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NASSAU COUNTY BUS TRANSIT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
January 31, 2024
6:30 p.m.

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

- PATRICK GALLAGHER, Deputy County Attorney
- JOEL BERSE, Committee Member
- JEAN DUROSEAU, Committee Member
- JACLENE D'AGOSTINO, Committee Member
- JACK KHZOUZ, NICE CEO

- DEBRA SMITH, Court Reporter

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2 ATTORNY GALLAGHER: I'd like to
3 call the meeting to order, the
4 January 31st meeting of the Nassau
5 County Transit Committee.

6 On the agenda today is a review of
7 the 2024 operating budget, the Q3 for
8 2023 score card, service updates, and
9 community outreach.

10 I would do a roll call, but I know
11 we do not have a quorum. So, I will
12 turn this over to Jack for his
13 presentation.

14 MR. KHZOUZ: Thank you,
15 Mr. Gallagher.

16 I appreciate, Mr. Gallagher, the
17 new county attorney, supporting the
18 board. I certainly appreciate his
19 support.

20 I want to say Happy New Year,
21 first of all, to everyone. Thank you,
22 board, for your past support and
23 guidance. We appreciate it very much.

24 In the room today, along with our
25 public that we serve every day, we have

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2 a large group of leadership from NICE
3 Bus here. They're the folks that
4 really run the service every day, from
5 Able-Ride and Operations Safety,
6 planning. They're the heroes that run
7 the service every day. I appreciate
8 everybody being here.

9 We have a short presentation, and
10 at the end, obviously we'll take
11 comments and questions from the board
12 and comments and questions from the
13 public. So, hopefully we can get this
14 going.

15 So, again, as Mr. Gallagher
16 mentioned, we're going to talk about
17 the operating budget next year. This
18 is a preview. We're not going to -- it
19 has nothing to do with today but it's
20 just a preview of what we have been
21 expecting.

22 We're going to get together at the
23 end of March to actually see the actual
24 budget and go from there. We'll talk
25 about the score card. We'll have some

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2 service updates and some community
3 outreach updates for everybody.

4 There is also some capital
5 projects that we'll talk about here too
6 that have kind of come into fruition.

7 So, the projected budget, some
8 good news on the budget. We look like
9 we're going to be fully funded for next
10 year, which is, again, a great support
11 from both our state representatives,
12 our local representatives. The federal
13 government has really come in to
14 support the transit system.

15 You know, we're here to move
16 communities, promote economic
17 development, give everybody access.

18 So, let's go over it. As normal,
19 the orange is the biggest part of our
20 budget. Sixty-eight percent of our
21 budget is made up of the state
22 operating assistance. This is what we
23 project the state to supply us to
24 operate the system for next year.

25 We'll find out what the actual

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2 number is March 31st, April 1st,
3 assuming that the state finalizes the
4 budget at that period.

5 So, we'll have a very, very good
6 indication the third week of March when
7 we have our next meeting, and we can
8 vote on the assumptions that we have
9 here, but right now we're projecting
10 this number.

11 The Nassau County requires STOA
12 match, or the match against the state,
13 is 2.5 million. The next three lines
14 are federal funds used to operate. So,
15 it's about a 20-million-dollar federal
16 funds that operate the system.

17 New York State to help match those
18 funds has to supply \$700,000 and the
19 county has to supply another \$700,000
20 to match all the federal funds that
21 makes up 1.4.

22 Passenger revenues, about
23 \$31 million, so it's a good part of our
24 operating revenue. And, you know,
25 obviously without our riders, we don't

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2 really serve a purpose. So, we
3 understand that very much.

4 Then the nonuser revenue, what is
5 that? That is advertising. Mostly
6 advertising. It's a little bit of some
7 other fees that come into us, but
8 really 99 percent of that is the
9 advertising that's on the side of the
10 vehicle. So, very important to
11 understand.

12 So, 169.2, that's a much bigger
13 number than last year. Why is that a
14 bigger number? We're going to talk
15 about it a little later, but it's
16 really to supply and support our
17 paratransit division.

18 Inmer Hernandez is here today. He
19 is our director of pratransit
20 operations.

21 The paratransit division has been
22 mandated by the FTA to expand service
23 into Queens, both on the south and the
24 north, and into Suffolk County also.

25 So, that really is a number that

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2 reflects that expanded service.

3 But, we started that back last
4 year, the largest part -- launch,
5 January 1st, when we started service to
6 Flushing and Jamaica. So, that's why
7 it's there.

8 Again, the county has been great
9 at supporting and understanding that we
10 have to do that. It's a mandate by the
11 FTA.

12 So, let's go into service updates.
13 What we are projected to plan for, for
14 next year or for the year that we're in
15 right now -- first of all, let's hit
16 the score card really quickly.

17 The score card we do quarterly.
18 I'm sorry, I think I wrote third
19 quarter. It's really the fourth
20 quarter score card here.

21 So, we'll go across the top on the
22 fixed route side. We measure on-time
23 performance. We measure missed number
24 of pullouts at the gate here. We also
25 measure number of accidents per hundred

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2 thousand as a ratio.

3 Those are standard -- industry
4 standard KPIs, or industry standard
5 measurements that we look at.

6 So, for the fourth quarter, our
7 total average on-time performance was
8 about 89 percent. That gave us an
9 incentive of \$5,000. Again, there is
10 no money that changes hands here. It's
11 credits and debits basically. So, we
12 hit that number.

13 Our missed pullouts were one tenth
14 of one percent. So, a fairly small
15 number. Again, that hit the number.
16 It wasn't a -- it wasn't a penalty or
17 reward, we just happened to hit that
18 little sweet spot there.

19 Then accidents per hundred
20 thousand, I'm not really proud of this
21 number. Our accidents crept up a
22 little bit. We count everything as an
23 accident. So, even if we brush a
24 signpost or a tree limb, we count that
25 as an accident.

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2 We back into a -- back over a
3 curb, we count that as an accident.
4 Even if there's no damage, zero damage,
5 we count it as an accident.

6 So, unfortunately, we didn't make
7 our accident numbers both on the para
8 and fixed side route. That tends to be
9 an industry trend right now with
10 transit. Accidents are creeping up a
11 little bit.

12 Part of that reason is the amount
13 of new drivers that we've got coming
14 into the system right now.

15 Not only are our ranks affected by
16 what's going on out there with hiring,
17 which is challenging, right, but it's
18 also being affected by retirees.

19 We have a large number of folks
20 retiring. Those 25 year, 30-year,
21 40-year drivers. And we have a few
22 that are 50-year drivers. They're
23 retiring now. So, you know, again,
24 we're feeling it a little bit.

25 But, again, accidents are minor,

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2 and we'll hopefully keep it that way.

3 On the pratransit side, our KPIs
4 are a little different. We add call
5 answer ratios because, again, remember,
6 all our clients call for trips.

7 So, the call center is very, very
8 busy. The number of calls they
9 actually pick up and answer before
10 people disconnect, 94 percent,
11 93 percent. Again, no incentive or hit
12 on that one, so it's basically zero.

13 On-time performance, 86 percent,
14 which Inmer and his team should very
15 proud of. Again, it's a door-to-door
16 service. We're picking up and dropping
17 off customers throughout that time.

18 So, you could have five people on
19 a van and pick up and drop off people
20 throughout the county and hit them all
21 on time is sometimes a challenge. But
22 85 percent, 86 percent is very good.

23 Missed pullouts, again, very low
24 again here on the paratransit side.

25 That does not mean anyone was denied

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2 service. Everybody got service.

3 So, accidents, again, much higher
4 than we wanted, but, again, minor
5 accidents. We're working on some plan
6 to get that out.

7 Then productivity, the amount of
8 passengers per hour we're able to
9 transport on a shared ride service.
10 1.30 is a fairly good ratio. It means
11 you're being efficient enough but you
12 are also -- you are being efficient but
13 you are not inconveniencing the riders
14 on the trips.

15 You're not making the trips too
16 long. You're not putting too many
17 trips outside the on-time performance
18 mark. It's just the right balance.

19 So, anyway, that's the score card
20 for the quarter. We'll talk about it
21 and cover it again at the next meeting
22 so that we can be a little bit more
23 official with this.

24 I did want to show this chart.
25 There's been a lot of questions about,

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2 well, what does ridership recovery look
3 like since Covid took hold?

4 And you can see the blue dot at
5 the very top that says 100 back in
6 between 2019/2020, March I think it was
7 2020 when we got hit, and we
8 automatically saw a drop in ridership
9 down to 60 percent.

10 The orange line represents our
11 on-time performance over time. And the
12 reason I want to show this is, as
13 ridership has recovered -- and we're in
14 about 87 percent right now -- our
15 on-time performance has actually
16 improved.

17 So, there's a lot to be said for
18 what our performance team has done,
19 what our operations team has done to
20 ensure that hasn't eroded, on-time
21 performance hasn't eroded over time as
22 more people board the bus. It's
23 actually improved.

24 Now, and this is as of the end of
25 2023, currently, the end of January, it

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2 looks like on-time performance -- we
3 have to still do some work on the
4 number -- the on-time performance looks
5 like it's hit 92 percent. So, we're
6 fairly happy with that.

7 Now we're digging down deeper in
8 on-time performance and looking at it
9 by trip, by direction, by route, by
10 time of day. So, it's not just one big
11 average number, because if you are
12 Mrs. Jones standing, you know,
13 somewhere at your stop and you're not
14 getting 92 percent, we want to find out
15 why, right?

16 So, that's how we're going to be
17 able to take 92 percent to 94 percent,
18 by digging in deeper. We've still got
19 some work to do there, but a pretty
20 good number.

21 So, the updates for 2024 on the
22 service. You know, I don't want to
23 characterize this -- over-characterize
24 it, but in general, it's good news.
25 It's all service additions, service

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2 tweaks. It's all good news stuff.

3 We're not perfect. We know that.
4 We're running a very complex system
5 with 500, 600 drivers and complex
6 machines that break down on Nassau
7 County roads that are challenging, and
8 Nassau County traffic, but we try to do
9 our best.

10 With John Feldman, who is the
11 director of schedule and planning, he's
12 gone through it methodically. He
13 looked at every route and tried to show
14 some improvements in the route.

15 Our basic budget, though, for the
16 fixed route is almost flat. We're not
17 really seeing an increase in the
18 operating budget for the fixed route.

19 So, how does John increase service
20 or improve service? It's really
21 tweaking service. It's really looking
22 at what we can be more efficient with.
23 And his partnership with operations
24 really helps that.

25 So, the N1 in the a.m. and p.m.,

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2 we've increased frequency to 18 to 20
3 minutes. We've added trips that will
4 help that service quite a bit.

5 It's a very convoluted route in
6 the south; it takes a lot of time to
7 get out of that area and get going to
8 where you need to go, but John and his
9 team have done -- with operations have
10 done a great job in getting on-time
11 performance where it should be.

12 The N6, we've added short turns on
13 weekdays. That just adds more service,
14 more buses. The N20X added more stops.
15 The 22X added express stops. That's
16 been a big hit with our passengers.
17 The N24, again, there are some changes
18 there in how we routed the buses,
19 especially on the weekends.

20 And, again, it balances the loads
21 a little better so we don't have
22 overloads sometimes and we don't have
23 empty buses at other times. So, John
24 has balanced that pretty well.

25 Again, the 35, the same thing;

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2 he's done some balancing there. We've
3 done some better job on the connections
4 on the 54/55 on the east side. The 72
5 trips have been flipped to the N70s, so
6 that's working its way through.

7 And then again, the Able-Ride
8 service, to extend Able-Ride as much as
9 we did without our clients suffering.
10 In other words, without extending
11 trips, without lateness, without
12 everything else.

13 Again, I'll give Inmer and his
14 team a big high five for that one.

15 So, additional service updates
16 later on in the year. What are we
17 looking at? On the right-hand side, by
18 the way, is our new electric bus. So,
19 it's the first that arrived end of
20 last -- well, middle of last year.
21 It's on the road now. It's serving the
22 N16. It's the first electric bus on
23 Long Island.

24 We have five more that just
25 arrived. They're going through the DOT

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2 process now and being inspected. We
3 hope to have those on the road probably
4 by the third week of February. So,
5 we'll have the full fleet of electric
6 buses out there for everybody.

7 So, some pretty good reviews on
8 them. The drivers like them. The
9 passengers like them. So, let's keep
10 our fingers crossed. But, very cool.
11 Some great graphics. We really like
12 those vehicles.

13 So, we are planning some
14 additional on-demand microtransit
15 service mini, which is now in Freeport
16 to Lynbrook. Very successful.
17 Providing over a hundred rides a day.
18 We're looking at some additional
19 opportunities to expand that type of
20 service to different areas.

21 Again, the way we use mini is to
22 connect people to other routes. To the
23 Long Island Railroad. To the
24 libraries. And we look at corridors
25 and say, okay, what are the major

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2 generators in those corridors?

3 Long Island Railroad on each end,
4 two large fixed route buses so that
5 people can travel in and out of those
6 communities a lot easier than currently
7 is happening. So mini has been a big,
8 big hit. Again, more expansion as we
9 go.

10 Before we talked about the
11 Able-Ride expansion. Electric buses, I
12 just covered that. Again, on the N16,
13 which goes right by the depot, so if we
14 need to charge, we can charge in a day
15 and swap buses out.

16 You're not going to see chargers
17 spread out through Nassau County. You
18 know, no one is going to like that.

19 So, what we have tried to do is
20 design the electric bus routes to
21 ensure that they always come by this
22 depot so that we can charge them on
23 site here.

24 And very happy to announce that
25 the final phase of the Rosa Parks

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2 Transit Center refresh is going to
3 start here momentarily, literally
4 within the next few weeks.

5 All the surfaces are going to be
6 updated on the inside of the terminal,
7 new floors, new walls, new doors, new
8 air curtains around the doors. There
9 is going to be a new convenience store
10 built out. So, it will really look
11 fresh and very, very nice.

12 We're very, very happy about it
13 and very proud, and I think the
14 community will be happy with it too.

15 So, community outreach. Erika is
16 here. Everybody knows Erika. Erika is
17 our director of customer engagement and
18 communication.

19 Did a great job this year with
20 community outreach. She did over 50
21 events, fifty events in the county.
22 She only has a team of three. So, to
23 hit 50 events is great.

24 We did the Santa bus again this
25 year. A great, great reaction to that.

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2 Took it to a couple of schools, United
3 Cerebral Palsy, and a couple of other
4 locations. Taught kids a little bit
5 about bus safety. But more
6 importantly, they saw Santa Claus.
7 That was the important thing.

8 Then Island Harvest is our big
9 push for the year at the end of the
10 year. We do events all through the
11 year, but Island Harvest is our big
12 beneficiary. At the end of the year,
13 the team, the employees collected
14 \$16,000 worth of food. So, that's a
15 big deal for them.

16 Lastly, I'm going to throw this
17 out there just to help everybody plan a
18 little bit. I should have probably
19 done this 10 years ago, 12 years ago,
20 but just kind of plot out maybe some
21 potential future BTC meeting dates.

22 MEMBER BERSE: June 20th is no
23 good for me.

24 MR. KHZOUZ: That's why we're
25 planning them now. We can obviously

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2 mess with these dates a little bit.

3 Normally, we try to do this on a
4 Thursday night, third Thursday of
5 whatever month it is, but, again, we're
6 very, very flexible. We thought we'd
7 get it out to everybody now.

8 Mr. Gallagher, that concludes the
9 presentation. I'm sorry, do you want
10 to go back?

11 So, if the board has any
12 questions, we will start with the board
13 first and then we'll go from there.

14 Joel?

15 MEMBER BERSE: Have there been any
16 concerns about the electric buses
17 because there are major issues within
18 the Hicksville Fire Department, and I
19 know a couple of others that they've
20 been talking within fire departments,
21 because of battery fires.

22 And I didn't know -- I know you
23 guys had talked to the fire marshal,
24 whatever like that, but is it totally
25 alleviated as concerns or is it still

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2 the potential that they're worried?

3 MR. KHZOUZ: Safety is never fully
4 mitigated, right? Safety concerns are
5 never actually mitigated. The best we
6 can all do is plan for the worst,
7 right, and train, train, train, train,
8 train.

9 MEMBER BERSE: But you are on bus,
10 bus, bus, bus, bus.

11 MR. KHZOUZ: Right. So, we have
12 taken every precaution for storage
13 locally. When buses are on the road,
14 we've trained the drivers on what to do
15 in case there is any type of incident.

16 We are in the process now of
17 recontacting the fire marshal for them
18 to organize village first responders to
19 come in and look at the vehicle, as
20 they normally do when we get new
21 equipment.

22 So, they'll go through the
23 equipment, they'll learn more from the
24 OEM how to deal with issues. But, you
25 know, it's a concern obviously, and

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2 we've taken every precaution we can.

3 MEMBER BERSE: Where are the
4 batteries physically? Are they on top
5 like the CNG or --

6 MR. KHZOUZ: They're on the bottom
7 of the vehicle underneath --

8 MEMBER BERSE: So, what if
9 something happens when a fire goes up?
10 The whole bus --

11 MR. KHZOUZ: Fires don't normally
12 go up; fires go out in this particular
13 case. They go out the sides. That's
14 where -- the fireproof is in the floor,
15 so the fire will go out.

16 Now, it's all a theory until it
17 happens. What's the famous line from,
18 I think it's Mike Tyson, everybody has
19 a plan until you get punched in the
20 face.

21 MEMBER BERSE: Either that or,
22 don't assume.

23 MR. KHZOUZ: All we can do is plan
24 for what we've been educated on and
25 what the industry has been educated on.

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2 So, you know, again, with six
3 vehicles, I cannot think of another
4 system outside the MTA in New York City
5 or New York State that has more
6 vehicles right now than we do. So,
7 everybody is learning.

8 So, not a great answer, not the
9 best answer, but it's the answer, you
10 know.

11 MEMBER BERSE: Okay. Well, it's
12 not like it's ignored, so that's what's
13 important.

14 MR. KHZOUZ: Not at all.

15 MEMBER BERSE: Has the Alpine
16 project on the south side of the
17 Hicksville station been in touch with
18 you? Because I know they're about to
19 start doing things.

20 MR. KHZOUZ: Yeah, we have heard
21 from a few folks. And I think it's on
22 John's --

23 MR. FELDMAN: I just spoke with
24 him today.

25 MR. KHZOUZ: It's on John's

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2 calendar and Erika's calendar to make
3 sure that we're involved.

4 MS. RICHARDS: We're working on it
5 with them right now.

6 MEMBER DUROSEAU: How many
7 electric buses do you have all
8 together, six?

9 MR. KHZOUZ: Six. The plan is to
10 go to, I believe, 16 total and then
11 pause and decide as an industry, not
12 just us, really what the next thing is.
13 Is this technology the right one? Is
14 there another technology?

15 Again, I want to remind everybody:
16 All our fixed route buses except for
17 these six compress natural gas, so
18 they're already almost no omission.
19 They are low omission. And they are a
20 great fleet. Man, they're a great
21 fleet.

22 If we're going to jump, it's going
23 to be a major capital project to do
24 that. You know, people are talking
25 about a lot of other propulsion

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2 systems, but really electric is really
3 the only thing out there right now.
4 And everybody is still proving. Still
5 proof.

6 MEMBER DUROSEAU: I do like the
7 paint job. I feel like we spent a lot
8 of money for those. I mean, the paint
9 job.

10 MR. KHZOUZ: Those were designed
11 by Sharon and John.

12 MEMBER DUROSEAU: Good job.

13 MR. KHZOUZ: I don't think there
14 is any other questions for me for now.

15 MS. SIMPKINS: I have a question.

16 MR. KHZOUZ: At this point,
17 Mr. Gallagher, if it's okay with you,
18 we can ask the public if they have any
19 comments.

20 MEMBER BERSE: Give your name and
21 affiliation, please.

22 ATTORNEY GALLAGHER: Can you state
23 your name and address for the record,
24 please.

25 MR. CRAWLEY: My name is Richard

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2 Crawley (phon). I live at 425 Newbridge
3 Road, Apartment 32, East Meadow.

4 Can someone please record me so I
5 can hear myself yak?

6 (Pause)

7 MR. CRAWLEY: I have some chief
8 concerns, top which is, I know you
9 heard -- I know you guys talked about
10 you're expanding the mini bus service,
11 you know. I'm just curious where it's
12 going to be expanded to.

13 I mean, there are a number of
14 areas that could really benefit, like
15 Hicksville, where the N73/74 was.
16 Like, even south of -- even south of
17 Hempstead Turnpike where the N50 and
18 N47 used to run.

19 I mean, we're in a serious dead
20 zone area as far as public
21 transportation is concerned in those
22 areas. At least the ones I know about.

23 I think you could really benefit
24 from the mini bus service from
25 Hempstead Turnpike along Newbridge Road

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2 straight down to Bellmore station and
3 connecting to -- and also connecting to
4 the N49, you know, north of Hempstead,
5 along the same thing.

6 What else? Also, here are some
7 avenue -- inter-area can really benefit
8 from expanded service because there are
9 places that do depend -- that do need
10 buses, you know, in one form or
11 another.

12 I know that the fixed route bus
13 budget is flat. Am I right?

14 MR. KHZOUZ: Correct.

15 MR. CRAWLEY: Well, I'm just
16 curious about how are we going to
17 increase it? I mean, how are we going
18 to explain to the Nassau County
19 Legislature that we need more money
20 from the Nassau County budget, you
21 know?

22 Because they keep on talking
23 about, you know, casino. You think
24 everyone is going to drive in? No.
25 They're going to depend on buses

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2 getting them to and from the Hicksville
3 station, the Mineola station, and a
4 bunch of other stations.

5 Look, I get it, times are tight,
6 times are tight as what it is now, but
7 you know what? You know what's even
8 tighter? I mean, people are getting
9 hurt on the roads. I mean, pedestrians
10 cars, bikes.

11 I mean, we're dealing with a huge
12 uptick in bad drivers. If you don't
13 believe me, read the newspapers.

14 MEMBER BERSE: Let's try to wrap
15 it up.

16 MR. CRAWLEY: I'm sorry. I'm just
17 going to tell you this. We need to
18 increase mini bus service or restore
19 bus lines and get more buses for the
20 N50, the N47, the N73/74. That way, we
21 can restore bus service to everywhere.

22 Also, I can't -- even though this
23 is Nassau County, I can't get any ride
24 to Jericho area. I mean, it's simple,
25 there's no bus lines for those.

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2 MEMBER BERSE: Okay. Thank you.

3 MR. CRAWLEY: I said my peace.

4 Bye bye.

5 MS. SIMPKINS: I would just like
6 to know --

7 MEMBER BERSE: Stand up and give
8 your name and address for the record.

9 MS. SIMPKINS: Alisha Simpkins, 38
10 Farnum Boulevard, Franklin Square, New
11 York, Apartment 2.

12 I just would like to know, is the
13 N15, is it still gonna go down Old
14 Country Road? Did they stop that,
15 where it goes down Old Country Road a
16 portion of the day?

17 MEMBER BERSE: Some of these
18 questions they will address at the end.
19 They're recording what the questions
20 are, and Jack will address them all.

21 So, if you have any other
22 questions --

23 MS. SIMPKINS: I have a question.

24 MEMBER BERSE: Go ahead. No
25 problem.

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2 MS. SIMPKINS: The N71 doesn't go
3 to Sunrise mall anymore. They took it
4 out temporarily. How long until they
5 bring it back, and is it going to go to
6 Sunrise mall, because Sunrise mall is
7 closed now, right? It closed --

8 MEMBER BERSE: When Sunrise mall
9 becomes viable again, I'm sure they
10 will consider it, but it's not viable
11 now.

12 MS. SIMPKINS: It's gone forever
13 as of now.

14 MEMBER BERSE: Well, if the mall
15 doesn't change, that's, you know,
16 unreasonable to ask them to if the mall
17 doesn't change.

18 So, anyone else?

19 MR. TOCIVIA: Joe Torcivia,
20 Levittown. And I will read from a
21 prepared statement because I'm a
22 writer, not a speaker.

23 So, many of you recall that I
24 would attend these meetings -- Jack
25 certainly does -- with a list of

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2 complaints over levels of service and
3 other things, and offer feasible
4 suggestions, not pie in the sky never
5 happened types, and whether or not I
6 had any actual thing to do with it,
7 many of the most reasonable ones were
8 acted upon and then some, and I thank
9 you.

10 Today, I feel that NICE has
11 created a very respectable bus system
12 for what Nassau County is. More
13 service where it needs to be and fewer
14 empty buses traveling along
15 underutilized routes.

16 My own route, the good old N49,
17 which you've heard about over the
18 years, thank you, has largely benefited
19 from these changes versus what had been
20 when I first appeared before you.

21 Still, there is always something,
22 isn't there? What few shortcomings
23 still exist and, I emphasize "few," I
24 believe are owed to the fact that NICE
25 regards the N49 and the N48 as one

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2 route and parcels its services thusly.

3 True, they have the common start
4 and end points and commonality along
5 Front Street but for nearly half of
6 those routes, they diverge
7 significantly in a gap too far to walk
8 between them, serve different
9 communities and destinations of which
10 some is well covered by other routes
11 while others are not.

12 N48, for instance, is duplicated
13 at the north end of Carmen Avenue by
14 the N24 serving the family court and
15 the Barnes & Noble office building.
16 The south end is covered by the
17 different Hempstead Turnpike lines, and
18 when the correctional center is not
19 open to visitors, there are few
20 significant destinations in between.

21 N49 has had no such duplicate
22 coverage on Newbridge Road since the
23 elimination of the N50, which, frankly,
24 should have been one of the lines NICE
25 needed to cut in terms of ridership,

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2 leaving the Hicksville, Levittown and
3 East Meadow communities along Newbridge
4 Road with no alternative service.

5 Plus, there is a significant
6 shopping area at the intersection of
7 Levittown Parkway and there is Walmart
8 and a surrounding shopping center at
9 Hempstead Turnpike, all of which are
10 not covered by the 48. These should be
11 considered separate routes when it
12 comes to scheduling.

13 Last paragraph. Weekday N49
14 service, like so much else, has gotten
15 significantly better -- again, thank
16 you -- amounting to reasonable hourly
17 service, save occasional longer gaps
18 around 7:30 to 10:00 p.m., and the less
19 reasonable 90-minute gaps on Saturday,
20 all of which appears to be done as a
21 schedule balancing effort with the N48,
22 which despite the similarities, is a
23 different route with more alternatives.

24 Finally, I love the new
25 destination signs.

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2 Thank you.

3 MEMBER BERSE: Thank you.

4 Anybody else? Last call.

5 Name and address.

6 MR. HO: Address or is town okay?

7 MEMBER BERSE: You have to be
8 identified somehow.

9 MR. HO: Alexander Ho, 70 Atlantic
10 Avenue, Farmingdale, New York. First
11 time here. Thank you very much for
12 this meeting, the CEO, Mr. Khzouz, for
13 the presentation.

14 My questions are as a somewhat new
15 rider of the NICE bus due to a job
16 change. I work in Port Washington. If
17 I want to take the bus, it's usually
18 because I don't want to drive into the
19 city.

20 It's really convenient for me to
21 take the train to Mineola and somewhat
22 less convenient to have to endure a
23 40-minute local bus ride on the N23 to
24 get to work.

25 The infrastructure is there. I'm

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2 grateful to have a bus stop right in
3 front of both my work place and also
4 the option of taking the bus from where
5 I live in Farmingdale too, which is how
6 I got here. I took the N70 the transit
7 bus here.

8 But perhaps one thing that could
9 possibly be looked at is to whether or
10 not there might be -- to look into
11 whether or not there can be an express
12 bus service that goes north-south. I
13 would like it to be the N23, but that's
14 only because I ride it.

15 The second thing is whether or not
16 the final phase of the renovations to
17 the transit center will include soap
18 dispensers that are embedded into the
19 actual sink.

20 There are no soap dispensers on
21 the men's restrooms. At least there
22 used to be but they probably got torn
23 off. Soap doesn't get stolen. And
24 Penn Station and Grand Central sinks,
25 restroom sinks too, because the

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2 dispensers are actually level with the
3 faucet and everything else.

4 The third thing is whether or not
5 there is going to be a push to increase
6 bus service in time for the World
7 Cricket Cup that's going to take place
8 in Eisenhower Park this June.

9 Thank you for your time.

10 MEMBER BERSE: Anyone else?
11 Hearing no further, Jack, the floor is
12 yours.

13 MR. KHZOUZ: I will try to answer
14 as best as I can on all of that, and I
15 will ask -- I will phone the audience
16 when I need some help here because I
17 don't necessarily know all of the
18 answers. I will work backwards.

19 The Cricket Cup, we have been
20 talking to the county back and forth on
21 that. We're not sure exactly where
22 it's going to land but we're involved
23 in it. So, we'll see, whether it be
24 shuttles, parking shuttles, or
25 something else.

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2 We're open to whatever we need to
3 do to support the county in their
4 efforts to bring events locally. So,
5 that's great.

6 Great idea on the soap dispensers.
7 My frustration there also. We'll work
8 on that.

9 And, again, you know, everybody
10 has brought up some great ideas on
11 fixed route service, whether it be
12 express service, and we try to add
13 expresses as we can.

14 Our goal over the longer term --
15 when we say "longer term," we're
16 talking about, again, we've been here
17 12 years and I think we've done a
18 pretty good job in evolving the system.

19 The next evolution is increasing
20 speed of travel; more expresses; less
21 stops; potentially somewhere down the
22 line, bus lanes, things like that; and
23 looking at how north-south connections
24 work. So very, very important as we go
25 forward.

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2 You're correct. Balancing the
3 schedule between the N48 and 49 is
4 certainly something we've had to do
5 over time.

6 Those areas, again, back to some
7 older N47s and 50s, yes, they weren't
8 the best routes in the world, but we
9 figured out a way through efficiencies
10 on how to make them work.

11 Ideally, again, we could continue
12 to add on little tweaks as we go
13 forward. We don't believe in doing
14 full system redos because all that does
15 is upset everyone, and no one seems to
16 get what they want out of it.

17 So, our thinking has always been
18 evolve, make it better, evolve over
19 time.

20 The N15, ma'am, does travel on Old
21 Country Road. Oh, I'm sorry.

22 MR. FELDMAN: As you know, we used
23 to run a couple of trips during the
24 rush hour from Hempstead and Long Beach
25 over Old Country Road to Roosevelt

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2 Field.

3 What we were finding is, the trip
4 was so long because of all the traffic
5 on Old Country Road. It would take
6 almost 90 minutes, and we would often
7 be late.

8 So, we did change those trips to
9 go to Mineola a couple of months ago to
10 see how customers could transfer to the
11 N24 and 22 at Mineola, to continue down
12 Old Country Road.

13 We're still looking at that to see
14 if we need to put those trips back or
15 if the transverse suffices.

16 MS. SIMPKINS: So, they're not
17 doing that as of now?

18 MR. FELDMAN: As of now, they're
19 not.

20 MR. KHZOUZ: Then the Sunrise
21 mall, John. While you got the floor,
22 go.

23 MR. FELDMAN: As far as I'm aware,
24 we're still serving the Sunrise mall
25 and the N71. There may be a detour

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2 locally this week or today or something
3 like that.

4 The N71 is still planning to go
5 into the mall. It continues to
6 Amityville on Saturday and Sunday. But
7 it serves the mall seven days a week.

8 MS. SIMPKINS: It said something
9 up there that it's discontinued.

10 MR. FELDMAN: That's the N72. The
11 N72 is a short turn at 110. We just
12 replaced it with a N70, which goes all
13 the way to --

14 (Crosstalk)

15 MS. SIMPKINS: Oh.

16 MR. KHZOUZ: So, as the mall
17 becomes less relevant --

18 MS. SIMPKINS: What's at Sunrise
19 mall right now?

20 MEMBER BERSE: Almost nothing.

21 MS. SIMPKINS: What stores?

22 MEMBER BERSE: The mall is
23 completely void of stores.

24 MR. HO: Dick's Sporting Goods is
25 still there. Dave & Busters is there

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2 because I go there on Mondays.

3 MEMBER BERSE: It's just
4 restaurants, basically.

5 MR. KHZOUZ: There are restaurant
6 staff that do take the bus that we
7 still service, but that will change,
8 unfortunately, over time, with how they
9 redevelop the center.

10 So, there may be a time somewhere
11 where that stop goes out to the street
12 potentially, though that's a problem on
13 Sunrise --

14 (Crosstalk)

15 MEMBER BERSE: They're making a
16 proposal, the town of Oyster Bay, the
17 property owners. So, it's in play.
18 It's just nothing is decided.

19 MR. KHZOUZ: So, if there are no
20 other questions -- we can take
21 questions afterwards and make sure that
22 we answer everything as we can, but
23 thank you for being here and asking.

24 MS. SIMPKINS: Thanks for the good
25 service.

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2 MR. CRAWLEY: What about the
3 expansion, like I asked?

4 MR. KHZOUZ: As I said briefly,
5 just really our goal right now is to
6 maintain the system as it is, increase
7 the frequency of the routes that we
8 cover as we go forward. And more
9 funding of resources become available,
10 as you well pointed out, that certainly
11 we can look at.

12 But there are some opportunities
13 to add a couple more mini routes, as
14 you mentioned, this year. So, we don't
15 have the final there yet, so I have
16 nothing to talk about there.

17 MR. CRAWLEY: I believe you are
18 missing out on a golden opportunity.
19 That's my arrogant opinion, of course.

20 The reason why I moved to 425 is
21 because there used to be an N50 bus
22 service, N47. Now, I'm dependent on
23 Able-Ride and Uber to get me to work or
24 to other areas.

25 I mean, I love Able-Ride. Nothing

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2 wrong with it. It serves its purpose
3 well, and I'm pleased. Don't hold it
4 against me, please.

5 MEMBER BERSE: Why don't you talk
6 to them after outside.


7 MR. CRAWLEY: I'm sorry. You're
8 right. I goofed.

9 MR. KHZOUZ: So, with that,
10 Mr. Gallagher, I think we're all set
11 then.

12 MS. SIMPKINS: Thank you.

13 MR. KHZOUZ: Thank you. I
14 appreciate it.

15
16 ***It is hereby certified that the foregoing
17 is a true and accurate transcript of the
18 stenographic minutes of this meeting.

19 
20 -----
21 Debra Smith,
22 Court Reporter
23
24
25

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