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Transcript of Chicago Transit Authority Board Meeting

Date: November 15, 2023

Case: Chicago Transit Authority Board Meeting, In Re:

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BEFORE THE CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD

BOARD MEETING

Chicago, Illinois

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

2:43 p.m.

Job No.: 510696

Pages: 1 - 79

Reported By: Courtney Petros, RPR, CSR

Transcript of Chicago Transit Authority Board Meeting
Conducted on November 15, 2023

1 Meeting, held at:

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4 CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY

5 567 West Lake Street

6 Chicago, Illinois 60661

7 312.681.3137

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12 Before Courtney Petros, a Certified Shorthand

13 Reporter and Registered Professional Reporter in

14 and for the State of Illinois.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

BOARD MEMBERS:

- LESTER L. BARCLAY, CHAIRMAN
- REV. DR. L. BERNARD JAKES, VICE CHAIRMAN
- NEEMA JHA
- MICHELE LEE
- REV. JOHNNY L. MILLER
- ROSA Y. ORTIZ

PRESENT:

- DORVAL R. CARTER, Jr., CTA PRESIDENT
- KENT RAY, GENERAL COUNSEL
- GEORGETTE GREENLEE, SECRETARY

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Good afternoon, I would
3 like to call to order the meeting of the Chicago
4 Transit Board for November 15th, 2023.

5 Georgette, please call the roll.

6 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz. Just
7 calling the roll.

8 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes. Here.

9 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jakes.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Yes.

11 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay.

12 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

13 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

14 DIRECTOR MILLER: Here.

15 MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.

16 DIRECTOR LEE: Here.

17 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman.

18 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: The Chair recognizes
19 Director Ortiz.

20 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Thank you for the
21 recognition, Chairman. I move that the agenda for
22 today's meeting be amended and that the Board
23 matters, which is agenda item No. 6, be moved to
24 agenda item No. 2.

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1 DIRECTOR MILLER: Second.

2 MS. GREENLEE: It's been properly moved
3 and seconded that the agenda be amended for
4 today's meeting and that Board matters be moved up
5 to agenda item No. 2. We'll take the roll call
6 vote.

7 Director Lee.

8 DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.

9 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

10 DIRECTOR MILLER: Yes.

11 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay.

12 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

13 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jakes.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Yes.

15 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.

16 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: I move that we approve
17 the ordinance fixing the salary of Neema Jha as a
18 member of the Chicago Transit Board.

19 DIRECTOR MILLER: Second.

20 MS. GREENLEE: That matter is under Board
21 matters. It's been moved and seconded that we
22 approve the ordinance fixing the salary of Neema
23 Jha as a member of the Chicago Transit Board.
24 I'll take the roll call vote.

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1 Director Lee.

2 DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.

3 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

4 DIRECTOR MILLER: Yes.

5 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay.

6 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

7 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jakes.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Yes.

9 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.

10 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

11 Chairman Barclay, I move that we recess
12 the Chicago Transit Board regular meeting until
13 called to order by the Chair following the
14 committee on finance, audit, and budget meeting.

15 DIRECTOR MILLER: Second.

16 MS. GREENLEE: It's been moved and
17 seconded by Director Ortiz and Director Miller
18 that the regular meeting of the Chicago Transit
19 Board be held in recess until after the meeting on
20 the committee on finance, audit, and budget.
21 We'll take the roll call vote.

22 Director Lee.

23 DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.

24 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

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1 DIRECTOR MILLER: Yes.

2 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay.

3 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

4 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jakes.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Yes.

6 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.

7 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

8 MS. GREENLEE: The yeas have it.

9 Chairman Barclay.

10 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: It appears the yeas
11 have it and the meeting stands in recess until the
12 conclusion of the committee on finance, audit, and
13 budget meeting.

14 MS. GREENLEE: I would like to go and get
15 Director Jha, if that's okay.

16 (A recess was taken.)

17 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: The Chicago Transit
18 Board regular meeting will come to order again.

19 MS. GREENLEE: Excuse me. We are starting
20 the regular meeting of the Chicago Transit Board,
21 which has been in recess. If you can please
22 govern yourselves accordingly. Thank you.

23 Chairman Barclay.

24 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our first order of

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1 business is public comments. Georgette.

2 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay, we have
3 two written public comments that have been
4 submitted by John Paul Jones. We have three
5 in-person public commenters and one who is on the
6 phone. The individual who is on the phone is
7 Melinda Kelly.

8 Is she queued up? Okay. Ms. Kelly, you
9 have three minutes.

10 MS. KELLY: Thank you. Good afternoon,
11 Chairman Barclay and committee members. My name
12 is Melinda Kelly. I'm president of Chatham
13 Business Association also known as CBA, and I
14 would like to thank the CTA Board for this
15 opportunity to speak.

16 I want to speak about CTA's outreach and
17 community engagement efforts on behalf of the Red
18 Line Extension project on the south side of
19 Chicago.

20 In 1972, CBA was formed with a mission to
21 promote political and economic stability in
22 Chatham and its surrounding communities. But,
23 since then, because of our expertise in small
24 business growth and development, our market has

1 expanded to service businesses citywide throughout
2 the state of Illinois and even on the Federal
3 level for FDA.

4 Over the years, we've worked with major
5 financial institutions, corporations, local
6 business and civic leaders to spearhead economic
7 development in some of our most vulnerable
8 neighborhoods where the majority of our members
9 have their business operations.

10 African American businesses have a
11 significant impact on our community because they
12 create and sustain employment opportunities for
13 our community. That's helping us combat crime and
14 poverty while encouraging literacy, education, and
15 entrepreneurship on a local level.

16 In that vein, I am here appearing before
17 this committee to share the crucial role CTA has
18 played in its outreach and community engagement
19 and informing the community members on the
20 challenges, opportunities, and proposed positive
21 impact that will result from the Red Line
22 Extension project.

23 Specifically, I would also like to thank
24 CTA's Juan Prieto, director of diversity and

1 disadvantaged business liaison officer, and
2 TaNesheha Marshall, vice president of the Red Line
3 Extension, as they have appeared and presented at
4 various community events that targeted the small
5 business community and shared relevant information
6 on CTA's diversity program.

7 In addition to introducing the prime short
8 list for the Red Line Extension, CTA has
9 encouraged those primes to hold independent
10 outreach events, like the ones hosted on the south
11 side by the FH Passion, Ragnar Benson, and the
12 other venture team at the Kroc Center.

13 The leadership of the Red Line Extension
14 project was short-listed also appeared in person
15 and CBA's monthly visits membership meeting at the
16 Discover Center. And these are hosted in
17 community and near the Red Line Extension project.

18 For over 51 years, it is our mission to
19 improve the quality of life for Chicago's low
20 income community residents, including those with
21 disabilities, by leveraging economic investment
22 opportunities, which is why CBA supports the CTA
23 Red Line Extension project.

24 CBA stands ready to continue to partner

1 and support CTA on our shared mission of
2 advocating for disadvantaged and minority-owned
3 businesses. My information is available --

4 MS. GREENLEE: That's time. Thank you
5 very much for your comment.

6 Our next public in-person commentator is
7 Sheila Black Haennicke. Please come and have a
8 seat at the desk. You have three minutes.

9 MS. BLACK HAENNICKE: Thank you.
10 Georgette, we have materials for your directors,
11 if we may.

12 MS. GREENLEE: I will take them and I will
13 make sure the directors get all of your materials.
14 Thank you very much.

15 MS. BLACK HAENNICKE: Thank you.

16 Two years ago today, November 15th, 2021,
17 my son, David, boarded the Blue Line at Forest
18 Park around 6:00 p.m. shortly after midnight on
19 November 16th, he was found unresponsive but still
20 breathing on a train at the Rosemont stop. Five
21 minutes elapsed from the time a CTA worker called
22 911 and paramedics arrived on the scene.

23 Despite everyone doing everything they
24 could, David died on the floor of that train from

1 an opioid overdose. He was one of 31 fatal
2 overdoses on CTA property in 2021. That number
3 doubled to 60 in 2022.

4 I want to stop overdoses, and so do my
5 fellow advocates at the West Side Heroin Opioid
6 Task Force. We share your goal of making the CTA
7 safer for all riders, and we want to help by
8 getting the opioid overdose reversal drug, Narcan,
9 into the hands of riders so that they can help
10 each other. I'm giving you each a box, as you can
11 see.

12 The task force focuses on harm reduction,
13 including street outreach in areas of greatest
14 need like communities of color that have been
15 hardest hit by the opioid overdose epidemic.

16 Data about fatal overdoses on the CTA
17 reflect this fact. Most of the people who died
18 from overdose on CTA property between 2018 and
19 2022 were black.

20 Task force member organizations, including
21 Thresholds, Haymarket, and the Night Ministry, are
22 already partnering with the CTA by doing outreach
23 to unhoused people on some train lines and at some
24 stations. And they are wonderful. We love them.

1 We ask that you build on these amazing
2 partnerships by empowering CTA riders to help one
3 another with Narcan placed on CTA platforms in
4 easy, open receptacles provided and maintained by
5 task force organizations, including the Cook
6 County Department of Public Health and Chicago
7 Recovery Alliance.

8 Narcan on train platforms will add to the
9 impact of other metrics like the personal hygiene
10 and Narcan vending machine currently being piloted
11 at the 95th Red Line station.

12 Narcan on train platforms will get this
13 lifesaving medicine into riders' hands and onto
14 trains faster. Narcan on train platforms
15 demonstrates to the public that the CTA cares
16 about all its riders and the communities it serves
17 at a time when we all want ridership to increase.

18 Narcan on train platforms may shorten
19 train delays due to overdoses as people can be
20 revived before paramedics arrive. Narcan is easy
21 to use and each kit has simple instructions. The
22 CTA can increase the Narcan public service ads
23 already present on some trains and extend that
24 information to the TV screens on the platforms.

1 CTA riders want to help each other and are
2 ready to use Narcan. On international overdose
3 awareness day in August, the task force handed out
4 nearly 100 Narcan kits on the Green Line in an
5 hour. In closing, we ask that the CTA establish a
6 work group to make Narcan on CTA platforms a
7 reality in the coming year.

8 MS. GREENLEE: That's time.

9 MS. BLACK HAENNICKE: It is too late to
10 save my son, but by November 15th, 2024, if we
11 work together, we will have saved other lives by
12 empowering CTA riders to use Narcan. Thank you.

13 I'm sorry I went over time.

14 MS. GREENLEE: That's okay. I just have
15 to be equitable. And we have all kinds of people
16 in the audience. That's all.

17 Our next public commentator is Samuel
18 Guardino.

19 MR. GUARDINO: My name is Sam Guardino. I
20 am the director of homeless services for
21 Thresholds. And I think Tom's report covered a
22 lot. And his individual stories are stories that
23 I know and are real and made an impact.

24 So this partnership, especially as we've

1 added the second shift thing, has been a game
2 changer for us. We started in January. So not
3 only was able to have a whole team working on a
4 second shift up and down the entire Red Line, but
5 the support of CTA people on the ground, the
6 platform staff and others and security
7 contractors, has been crucial to make us -- to
8 help us do our job.

9 And, yes, they do tell us about people.
10 And they keep a eye on us, you know, making sure
11 everything is going okay. And, generally
12 speaking, they've been a great resource.

13 The support of the management people
14 involved, I've never seen an organization of this
15 size have such accessibility to senior management,
16 including nighttime accessibility, with specific
17 questions, managers have made themselves
18 available, which has been just a different touch.

19 I want to emphasize what Tom said in terms
20 of the shelter and then, of course, the housing.
21 How many personnel hours per every number of
22 shelter placements it took along with the
23 involvement of the participant, the unsheltered
24 person on the CTA. That's a whole nother report

1 that someone better than me would have to put
2 together.

3 How many personnel hours it takes and
4 involvement in terms of the rapid rehousing and
5 accelerated moving event in housing and other
6 housing options, those are deep dives with people
7 and we've been very fortunate having access to
8 find people who are ready to take those deep
9 dives.

10 In the meantime, we want people to be
11 naloxone, we want people to have something to eat.
12 The best engagement tool -- we do it all the time
13 in our meetings in our professional life -- is
14 over food, right, to get people to sit and to talk
15 with us.

16 And technology is an interesting question.
17 We're improving some of our technology right now
18 in this next year to make it easier for staff and
19 participants to do more of the work on tablets
20 right when we're with them. It's kind of hard to
21 use a laptop on a bouncing train, so we are
22 improving, as part of this thing, some of the
23 devices and some of our interagency accessibility
24 and data transportation within this next year.

1 And I'm not going to give you a story.
2 You've heard a few. But I was kind of thumbing
3 through our health record before I came over and I
4 noticed one about one of the participants who was
5 house in the accelerated moving event. It's a
6 note. As we continue ongoing support, so we're
7 trying to help people maintain this housing,
8 right, with case management. The case
9 management --

10 MS. GREENLEE: That's time, Mr. Guardino.

11 MR. GUARDINO: Okay. Well, anyway, it's
12 cool. And it ends up with his mom helping him
13 direct his -- decorate his apartment who hadn't
14 found him for years as an unsheltered person.

15 All right. Thanks. Thank you. I really
16 appreciate this. And I appreciate the spirit in
17 this room about this.

18 MS. GREENLEE: Thank you. And our last
19 public commentator for today is Jeffrey Collard.

20 MR. COLLARD: Good afternoon.

21 MS. GREENLEE: Excuse me, but if we can
22 just ask whomever's cell phone is playing to
23 please silence your phone. Thank you very much.

24 MR. COLLARD: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice

1 Chairman, Board members, Mr. President, thank you
2 for the opportunity to address you this afternoon.
3 My name is Jeffrey Collard. I'm the vice
4 president of operations for Haymarket Center.

5 We are Chicago's largest center treating
6 individuals for substance use disorders and mental
7 health. Also, as of June 1st, we received Federal
8 designation as a federally-qualified health center
9 look alike, which means that we are able to
10 integrate substance use, mental health, and
11 primary care for our patients.

12 We serve 12,000 people per year, the
13 majority of whom are experiencing or have
14 experienced homelessness. Almost all of them have
15 no resources or are on Medicaid.

16 We were founded 47 years ago by Father
17 Ignatius McDermott who had a personal passion for
18 helping what were then mostly alcoholic men on the
19 street. At the time, he founded Haymarket as a
20 place to bring in men that were found sleeping in
21 doorways on Skid Row, which is where the nice
22 neighborhood of West Madison was at the time, to
23 bring them into a safe environment where they had
24 a chance to get sober and get into recovery.

1 So we've expanded on that mission over the
2 years. But to continue that same mission into a
3 full continuum of treatment and care, we've
4 partnered with the Chicago Department of Family
5 and Support Services, DFSS, for many years on
6 projects to provide outreach to individuals
7 experiencing homelessness at O'Hare Airport, which
8 you heard earlier, we have an office there 24
9 hours a day to encounter people experiencing
10 homelessness, and, also, in community areas,
11 including homeless encampments.

12 As you've already heard, in the past year,
13 we launched the outreach project on the CTA Blue
14 Line. Haymarket CTA outreach teams are some of
15 our most passionate staff, and we're fortunate to
16 partner with the passionate staff of Thresholds
17 and the passionate staff of DFSS and CTA.

18 We have the two shifts, as Mr. McKone told
19 you. I have one happy correction to make to what
20 he told you, which is that our overnight team, as
21 he said, was Monday through Friday, it is now
22 seven days a week. We have the staff up. So both
23 of our teams, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and
24 11:00 p.m. to 7:30 a.m., are seven days a week.

1 The current assignment in staffing cover
2 the Blue Line from Clark and Lake through to
3 O'Hare. The teams encounter individuals both on
4 the trains themselves and around the stations, as
5 you heard, with particular attention to hotspots
6 where we've observed individuals congregating and
7 where CTA has also observed or has received calls
8 from the neighborhood and wants to be responsive.

9 The project's goals, as you heard, are to
10 triage people experiencing homelessness out of the
11 CTA and into appropriate services and, ultimately,
12 housing.

13 MS. GREENLEE: Mr. Collard, that's time.

14 MR. COLLARD: Okay.

15 MS. GREENLEE: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: We want to thank all of
17 our public commentators this afternoon for sharing
18 with us. Everyone provided us with great insight.

19 I wanted to highlight you, Ms. Haennicke
20 for addressing the Board to discuss this important
21 issue. I'm going to ask President Carter to
22 please make sure that he connects you to our
23 safety person who is responsible for safety and
24 also community engagement to have further

1 discussions and dialogue with you as to how we may
2 be helpful in dealing with this very critical
3 issue.

4 MS. BLACK HAENNICKE: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you for coming.
6 I appreciate it.

7 Our next order of business on the agenda
8 is our presidential report by President Dorval
9 Carter. Thank you.

10 PRESIDENT CARTER: Members of Board, good
11 afternoon. My remarks today will address CTA's
12 past, present, and promising future. I'd like to
13 begin with a few thoughts regarding my proposed
14 fiscal year 2024 budget recommendation, which this
15 body is considering today.

16 The \$1.99 billion balanced budget
17 recommendation for fiscal year 2024 that has been
18 presented to you includes, as you understand it,
19 no fare increases and maintains the delivery of
20 bus and rail service with plans to add additional
21 service in 2024 to meet our growing ridership
22 demand.

23 The spending plan envisions and provides
24 resources for a promising year in which we expect

1 positive ridership trends and growth across our
2 system. The budget also anticipates
3 infrastructure investments that will further
4 modernize our system and improvements in security
5 upgrades to technology tools, including our Ventra
6 fare system.

7 Perhaps most important is that CTA will
8 add bus and rail service in 2024 as we continue to
9 hire and train bus and rail operators to address
10 current agency workforce shortages.

11 As we announced just last week, and
12 according with my announcement last month, that we
13 would soon make service adjustments reflecting
14 growth in our workforce, rail service is already
15 being added back to rail lines that saw recent
16 temporary reductions due to construction work on
17 the Blue Line.

18 In the year to come, these continued
19 service adjustments will result in shorter wait
20 for riders, increased reliability, and the
21 scheduled service reflects the increase in the
22 available workforce.

23 We all share the same goals in terms of
24 improved service, continued hiring for key

1 positions, and other vital areas. This budget
2 helps to address those concerns by anticipating
3 increased workforce numbers as well as
4 infrastructure improvements.

5 And so I would ask for your support of the
6 proposed 2024 budget and appreciate your continued
7 advice, consultation, and thoughtful leadership as
8 we look forward to the implementation of this
9 budge in the new year.

10 With regards to ridership, I am pleased to
11 report to the Board that we continue to see
12 positive trends in recent systemwide ridership
13 numbers. September and October were the two
14 highest ridership months since the beginning of
15 the pandemic. In September, our customers took
16 25.6 million rides on CTA trains and buses, and
17 last month they topped that postpandemic record by
18 taking 26.7 million rides.

19 In addition, just last week, we had three
20 more million-plus ride days bringing us to 25
21 totals days since August 1st when rides have
22 exceeded one million rides. In fact, between
23 January 1st and October 31st, customers took more
24 than 233 million rides aboard CTA vehicles, which

1 is up 14 percent compared to that same ten-month
2 period last year.

3 I want to thank our customers from daily
4 commuters to those choosing transit during
5 business to this great city and ask that they
6 continue to stay with us. The continued increases
7 in ridership bode well for the future of transit
8 in Chicago and it's key to continued improvement
9 in this new normal that we live in today.

10 Like all of you, I am also focused on our
11 hiring and training and I am encouraged by the
12 progress that we continue to make. During the
13 month of October, we hired 130 new bus operators,
14 which represents our best month of the year so
15 far, and we are now on track to reach a total of
16 nearly 1,000 new bus operators hired by the end of
17 the year completely blowing through our goal of
18 700 bus operators per year.

19 We have transitioned a dozen more
20 employees into rail operator positions upon their
21 successful completion of training, which we have
22 increased to 100 rail operators for this year
23 alone.

24 And I am committed -- and let me clarify

1 this because there's a lot on social media
2 suggesting otherwise -- I asked my staff about a
3 month and a half ago to come up with a plan that
4 would allow me to increase the number of rail
5 operators that we are putting into seats for the
6 next fiscal year.

7 They have presented me with a plan that I
8 requested, not a plan that I was waiting to think
9 about, a plan that I requested that would more
10 than double the number of rail operators that we
11 will have next year -- that we will hire for next
12 year from 100 to 200 operators for the upcoming
13 year.

14 I want to be clear. There is nothing that
15 I have been doing that has been intending to
16 prevent or create barriers for the hiring that we
17 have to do. In fact, it would be actually moronic
18 for me to be pursuing that type of strategy.

19 The work that I'm doing is trying to find
20 ways to increase the hiring that we're doing,
21 particularly with rail operators, which present a
22 unique set of challenges because of the length of
23 time that it takes to train them and because of
24 the safety considerations that we have to be

1 mindful of in the way that we go about doing that.

2 Having said that, I'm committed to
3 increasing the number of operators that we had
4 from this year to next year and have instituted a
5 series of steps, including the increase in the
6 number of rail instructors that we have, to allow
7 us to do that.

8 So over the course of the following year,
9 you're going to see a dramatic increase as we have
10 been doing, I would point out, over the past
11 couple of years to increase the number of rail
12 operators that we have.

13 I am optimistic, which is why I put in my
14 budget the expectation that by the end of next
15 year, we will be back to 2019 levels for service
16 for both bus and rail, that we will be able to
17 meet that objective that will allow us to provide
18 the service levels that I committed to providing
19 two years ago.

20 And I want to remind everyone that when I
21 started my Meeting the Moment plan a year -- a
22 year and a half ago, the initial step was to
23 stabilize our service. I'm happy to tell you that
24 as we come up on the end of this year, the service

1 has been stabilized. We are now providing daily
2 between 95, 98, and 99 percent of scheduled
3 service where a year and a half ago those numbers
4 were in the 60 percent range.

5 I am mindful of the fact that the amount
6 of service that we're putting out is less than
7 what we were putting out a year and a half ago.
8 But it is reflective of the commitment that I made
9 when I implemented the Meeting the Moment plan,
10 which is that I would align the service to the
11 workforce that I had available and that, in doing
12 that, I would improve the reliability of the
13 service that we are providing.

14 I have met those objectives. And, now,
15 the good news is, as we move into the next year,
16 I'm now going to be able to restore the service
17 levels as our workforce has increased just as I
18 committed to doing a year and a half ago.

19 So the point that I want to make is that I
20 have never misled anyone in what my plan was for
21 what we're doing here. What people need to
22 remember and what I want to make sure that I'm
23 expressing to this Board is that it takes time to
24 do this. It is not something that can be done

1 overnight. If I could do it overnight, I would
2 have done that.

3 The truth of the matter is, we have made
4 significant progress over the course of the past
5 year and that progress has put us in the position
6 to start to do the things that we want to do in
7 the upcoming year.

8 I will continue, as I have done this
9 entire year in a very transparent way, to share
10 with you my progress in implementing that
11 objective. I will share with you the service
12 levels that we are adjusting. I will share with
13 you the scheduled service that we're putting out.
14 I will share with you the number of people that we
15 are hiring in both our bus and a rail operator
16 positions so that there won't be any question as
17 to whether I'm meeting or not meeting the
18 objectives of the following year.

19 And at the end of the next year, you will
20 have a comprehensive understanding of where CTA
21 service stands relative to the workforce that
22 we've been able to recruit, retain, and continue
23 to commit ourselves to as an overall strategy for
24 CTA.

1 In that regard, I think it's important to
2 note it that just today I attended a graduation of
3 employees -- of over 100 employees -- who have
4 successfully completed initial training programs
5 for a number of positions including bus operators,
6 bus mechanics, bus and rail servicers, customer
7 service assistants, and rapid transit operators.

8 These events that we've been holding every
9 month for the last six or seven months has the
10 ability to show and recognize the new employees
11 who are coming on to CTA but also as an indication
12 of the fact that we are adding to our numbers on a
13 monthly and a regular basis.

14 Tomorrow, we'll be hosting a
15 veterans-focused career fair. So, please, if any
16 of you know any veterans who are looking for work,
17 please let them know that CTA is hiring and we're
18 holding a special event tomorrow just for veterans
19 to increase the number of veterans here at CTA.

20 In the coming days, we will watch launch
21 an online survey to gather public feedback
22 regarding our performance metrics dashboard. As
23 you know, this is a dashboard that I launched
24 earlier this year that includes a lot more detail

1 in terms of what our performance metrics are as
2 well as the ability to mine and dig into to the
3 data around that detail to determine certain
4 information about our service and how we're
5 performing it on a daily basis.

6 We believe that the range of performance
7 measures that we have put in place and the data
8 that we are providing on our dashboard puts CTA on
9 the cutting edge within the public transportation
10 industry for information transparency. However,
11 the information we gather will provide us with
12 more insight directly from riders by allowing
13 individuals to weigh in on changes or additions
14 they would like to see made to the dashboard.

15 I believe this is a unique opportunity for
16 us to gather thoughts directly from our customers
17 and others to help us provide them with what they
18 consider to be useful and vital information around
19 CTA service, which is the purpose for why the
20 dashboard was created.

21 On several occasions throughout the past
22 year, I have also discussed with all of you the
23 equity and infrastructure project or EIP program.
24 EIP is a national group that is focused on

1 promoting contracting opportunities for
2 historically underutilized businesses or hubs, and
3 CTA was one of the five initial signatories to
4 this program or, as we're referred to, first
5 movers.

6 This is obviously something that I believe
7 very strongly in and it's been sort of the
8 foundation of a lot of the work that I have done
9 not only at CTA but in my entire career.

10 So it is my pleasure to inform you and the
11 Board that I have accepted EIP's appointment to
12 serve as one of its co-chairs, which will allow me
13 to play a pivotal role in the program's goal of
14 helping to build generational wealth and reduce
15 the racial wealth gap by assisting hubs that seek
16 to participate in large infrastructure projects as
17 prime contractors, joint venture partners, or as
18 equity participants.

19 Transit equity is credibly important to
20 me. And under my leadership, CTA has grown into
21 an industry leader for working with, developing,
22 and providing new and unique opportunities for
23 small and disadvantaged business enterprises.

24 I look forward to helping to facilitate

1 EIP's growth and advocate for new, innovative
2 programs like CTA's current joint project with
3 SEPTA, the Southeastern Transportation Authority,
4 which is the first major EIP project that will
5 create a joint small business certification
6 program allowing contractors to compete for
7 project awards for both agencies once they are
8 certified by either organization.

9 Finally, I'd like to close on a more
10 personal note, something that leaves my heart very
11 bitter and heavy but allows me to acknowledge the
12 life's work of a good friend and colleague of
13 mine.

14 You all know Bill Mooney, IV, who we refer
15 to as Bill Mooney, Jr., but most of you probably
16 do not have or have not had the pleasure of
17 working with his father, Bill Mooney, III, who we
18 also refer to as Bill Mooney, Sr.

19 Unfortunately, Bill Mooney, Sr. recently
20 passed away. For those of you who did not know
21 him, I would like to share a few details about his
22 history with CTA.

23 Bill was a graduate of the Illinois
24 Institute of Technology in civil engineering and

1 he went on to earn his MBA at the University of
2 Chicago. He began his career in public service as
3 a Chicago police officer on the transit detail.
4 He later joined an accelerated management program
5 at CTA transitioning from law enforcement to
6 becoming a transit professional.

7 Bill went on to become a 34-year transit
8 veteran. Along the way, he and I personally
9 worked together when he was the head of the
10 paratransit program at a time when he was starting
11 off in his management career at CTA and I was
12 starting off as a staff attorney at CTA, one of
13 the first projects that I actually got to work on
14 and Bill and I together worked on privatizing the
15 paratransit service at CTA and bringing in outside
16 vendors to provide that service, a model that is
17 currently being used by the paratransit service
18 that is provided by Pace today.

19 Bill went on to serve in roles in rail
20 operations, bus operations, and ended his tenure
21 as chief operating officer. Many of these
22 positions were positions that I also got a chance
23 to work with him as I moved up my career path at
24 CTA as well.

1 After leaving the CTA, Bill provided
2 transit consulting services to agencies across the
3 world. He was truly known as an industry leader
4 and innovator and is recognized not only
5 nationally but internationally as one of the
6 brightest minds in public transportation that we
7 have all known.

8 As I indicated, on a personal note, I have
9 had the pleasure of working with Bill for many
10 years. In fact, we grew up as professionals
11 together here at CTA. Rising through the ranks, I
12 can say firsthand that he was not only a
13 consummate professional, but he set a standard to
14 which we all aspire.

15 And while Bill Mooney, Sr. gave so much of
16 his professional life to CTA or public transit,
17 what we didn't see coming is that he would also
18 give us another incredible gift, his son, Bill
19 Mooney, Jr.

20 The younger Bill has not only lived up to
21 his father's legend by living and breathing CTA
22 excellence, he has served as a shining reflection
23 of what a transit professional should be and
24 mirroring his father's diligence and commitment

1 not only to CTA but to this industry. I know that
2 his dad was very proud of him as we all are here
3 at CTA.

4 Bill, Sr. was also father-in-law to Leah
5 Dawson-Mooney, a consummate transit professional
6 who only recently ended her own accomplished run
7 as our director of strategic planning and policy.
8 And he is also uncle to both Kathryn Dykas and
9 Virgil Allen, both who are valued members of our
10 transit operations team.

11 The Mooney legacy is a tremendous example
12 of how the CTA family of employees is often
13 comprised of generations of excellent employees,
14 wives, daughters, sons, husbands, and extended
15 family who see public transit as the family
16 business.

17 Bill, on behalf of the entire CTA family,
18 I want to again extend my condolences to you,
19 Leah, your children, and the rest of the immediate
20 and extended Mooney family. Your father gave CTA
21 so much and his legacy lives on both through his
22 mentorship of others who continue at CTA today and
23 with every day that you serve this great agency.

24 Mr. Chairman, that concludes my report and

1 I'm happy to answer any questions that you may
2 have.

3 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you, President
4 Carter, for the update. I'm encouraged by the
5 direction of the numbers presented in your report
6 this month, particularly, the increases in
7 ridership. I'm also pleased that violent crime on
8 the system is going down as well.

9 PRESIDENT CARTER: I didn't mention that,
10 but it is.

11 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I know. Other people
12 have mentioned it for you.

13 These are indicators that the measures
14 implemented by you and your team to address these
15 postpandemic challenges are moving in the right
16 direction. But, as you know, and your team
17 members are already aware, we're not quite there
18 yet as far as our meeting recovery goals and
19 restoring rider complete confidence are concerned.

20 We were reminded of these most recently at
21 our budget hearing from the comments by our
22 speakers. Most of the comments we heard that
23 night pertain to service reliability, hiring, and
24 training processes and the quality of service that

1 we provide, particularly, cleanliness and social
2 service matters. We know these are complex issues
3 and we know you and your team are working to
4 address them.

5 To restate what I said at the briefing, I
6 encourage you to continue your work, but I also
7 challenge you to consider creative ways to
8 leverage the partnerships and strategies we
9 currently have in place to expand our efforts.

10 I said this particularly about our social
11 service partnerships. We heard great stories of
12 how those partnerships with the city and social
13 service outreach organizations are working. Let's
14 explore more ways to minimize that impact and
15 perhaps find some synergies that can address the
16 other concerns raised by our customers.

17 And, finally, I also want to echo your
18 sentiments about Mr. Mooney. I often mention my
19 early years at CTA interning as a rail conductor
20 during my summer breaks. Mr. Mooney then was a
21 longtime CTA employee, he was bigger than life
22 then, and over the years grew to be a leader as we
23 all know. He knew everyone at CTA and everyone
24 knew him, and it was because he worked hard and

1 was passionate about serving our customers.

2 That same style of representation, work
3 ethic, and leadership lives through you, Bill, and
4 the great work that you do in leading our
5 infrastructure department. On behalf of the
6 Board, I want to extend our condolences of you and
7 Leah and your entire family as you mourn the loss
8 of your dad. Our thoughts and prayers are with
9 you.

10 Now, I'd like to open it up to any other
11 board members who have any comments to respond to
12 President Carter.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: President Carter,
14 thank you for your report. And, you know, you too
15 are in my thoughts and prayers because I feel your
16 pain from over here.

17 Can you or maybe someone from your team
18 just explain -- give a couple of minutes of why is
19 it important -- you talked about this in your
20 report, because at the budget hearing, you know, I
21 wasn't here physically but I was online, that
22 there was concerns that you're not hiring enough
23 rail operators.

24 But in not hiring enough rail operators,

1 can you explain the process, you mentioned it, of
2 how you can't just hire somebody on Thursday and
3 make them a rail operator on Friday? You know,
4 can you explain the process?

5 PRESIDENT CARTER: Yeah. The -- training
6 someone to become a rail operator is a
7 three-to-five-month process that we put our
8 employees through. It's important to keep in mind
9 that operating a train is a very complicated
10 undertaking and operating it safely is even more
11 complicated. And we are committed to making sure
12 that we're not just putting people in these seats
13 but we're putting people in these seats who are
14 qualified and certified to safely operate this
15 equipment.

16 There is a lot of work that our training
17 instruction team does to prepare people who
18 ultimately fill these roles. And we pull these
19 people from what we call flagger positions at CTA.

20 A lot of times, people ask, well, why
21 don't you just hire off the street like you hire
22 bus operators? The reason is, working on the
23 railroad, working on the right of way is a very,
24 very different experience, and it's one in which

1 you have to be comfortable with being there.

2 And part of the operator's job is not just
3 operating that train, it's also being able to
4 maneuver on our tracks safely, being able to
5 understand how to communicate with our control
6 center effectively, being able to understand the
7 way in which our vehicles operate on the right of
8 way. And a lot of that experience occurs when you
9 are a flagger at CTA.

10 So we pull from the flagging ranks to fill
11 our rail operator ranks. Now, the good news is
12 that I've got over 100 flaggers right now, so I
13 have a good pool of flaggers to pull from. And as
14 positions open up in the training program, we move
15 them into the rail operator position to do what we
16 call making them dual qualified, which means they
17 can be both a flagger but they also have the
18 ability to operate a train.

19 The process that one has to go through to
20 get trained to be an operator is very intensive.
21 It involves classroom study, it involves practical
22 operations, it requires a certification test that
23 you have to take in order to show that you have
24 mastered all the requirements of this.

1 Lester is somewhat familiar with some of
2 this. During his time as a conductor,
3 conductors had to do some of the training
4 themselves, although, they didn't have to do the
5 same level of training that an operator would have
6 to do. But they had to know how the train
7 operated. They had to know, you know, how to
8 communicate with the control center. They had to
9 know a lot of the things that are required to
10 effectively not only manage a train but to respond
11 to issues that may occur on that train on a daily
12 basis.

13 We have more than doubled the size of the
14 classes that we have been putting in place to
15 train our operators in this process. Before the
16 pandemic hit, the average size of a class was
17 somewhere between 8 to 12 people. We increased it
18 during the pandemic to 22. We are now up to 40
19 and more.

20 And so we have been constantly trying to
21 increase the throughput. One of the challenges is
22 you need people to train them. You need rail
23 instructors. And as we dealt with the great
24 resignation that has hit not just our rail

1 operators, not just our bus operators, it also hit
2 our instructors and other people, and so there was
3 a need for us to, for lack of a better word,
4 backfill for those positions as well.

5 In addition to that, the same group of
6 people is where our rail supervisors come from.
7 And if I don't have rail supervisors, I don't have
8 people to effectively handle service restoration
9 and other issues that happen on the service over
10 the course of the day.

11 And so part of what we're doing is
12 balancing all of these other positions that we
13 need to fill vacancies for while also trying to
14 prioritize what I view as the most critical
15 position, which is rail operators. And that has
16 been a process that we have been engaged in while
17 also dealing with these never-ending continuum of
18 people, you know, retiring and resigning during
19 that same time.

20 So the good news is we've made progress
21 this year. We have more rail operators now than
22 we did in January. The bad news is it's not a big
23 leap. It's not like what I've seen on the bus
24 side. On the bus side it's a pure numbers game,

1 and I'm able to move people through the bus
2 training program much faster than the rail
3 operator training. It's not the same level of
4 training that's required to do that. The biggest
5 piece for a bus operator is getting your CDL. And
6 a lot of that work, we're now assisting them in
7 advance.

8 On the rail side, I have to not only deal
9 with, like I said, the training aspects, I have to
10 deal with the other demands that are being placed
11 on the same group of instructors to fill other
12 positions on the rail side of the house and find a
13 way to balance those needs so that I don't have
14 Don Bonds calling me up complaining about the fact
15 that he doesn't have enough people to do what I
16 want him to do on the service.

17 So about a month and a half ago, when I
18 realized that our rail operator numbers were not
19 going to be as good as I wanted them to be, I
20 pulled the staff together, I pulled, you know, my
21 rail ops people together, I pulled my hiring
22 people together, I pulled my training instructor
23 people together, I pulled my planning people
24 together, and I said I need for you to put

1 together a plan on how we're going to increase
2 this dramatically for the upcoming year.

3 That plan is what was being presented to
4 me. The point that I wanted to make in my remarks
5 is that there was a representation being made that
6 a plan had been given to me that I was sitting on
7 and I needed to make a decision about that. That
8 was what some of the comments were that you were
9 hearing at the budget hearing.

10 The reality is, is that the only thing
11 that was with me is what I had asked them to give
12 me, and I wasn't sitting on it. I was getting the
13 information I needed to understand how we're going
14 to implement it, which is a very different
15 conversation.

16 And so I continued to look for ways to
17 increase the number of people that we put through
18 the training process and to increase the number of
19 rail operators that we have in seats at CTA. And
20 it is a process that we'll all be committed to
21 over the course of the next year. Believe me,
22 there is no one who wants to get service levels
23 back faster than me. If for no other reason that
24 it eliminates some of the criticism that I've got

1 for the fact that people don't believe I'm doing
2 it fast enough.

3 But what I can tell you is I'm not going
4 to do it in an unsafe manner. I'm not going to
5 risk the safety of the million people who ride the
6 CTA every day just to put someone in a seat who
7 isn't ready to take on that responsibility.

8 CTA has a very good history, a very good
9 safety record that's the result of the fact that
10 we have a very rigorous training program that we
11 believe puts us in a position to feel comfortable
12 and confident that the people who are operating
13 these trains know how to operate it effectively,
14 efficiently, and safely. And I won't compromise
15 that in order to meet a number.

16 So we are committed to doing what we need
17 to do. We are adding the resources that we need
18 to make this happen. We are looking at ways to be
19 innovative and creative in the approach that we
20 take to train them so we make sure that we are
21 being as efficient as possible, but we're going to
22 do it in a safe manner.

23 And, at the end of the day, it's my
24 belief, as you've heard me state today and as I've

1 stated in my budget, that we will be able to
2 restore service, not just on bus, but on rail to
3 where we were before we faced the challenges that
4 occurred -- I would remind everybody -- as a
5 result of a pandemic, not as a result of any
6 intentional act that CTA staff or myself
7 implemented to create the problem.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Yesterday, we were
9 talking to -- and I'll say this and then,
10 Mr. Chairman, I'll be done. Yesterday, Jeremy
11 brought up a great point. And I actually ended up
12 experiencing that point this morning. I have a
13 restaurant that I go to, the Original House of
14 Pancakes --

15 PRESIDENT CARTER: On Tuesday.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: -- and this morning
17 -- that's my ritual.

18 PRESIDENT CARTER: It's a great
19 restaurant.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: It is a great
21 restaurant. When I went this morning, I noticed
22 that service was faster. I didn't complain when
23 it wasn't. And I realized that the service was
24 faster -- I talked to the manager.

1 I said, what happened? I said, food was
2 out there. Everybody was moving. And what they
3 said was -- and that's what made me think about
4 you, Jeremy, is that they were able to hire more
5 people and now because of the patience that
6 happened with, you know, those of us that are
7 faithful customers, they're able to hire more
8 people, we're able to get our food faster and get
9 out quicker.

10 I thought about you and I thought about
11 what you said. And I think about, you know, you
12 many of the comments that's out there, in-person,
13 social media, whether it's cuts versus
14 optimization, you know, it's schlock and spiel,
15 you know, whichever one you want to call it.

16 But at the end of the day -- I want to say
17 this for the record, the restoring -- based upon
18 what I'm understanding, restoring is not because
19 something was cut; restoring is because you had --
20 during this period of time -- and we cannot ignore
21 it that during this period of time, CTA lost
22 people through death, CTA lost people through
23 retirement, CTA lost people through just quitting.
24 You know, it was across the country that, you

1 know, people were clamoring for people to find
2 work.

3 Folks realized that they could live off of
4 a little during the pandemic. But, now, hiring is
5 at an uptick because money has run out. Now
6 people need to go back to work.

7 And so I say all that to say to you that,
8 yes, we will continue challenging, yes, we will
9 continue pushing, and, no, your critics are never
10 going to stop criticizing. But the best way to
11 deal with it is to meet the metrics that you have
12 set in place and keep checking those boxes and
13 that's it. That's all I have to say.

14 PRESIDENT CARTER: Just to put a final
15 point on your comment about Jeremy. What Jeremy
16 said, for those of you don't know what was
17 discussed -- he was making a point that the impact
18 of the pandemic and the challenges surrounding the
19 workforce are not unique to CTA.

20 And the point that he was making was that
21 if you go to a restaurant today, in many cases,
22 you wait longer to get your meal --

23 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: You didn't tell him
24 to turn his phone off. It's one of his critics.

1 PRESIDENT CARTER: -- you don't -- you go
2 to the restaurant and they don't -- you know, you
3 go in there and they tell you you've got a
4 20-minute wait and you're looking around and you
5 see tables that are open but they won't seat you
6 at those tables because they don't have enough
7 wait staff to do that. What they don't do is shut
8 down the restaurant.

9 You know, and it's sort of like what I was
10 doing with the optimization was the equivalent to
11 recognizing that I may have -- you know, I have
12 tables that I can't use because I don't have
13 people to serve them. It's the very same, you
14 know, assessment of I have service I want to
15 provide but I don't have enough operators to run
16 it.

17 So it's not a question of I don't have
18 enough equipment to run more service. It's not a
19 question of I can't create a schedule to run the
20 service. The question was I don't have enough
21 people to run more service.

22 So when you're talking about a restaurant
23 or when you're talking about a hotel, which I
24 think was his other example, you know, a hotel may

1 not fill all the rooms because there's not enough
2 housekeeping staff to clean all the rooms.

3 Or the way I discussed it is that an
4 airline -- you know, when you ride airlines today,
5 they are packed. It doesn't matter what day you
6 want to go, what week you want to go, it's packed.
7 You know what else? You don't have as many
8 options.

9 I used to be able to go -- get a flight to
10 go to Washington, D.C., I could go almost every
11 hour to Washington, D.C. There was a flight to
12 D.C. every hour. Now it's three or four flights a
13 day. Why is that? Because they don't have enough
14 pilots, they don't have enough flight attendants.

15 The truth of the matter is, there is so
16 much that has changed in the way we live our daily
17 lives that was impacted by the pandemic that is
18 part of what we accept as the new normal.

19 Now, does anyone call up United and
20 complain about the fact that they aren't running
21 more routes to Washington, D.C. than they used to
22 do? No. Do they upset about the fact that
23 they've got to be on a plane that's even more
24 crowded than ever because of the fact they're not

1 running as much flights? No. They just accept
2 that.

3 But when it comes to public
4 transportation, everybody wants to complain about
5 why you aren't doing things like they were before
6 the pandemic hit. And it's the same problem. You
7 know, the good news is, we're getting better and
8 we'll continue to get better. I want you as a
9 Board to push me, to push my team, to hold us
10 accountable for what it is that we're committing
11 to do.

12 You're going to see metrics every month
13 that are going to tell you that. So for anybody
14 who thinks there isn't transparency around what
15 we're doing or what we're not doing, I will be
16 reporting on this every month. The point is, it
17 takes time. And no one -- no one has figured out
18 solutions to that.

19 And let me just say this, there's been a
20 lot of discussion about are we behind Washington,
21 D.C. or New York or, you know, Philadelphia, stuff
22 like that. When you look at what's going on in
23 those cities -- first of all, if you look at one
24 transit system, you see one transit system, one.

1 Two, whatever issues may be happening in
2 Philadelphia may be very different than what's
3 happening in Chicago.

4 But, more importantly, just because you
5 increase your schedule doesn't mean you're meeting
6 your schedule. And you may recall when I
7 optimized my schedule it was because I could have
8 kept on saying that I'm running 2019 level
9 service, but if I don't have the workforce to do
10 it and that workforce has changed dramatically
11 because of resignations and retirements and other
12 things, which is a very different issue than what
13 I was dealing with during the pandemic.

14 Just to be clear, I didn't have a great
15 resignation problem during the pandemic. What I
16 had during the pandemic was an illness problem.
17 People caught COVID, they had to stay home. That
18 was a constantly changing dynamic that I had to
19 deal with.

20 What happened when the pandemic ended and
21 the great resignation started, I had a totally
22 different problem. It wasn't the question of if
23 somebody is going to be sick for five days, it was
24 the fact that they weren't here at all. That

1 required a totally different strategy, which is
2 what we implemented with the Meeting the Moment
3 plan and which we have continued to execute for
4 all of last year -- no -- for all of this year and
5 a portion of last year to get us to where we are
6 right now.

7 And I don't know that anyone can say that
8 we're in a worse place today than we were a year
9 ago. We may not be happy with where we are. We
10 may not be where we want to be, but we're not
11 worse. And that, to me, is progress. And that's
12 the only point I'm trying to make.

13 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you, President
14 Carter. Any other comments before we move on?

15 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: I think a lot of my
16 comments were addressed. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I just want to say one
18 last thing before you do move on.

19 Your comment about safety, making sure
20 people are well trained, because if something
21 happens on one of these trains because we're
22 rushing this process, there's not a board member
23 up here that wants you to rush the process.

24 PRESIDENT CARTER: No. I don't believe

1 that.

2 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: We have to safeguard
3 the public. And the appreciate your approach to
4 that. You know, because if something happens
5 because someone was ill-prepared to operate a
6 train, then all of us would feel a sense of
7 responsibility that we rushed this process. So
8 let the process unfold the way it should so that
9 the people who are operating these trains know
10 exactly what they're doing so that the public is
11 protected.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: That's right,
13 Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: All right. Moving
15 right along. Anybody else before -- because we'll
16 be here all night.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: No, we won't.

18 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: And dinner is not
19 served, so -- our next order of business is
20 approval of the minutes of the regular Board
21 meeting of October 13th, 2023. May I have a
22 motion to approve?

23 DIRECTOR MILLER: So moved.

24 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Second.

Transcript of Chicago Transit Authority Board Meeting
Conducted on November 15, 2023

55

1 MS. GREENLEE: It's been moved by Director
2 Miller, seconded by Director Ortiz that the
3 minutes from the meeting of October 13th, 2023, be
4 approved. We'll take a roll call vote.

5 Director Lee.

6 DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.

7 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

8 DIRECTOR MILLER: Yes.

9 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay.

10 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

11 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jakes.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Yes.

13 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.

14 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

15 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jha.

16 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

17 MS. GREENLEE: The motion to approve the
18 minutes passes.

19 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you. Our next
20 order of business is executive session. It's my
21 understanding, Kent, that there's no executive
22 session today.

23 MR. RAY: Correct, Chairman. No executive
24 session.

1 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our next order of
2 business is a report from the committee of
3 finance, audit, and budget, which will be
4 presented by Director Jakes.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Mr. Chairman, the
6 committee met earlier this afternoon and approved
7 the October 13th, 2023, committee minutes and
8 reviewed the finance report. The committee
9 reviewed seven ordinances:

10 Review of an ordinance amending that the
11 fiscal years 2023 through 2027 Capital Improvement
12 Program and authorizing an intergovernmental
13 agreement with Cook County through its Department
14 of Transportation and highways for a bus priority
15 corridor planning study.

16 Second, the review of an ordinance
17 adopting a budget for calendar year 2024 and
18 financial plan for calendar years 2025 through
19 2026.

20 Third, review of an ordinance approving
21 the fiscal years 2024 through 2028 Capital
22 Improvement Program and authorizing the filing and
23 execution of grant cooperative agreements and
24 amendments and related materials.

1 Fourth, review of an ordinance authorizing
2 the acquisition of real property located at 5628
3 West Roosevelt Road, Chicago.

4 Fifth, review of an ordinance authorizing
5 a nonhighway use agreement and a construction and
6 maintenance agreement with the Illinois Department
7 of Transportation for the Red Line Extension
8 project.

9 Six, review of an ordinance authorizing an
10 agreement with Development Now for Chicago for
11 transportation services for the Democratic
12 National Convention.

13 Seven, review of an ordinance authorizing
14 funding for the option term of the
15 intergovernmental agreement with the City of
16 Chicago through its Department of Family and
17 Support Services for outreach to individuals in
18 need of shelter.

19 Mr. Chairman, the committee also reviewed
20 11 contracts. The committee placed the seven
21 ordinances and 11 of the contracts on the omnibus.
22 The committee approved and recommended for Board
23 approval seven ordinances and the 11 contracts.
24 That concludes the report of the finance, audit,

1 and budget committee.

2 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I will now entertain a
3 motion to approve the omnibus.

4 DIRECTOR MILLER: So moved.

5 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Second.

6 MS. GREENLEE: It's been moved by Director
7 Miller, seconded by Director Ortiz that the
8 omnibus be approved. We'll take a roll call vote.

9 Director Jha.

10 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

11 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.

12 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

13 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jakes.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN JAKES: Yes.

15 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay.

16 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

17 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

18 DIRECTOR MILLER: Yes.

19 MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.

20 DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.

21 MS. GREENLEE: The motion to approve the
22 omnibus passes.

23 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our next order of
24 business is a construction report from Bill

1 Mooney, our chief infrastructure officer, and
2 JuanPablo Prieto, our director of diversity
3 program.

4 MR. MOONEY: Good evening. I am Bill
5 Mooney, chief infrastructure officer, and I would
6 be remiss not to take a moment to just to stress
7 -- I've only ever known the CTA as family, and I'm
8 still overwhelmed by the outpouring of love and
9 support that we've received during this time
10 period from the Board, President Carter, and much
11 of the leadership here.

12 My father loved the CTA dearly. Even long
13 after he left, he would send messages as he
14 traveled transit agencies about things he'd seen,
15 things we'd do. Sometimes the question of what
16 the heck were we thinking. If you knew my father,
17 it probably wasn't that nice.

18 And, truly, if there was a judge of
19 character of a man, it's the lives that he's
20 touched and the stories I've heard over the last
21 couple days just truly defines him as a
22 larger-than-life person and I truly appreciate all
23 the love. So, thank you.

24 But he'd want us to get back to the good

1 business with you. I'm joined today by --

2 MR. PRIETO: JuanPablo Prieto, director of
3 diversity programs.

4 MR. MOONEY: So we'll move on to our first
5 project. This is our CDOT Damen station project.

6 Advance a couple of slides for me, please.
7 Move to the first picture, please.

8 So we continue, now, actually, to come out
9 of the ground at Damen station and do steelwork.

10 So move on to the next picture, please.

11 Next one. We'll start here.

12 So we continue pier placements, which were
13 completed. We completed the major stair tower in
14 the middle that you're seeing kind of go up five
15 stories wide and start hanging steel. Here you
16 can see in this first photo, the steel structure
17 from the main stationhouse going up as well as
18 that elevated bridge that will connect us as -- to
19 both the north and south platforms.

20 Next slide, please.

21 They finished most of the work that
22 impacts the streetway there on Lake Street. The
23 streets been closed for an extended period of
24 time, so here you can see that restoration work.

1 There will be a lot of people, I'm sure, that will
2 be glad to see that corner open up a little more
3 again.

4 Next slide, please.

5 As well as you can see some of that
6 restoration of the steelwork. So you've seen them
7 placing these columns over the last few months and
8 here they are finishing them off with a fresh coat
9 of paint.

10 Next slide, please.

11 Our next project is our nonrevenue rail
12 vehicle facility. Move forward to the photos.
13 The project continues forward on budget and tight
14 schedule. We are looking very excitedly towards
15 the spring and opening up this facility. We've
16 worked a lot on the hardening of it going into
17 winter months. You see kind of in these photos
18 the final pourings of concrete.

19 Move forward a couple slides, please.

20 Next one, please.

21 Here you can see this is the exterior
22 apron, so this is just outside the facility as we
23 would connect to the railroad connection. This is
24 a maintenance facility for rail-borne equipment,

1 so this will actually be where those pieces of
2 equipment enter the facility. We'll be doing
3 track work over the next few months, tying it
4 ultimately back to the Green Line and the
5 railroad so we can get the equipment on and off
6 our railroad.

7 Next slide.

8 Here is an oil water separator. It's a
9 unique piece of equipment that allows us to filter
10 water that comes out of facility that may have had
11 drainage that's picked up anything in the facility
12 before it goes back into the main wastewater.
13 It's really a key piece of infrastructure and the
14 exterior, the last piece to go in before we can do
15 some of the restoration around the building and
16 the landscaping that goes with it.

17 Next slide.

18 And here you can see that interior photo.
19 I've shown you a bunch from this interior camera.
20 You can see the last pour of concrete here in the
21 near ground. You're seeing us progressively
22 working across as they use those areas to truck in
23 equipment. And in the far back, you can see a
24 little bit of a shiny aluminum steel. And that's

1 the paint booth. We'll try and get you some other
2 photos the next coming months. So this facility
3 is not only to wash all the equipment, repair all
4 the equipment, store all the parts for it, but it
5 also allows us to paint that equipment. It takes
6 a beating in the construction season, so a fresh
7 coat of paint helps with that longevity.

8 Next slide.

9 This is our Canal, Barry, Damen tie house
10 project. This is a moving forward very rapidly.
11 We hope to see Damen fully closed up as we enter
12 into winter. We can move forward. And we
13 actually started to see some of the major power
14 tracking equipment coming online.

15 Move forward a couple photos ahead. Next
16 slide, please.

17 Here we are at Damen. We've got walls.
18 It's really exciting to see the building enclosed.
19 Over the next few months, you'll see this building
20 fully enclosed. We'll start to get temperature
21 control inside and we'll start bringing in
22 equipment. That's a big moment in this. We're
23 hoping to have online towards summer of next year,
24 which will really provide some relief on the

1 demand and power manpower on the Blue Line.

2 Next slide.

3 And we've started the upgrade to the
4 equipment at Haymarket. So Haymarket, again, is
5 just down the street from the headquarters. So
6 this equipment actually ties into our canal
7 breaker house in the subway. And this is the new
8 line up there. So this is line number two. Last
9 month, I showed you some of the old equipment
10 coming out. Here's some of that new equipment
11 coming in. It's being commissioned and it's
12 online now powering that facility.

13 Next slide.

14 And at Barry, so this is the final pieces
15 of the foundation. So I've shown you a lot of
16 deep foundation work, a lot of the subgrade work
17 here recently. Here is the grade beam that
18 follows the whole exterior, and this is where the
19 steel and the walls come up from. So this
20 building is start to grow out the ground. And so
21 this is kind of the tail end piece of the project,
22 but you'll be seeing some of this sprout out up
23 over the next month.

24 Next slide.

1 We're going to talk a little bit about our
2 Forest Park phase one rebuild for the last time.
3 So on October 8th, early in the morning, we opened
4 up track work after a 71-day line cut. Very
5 excited and successful. We can move forward.
6 I'll be glad to share some of the photos of the
7 most beautiful track you'll ever see.

8 You know, this takes a village to build a
9 track of this caliber. And I not could say -- you
10 know, my team went through fire and ice to get us
11 there, but they weren't alone. They certainly had
12 a huge amount of support from everybody from comms
13 down to innovation, but certainly we would not
14 have been successful with support transit
15 operations around this work and worked with us
16 through test trains and other things we
17 commissioned on. So I'm very grateful for support
18 in that.

19 So here's the most functional track you'll
20 see. It's granite -- modern granite structure.
21 Wood ties. Beautiful. 55 miles per hour trackage
22 here. This is at Loomis, which is just west of
23 kind of Racine.

24 Next slide.

1 Here is what we call the Morgan Middle.
2 So you've seen a couple photos of this sprouting
3 up. This is a key connection point where we short
4 turn trains to be able to facilitate service on
5 the north side out of O'Hare and the demand up
6 there. And so this has just come back online as
7 well. It's a really important aspect of our
8 resource system and being able to provide service.

9 Next slide.

10 Here, again, some of that beautiful track
11 with that granite ballast. We made the shift for
12 Dan Ryan to go to granite, which was a huge
13 investment for us but it makes a huge difference
14 in longevity of that track. I'm a big fan of
15 tracks, if you haven't figured that out.

16 Next slide.

17 So part of the commitment on this project,
18 we did a lot of the substructure work that will be
19 facilitating the Racine ASAP project, which you'll
20 start hearing reporting about it in the upcoming
21 months as we start to see some of that work going
22 on.

23 So they built the platform extensions for
24 that new stationhouse to demolish the old Racine

1 stationhouse. That's ultimately where the
2 elevator will be coming down and creating that
3 access point. So here you can see them finishing
4 up the topping slab for that station extension
5 that will then be handed off to our second
6 contractor. In January, you'll start to see some
7 reporting on that project.

8 Next slide.

9 Here's the first train. It was a
10 beautiful night to see us restore that service.
11 We're very proud of the work down there and very
12 proud of the success of the project as a whole.

13 With that, I'll pause and talk about the
14 most important part of it.

15 MR. PRIETO: Thanks, Bill. The contractor
16 is currently attaining 26.12 percent DBE, which
17 equates to over \$22 million that have been paid to
18 DBE firms so far, and we're confident that they
19 will meet their commitment of 30 percent.

20 On the workforce side, the contractor is
21 meeting their careers, opportunity, and apprentice
22 goal. They're still working to meet the service
23 area EDA goal and completed a training for
24 individuals interested in construction on the

1 project site, which we reported out to the Board
2 in the beginning of the project. That was part of
3 their good faith efforts. They ended up hiring
4 three individuals from that training onto this
5 job.

6 Back to you, Bill.

7 MR. MOONEY: I think one of the most
8 interesting challenges of a project that moves
9 this fast is really how do you create that legacy
10 of work opportunity, right? And sometimes it is
11 hammers on jobs, but sometimes it is creating the
12 next workforce for the next set of projects. We
13 talk a Red Line Extension and getting that
14 workforce ready.

15 Next slide.

16 As we come to the conclusion of our
17 refresh and renewed customer facing program for
18 the year, you'll see kind of these numbers
19 cleaning up a little bit.

20 Next slide. Let's move forward in the
21 photos.

22 We are finishing up -- we are finishing up
23 on the last set of bus turnarounds. We have 11 or
24 12 of those. We have 22 of the 29 stations

1 completed.

2 This is Jefferson Park. What I would note
3 here is we've completed a master kind of renewal
4 construction project in 2019. If you look at the
5 before picture and the after pictures here, it's
6 pretty astonishing that in a very short period of
7 time, the use, abuse, and just loving, you know,
8 overall, you know, existence of our system that we
9 see in the weathering of the outdoor environment.
10 You can see the worn benches in the before and
11 then the refinished after here.

12 Next slide.

13 This is actually out in the bus terminal
14 right outside there. You can see where the paint
15 had worn from, you know, almost four years of
16 heavy use.

17 Next slide.

18 And here is kind of some updated signage.
19 So we've taken the opportunity to reprogram some
20 of the signage as well making it a little more
21 customer friendly as we gain feedback and continue
22 to interact with facilities as well as the
23 upgrades.

24 Next slide.

1 This is Washington/Wells, so it's cosmetic
2 exterior walkup. You know, this is a curb appeal.
3 That station in downtown Chicago, you really can
4 see the refresh with the brand new signage as well
5 as the fresh coat of paint and the upgraded
6 lighting.

7 Next slide.

8 And what would be a report without a
9 before/after of the LED upgrade at night. Nothing
10 says kind of a safe, secure environment than
11 having that really bright LED environment. So
12 that's it.

13 And my final report. Red/Purple
14 modernization project. We move forward on kind of
15 a couple pieces of work here.

16 Move a couple slides, please.

17 Here we are looking at the -- I'll talk
18 about the bridge under. So the first phase of the
19 Red/Purple bypass area was opening up that bypass.
20 Remember, Chairman, when you came out and rode on
21 that first train with us and, you know, how
22 exciting that was, well, over the last year or so,
23 we've been rebuilding the structure underneath
24 there.

1 So we are starting to untangle kind of
2 existing service that was running under the last
3 piece of the historical structure there and
4 starting to put in service to the new structure
5 there and we'll be building the last two tracks in
6 that area. So here you can see some of that work
7 in that corner, what we've historically called
8 Clark Junction.

9 Next slide.

10 Here is the preparation for the upcoming
11 kind of cut and throws to be able to detangle and
12 put us on that new structure while we've been
13 running around it otherwise.

14 Next slide.

15 And here's up in the Lawrence to Bryn Mawr
16 modernization area. So we are in full drill
17 boring mode. We have three drills on site. They
18 are drilling about 140 caissons between stations
19 and all the structural elements there. And so
20 we've got two drills working on the main structure
21 for the segmental box structure that are coming up
22 in the upcoming months. You'll start to see those
23 showing up in the photos again, but here you can
24 see those caissons being drilled.

1 Next slide.

2 And then we continue to do demolition. So
3 we are -- over 60 percent of the viaducts are
4 demolished. So all the viaducts are fully
5 demolished. 60 percent of the embankment is
6 completely removed at this point. We continue to
7 work to our way from north to south.

8 It's pretty astonishing if you're out
9 there, if you've ever experienced it beforehand,
10 to see how amazingly open it is. And then Board
11 to kind of be able to reopen and activate that
12 space is really paying off. You can see just that
13 impact in day one.

14 Next slide.

15 And as I mentioned, you know, we demoed
16 all the viaducts, we've also removed the last of
17 the historical station. So this is the last piece
18 of foundation being removed at Berwyn station.
19 Really a milestone of the project and now we start
20 to build from the ground up with the new modern
21 stations fully-accessible, world-class stations.

22 Next slide.

23 And, as always, continue our ongoing
24 outreach. There's a whole list of events here

1 that we do with local organizations and the
2 footprint of the project. We talk weekly with the
3 alder persons offices, both the 44, 46, 48, as
4 well as a lot of the community-activated
5 organizations in that area. We're very dedicated
6 kind of to that footprint and making sure that
7 we're on the ground with our ears listening to any
8 issues that may come up and also celebrating all
9 the great milestones we've had. It's really
10 enjoyable to actually have community meetings here
11 because they're seeing that progress and they see
12 the light at the end of the tunnel.

13 With that, I'll turn it over to JP.

14 MR. PRIETO: Thanks again, Bill. The
15 picture you see here on the slide is from our
16 event that we hosted on October 10th. We hosted a
17 quarter four workforce event at Gateley Park where
18 attendees heard a presentation from CTA staff
19 including infrastructure, RPM, and RLE teams about
20 CTA opportunities.

21 They also heard from two of the unions
22 that perform on our projects, operating engineers,
23 Local 150 and Local 281, both of whom had openings
24 for their apprentice programs. So we want to get

1 them in front of the audience so they can explain
2 their programs and the process of how to get into
3 those apprentice programs.

4 We had all of our workforce partners host
5 tables as well as some of our contractors so that
6 participants can get information on training
7 resources and current opportunities.

8 I'm very proud to report that in September
9 we crossed the sentry mark with the number of
10 unique DBEs on the design build contract. So far,
11 115 unique DBEs have been awarded over \$250
12 million between the design and construction
13 packages in RPM phase one. 51 of those firms had
14 never done business before with CTA before RPM.

15 I want to really thank and highlight the
16 teams that were responsible for making that
17 happen, the RPM team, the contractor, and
18 diversity staff who made sure to get all those
19 opportunities out to the DBEs as they could.

20 On the workforce side, at the end of
21 October, 1,998 unique individuals have worked over
22 1.4 million labor hours and earned over \$83
23 million in wages.

24 Now, we'd like to show you the next

1 installment in our monthly video series in which
2 we highlight the RPM project's ambitious workforce
3 and DBE inclusion programs.

4 Today, you'll hear from Eugene Sherrod, a
5 laborer with Walsh-Fluor who has worked on several
6 parts of the RPM project. It really is an honor
7 to share these stories on how CTA and RPM have
8 improved the lives of Chicagoans and their
9 families. Thank you.

10 MR. MOONEY: It seems like we may have
11 some technical difficulties with the link.

12 MS. GREENLEE: Here we go.

13 MR. MOONEY: That concludes our report.
14 We'd be happy to take any questions.

15 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you. Any
16 questions from the Board?

17 MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.

18 DIRECTOR LEE: I have one question. Is
19 there an opportunity -- I know you're meeting with
20 community members a lot, alder people, etc. Are
21 we able to also combine that with employment
22 recruitment? Are we already doing that? Is there
23 an opportunity to do both?

24 MR. PRIETO: For internal positions or for

1 the contract positions?

2 DIRECTOR LEE: Both.

3 MR. PRIETO: Both. So we regularly share
4 the information for our government and community
5 relations group. They get it out to all of the
6 alders whenever we're having -- and other
7 electives too, not just the alders -- when we're
8 having our workforce events, I know they share our
9 hiring events as well so that they can get to out
10 to community members.

11 MR. MOONEY: I comment that we recently --
12 a month ago we did an RO meeting, a community
13 outreach meeting, and we actually not only had
14 workforce partners there, we were talking about
15 the project, but we brought human resources there,
16 right?

17 DIRECTOR LEE: I think that's great.

18 MR. MOONEY: We talk about jobs coming,
19 right, but we've got lots of needs for jobs today.

20 DIRECTOR LEE: Thank you.

21 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

22 DIRECTOR MILLER: No questions. Thank
23 you.

24 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.

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1 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: I second that comment.
2 As much as we're encouraging new partners to come
3 into our projects, helping out and encouraging on
4 our own HR I think would be helpful. Thank you.

5 MS. GREENLEE: Director Jha.

6 DIRECTOR JHA: No comments. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Just congratulations on
8 the Blue Line work there.

9 And at the Board meeting -- sorry -- the
10 budget meeting, there were lots of comments about
11 our programs and our outreach in terms of
12 diversity and hiring contractors to basically
13 participate in the CTA business, and so I want to
14 thank you for the work that you're doing in that
15 area. It's very profound. Thank you very much.

16 MR. PRIETO: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Any other comments?

18 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: There were a lot of
19 shoutouts.

20 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yeah. We don't know if
21 it was stacked or -- thank you very much.

22 Our final order of business is new
23 business. Georgette, is there any new business.

24 MS. GREENLEE: Mr. Chairman, there is no

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1 new business.

2 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Since there's no
3 further business to come before the Board, may I
4 have a motion to adjourn the Chicago Transit Board
5 meeting of November 15th, 2023?

6 DIRECTOR MILLER: So moved.

7 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Second.

8 MS. GREENLEE: It's been moved by Director
9 Miller, seconded by Director Ortiz. We'll take a
10 roll call vote.

11 Director Jha.

12 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

13 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz.

14 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

15 MS. GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay.

16 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

17 MS. GREENLEE: Director Miller.

18 DIRECTOR MILLER: Yes.

19 MS. GREENLEE: Director Lee.

20 DIRECTOR LEE: Yes.

21 MS. GREENLEE: The motion to adjourn
22 passes.

23 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you very much.

24 (Off the record at 5:14 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER

I, Courtney Petros, Registered Professional Reporter and Certified Shorthand Reporter, the officer before whom the foregoing proceeding was taken, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct record of the testimony given; that said testimony was taken by me and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my direction; that reading and signing was not requested; and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed this 17th day of November, 2023.



COURTNEY PETROS, RPR, CSR

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