?

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Thank you, Mr. Setzer.

MR. SETZER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: At this time I would like members of the public to come to the podium if they like. Show of hands, Troop 127?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: 123.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Who is the spokesman for Troop 123?

MS. FALCO: Do you have any questions?

MS. COMERFORD: What about Jones Beach, did anybody ever take the bus to Jones Beach? Would you ever take the bus to Jones Beach? Are you going to go on a bus?

BOY SCOUT #1: Yes.

MS. COMERFORD: Tonight?

BOY SCOUT #1: Tomorrow.
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MS. COMERFORD: Where are you going to go?

BOY SCOUT #2: To the mall.

MS. COMERFORD: Which mall?

BOY SCOUT #2: I don't know.

MS. COMERFORD: Why are you going to the mall?

BOY SCOUT #3: To watch a movie.

MS. COMERFORD: You're going for a whole day?

TROOP LEADER: They are going to go watch a movie and their job is to find out how much a bus trip was.

MS. COMERFORD: Did anybody hear how much the bus is one way.

BOY SCOUT #3: $2.75.

MS. COMERFORD: $2.75. How much will you need to go round trip? You can figure that one out.

BOY SCOUT #2: $5.00.

MS. COMERFORD: The whole board up here is trying to figure it out.

MS. FALCO: How are you guys getting the money for that?
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BOY SCOUT #3: Chores.

MS. COMERFORD: They're doing chores, so they have to earn the money to take the bus.

TROOP LEADER: They have to put together a budget and expenses and income, which is what we saw tonight.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: We don't have any comments from the troop or the troop master?

TROOP LEADER: No. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Is there anyone else who would like to address the committee?

Young lady?

MS. DARCY: How are you? Good evening.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Come up to the podium.

MS. DARCY: Michele Darcy for the Nassau County Minority Legislature, I'm the Finance Director there. My members represent legislative districts, six of them. Legislative District 1 is
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2  Legislator Kevan Abrahams; Legislative
3  District 2 is Legislator Bynoe;
4  Legislative District 5 is Legislator
5  Curran; District 10, Legislator Birnbaum;
6  District 11 is Legislator
7  DeRiggi-Whitton; and District 16 is
8  Legislator Drucker, who also has a
9  representative here from his office and
10  we want to let you know we are all here
11  to hear the presentation and I will
12  report back to all the members. We are
13  carefully setting the budget at this
14  time. We are aware of the increase, we
15  didn't know your deficit, so I will make
16  sure they know that you have a $2,000,000
17  deficit. Also, one question, Mr. Setzer,
18  on the Jones Beach contract, you actually
19  have a contract with the New York State
20  DOT for that service?
21       MR. SETZER: Just for the season,
22  right?
23       MR. KHOUZ: Just for the season.
24       MS. DARCY: If it's extended,
25  half -- .
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MR. KHOUZ: Just this season.
MS. DARCY: We can be hopeful.
MR. SETZER: They are certainly aware of how important it is to get their employees there.
MS. DARCY: Do you know how many of their employees you service?
MR. SETZER: I don't.
MR. KHOUZ: We don't have final numbers, we just ended service not that long ago, so we have to compile all the numbers. It looks like the numbers are slightly down from last year, only because we didn't quite have the weather we had last year, but we look at all ridership.
MS. DARCY: I know because I hardly used the village pool. Okay. That was my only question, but I will take the information back to the legislature. Our first actual budget hearing is October 2 and we have tentatively scheduled budget hearings for the 20th and the 30th, hopefully will be the last budget hearing
and the vote by charter we are supposed
to vote by the 30th.

Thank you again for your
information. If possible, can I get a
copy of the chart?

MR. SETZER: It will be in the email
to you.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: So instead of
7-million-335, you will make it
9-million-335.

MS. DARCY: You never know.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Is there anyone
else who would like to address the
committee? Sir, did you want to address
the committee? No?

So you have all this information.
Is there any other business before the
committee that any of the members would
like to bring up?

With no other comments and Mr.
Setzer's fine presentation, thank you.
We appreciate it.

Would anyone like to make a motion
to adjourn the meeting?
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MR. ROSARIO: I will.

MR. DURoseau: I second it.

CHAIRMAN SHRENKEL: Okay, meeting is adjourned.

(Time noted: 6:29 PM.)
CERTIFICATION

I, Kathleen Anderson, a Notary Public in and for the State of New York, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing record was taken by me on the 28 day of September, 2017 at the aforesaid time and place, and it is a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 12 day of October, 2017.

_______________________________
Kathleen Anderson

KATHLEEN ANDERSON