

NICE BUS MEETING

Held on Thursday, April 15, 2021

Zoom conference

5:30 p.m.

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

2 ERIKA RICHARDS

3 CARRIE MILLER

4 TONY ROSARIO

5 JOEL BERSE

6 SHELDON SHRENKEL

7 JACK KHZOUZ, NICE CEO

8 SHARON PERSAUD

9 JEAN DUROSEAU

10 LATOYA PIPPINS

11 JACLENE D'AGOSTINO

12 REGINALD

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1 (Time noted: 5:31 p.m.)

2 MR. SHRENKEL: We'll call the meeting to
3 order and I'd like to designate you right now
4 to call on our members who have joined us. So,
5 this will serve as our roll call.

6 Our agenda today, we're going to introduce
7 our committee members. We're going to hear
8 from the CEO of NICE Transportation. He's
9 going make a presentation which is going to
10 concern his budget for 2021.

11 What we have done now is we have selected
12 several salient public comments which after
13 Mr. Khzouz's presentation, we'll have him read
14 those comments and he'll try to answer those
15 selected ones.

16 Now, if anyone else wants to send comments
17 concerning the budget, concerning service
18 issues, please feel free to do it online
19 through NICE Transportation, and I'm sure
20 they'll get back to with some of the answers.

21 Carrie, go ahead. Thank you.

22 MS. MILLER: For those participating today
23 virtually, we have the option of writing in
24 your comments. So, you can go ahead and use
25 that Q and A feature at the bottom of your

1 screen. Please be sure to include your name
2 and town for submission. For organization, if
3 you could please submit those by 6:00 p.m. just
4 so we make sure we can include as many as
5 possible in today's reading. They'll be read
6 by the moderator and also shared on past
7 today's meeting with the scheduling and
8 planning team as well.

9 Just so you know, we had a number of
10 submissions that were collected through
11 NICEbus.com and those are also included in
12 today's meeting.

13 We can go ahead and do roll call.

14 So, Sheldon Shrenkel, Chair.

15 MR. SHRENKEL: Here, Chairman of the
16 Committee.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. MILLER: Joel Berse?

19 MR. BERSE: I am very happy to be here.

20 MS. MILLER: Reverend Reginald Benjamin?
21 All right, Jaclene D'Agostino?

22 MS. D'AGOSTINO: Here.

23 MS. MILLER: Jean Duroseau?

24 MR. DUROSEAU: Here.

25 MS. MILLER: Dawn Falco? And Tony

1 Rosario?

2 MR. ROSARIO: Here.

3 MR. SHRENKEL: We have a quorum. Thank
4 you, Carrie.

5 At this point we'd like the presentation
6 by NICE's CEO, Jack Khzouz.

7 Jack, if you can give us all the
8 information, we'd appreciate it.

9 MR. KHZOUZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And
10 thank you, everyone, for joining us and serving
11 on the board. It's an important function you
12 all serve and we very much appreciate it
13 especially the last year and a half that we've
14 all had to undergo, but we appreciate your
15 service very, very much.

16 So, tonight we've got really three things
17 to talk about or two things to talk about.
18 We've got the budget presentation for 2021.
19 I've got some service updates to talk about and
20 then the budget vote will be at the end. The
21 chairman will call. In between there,
22 obviously, at the end we'll take questions from
23 both the board and we've got some write-in
24 questions that we'll take from the public also.

25 With that, we'll start with the budget

1 presentation. I've got a few slides. It's a
2 bit of a dry presentation, but there is some
3 good news here.

4 The 2021 operating budget service hours at
5 the very top you see the Paratransit service
6 hours against 2021. Those service hours
7 reflect pre-COVID levels in a lot of cases in
8 the Paratransit area so you can see the revenue
9 hours are growing in Paratransit, and we
10 continue to grow, and have clients come back.
11 So, as those grow, we'll continue to offer as
12 much service as demand requires.

13 On the fixed route side, you can see last
14 year we offered 8 to 111,000 service hours.
15 This year we're proposing about 808. It's
16 virtually flat. We'll end up actually a little
17 higher than that. So, we'll virtually be flat
18 in service hours for the year.

19 Our operating budget is as follows and it
20 breaks down pretty evenly across different
21 things. We do have some new streams of revenue
22 that come in this year, but as you can see the
23 top STOA continues to be one of our largest
24 contributors, that's the New York State
25 Operating Systems Fund. There is an adjustment

1 this year that help us again push that over the
2 top to almost \$88 million for the year, the
3 county match on both discretionary and STOA,
4 and then the CRRSAA funds, that the federal
5 relief bill for CRRSAA funds at \$16 million.
6 Passage revenue is projected to be \$24 million
7 and then nonuser revenue at 500,000. That
8 brings us to a budget of \$135 million,
9 virtually flat from last year. I'm happy to
10 say virtually flat from last year. In other
11 words, we have full funding. We'll offer full
12 service for this year with no fare increase, no
13 reduction in service, and as a matter of fact
14 we are going to start looking at increasing
15 some -- increasing some service, adding some
16 trips to the larger routes, that'll start in
17 May.

18 So, here's how the funding lays up year
19 over year. And, again, as you can see at the
20 bottom line there in the total 135.5 against
21 135 virtually flat. There are some increases
22 in some expenses and those are really assigned
23 to some additional cleaning regimens that we
24 put in place, PPE, additional driver shields,
25 things like that to keep our drivers and our

1 passengers safe through the COVID epidemic.
2 But, in general, you can see again there is no
3 reduction in service, there is no increase in
4 fares. We're very happy to report that and
5 we're overall in good shape.

6 This is how our rates fall out. Again,
7 you can see on the 20 monthly fixed fee rate
8 the county pays transit to operate service, it
9 has gone up and again that mostly has do with
10 COVID related costs to keep our team safe and
11 our passengers safe. Additional cleaning
12 methodologies have been instituted at the
13 Hempstead Transit Center, at the depots, so
14 there are some additional costs associated with
15 that, but again it doesn't reflect in a
16 reduction in service.

17 The variable rates both on the fixed and
18 on the para side, para goes up slightly, fixed
19 is about even. Para goes up slightly again.
20 It's a function of we keep almost a full staff
21 at para but only are operating at a 55 percent
22 pre-COVID capacity level so the cost per trip
23 is a little higher.

24 Some capital plan highlights: We're going
25 to start the major last phase of upgrades at

1 Hempstead Transit Center. This is a
2 3-and-a-half year, 4-year project that we began
3 a little while ago. The last phase is going to
4 start hopefully by summer. Those will include
5 new floors, new tiling on the walls, and new
6 ADA doors throughout the center. So, the
7 center has gotten a top to bottom makeover. It
8 looks great. There will also be some stamp
9 concrete work and replacement that will go on
10 there also. We're in the middle of delivering
11 14 Paratransit -- brand new Paratransit
12 vehicles, so that's happening. We're
13 delivering 100 new fixed route vehicles. We're
14 very excited about that. That will replace the
15 older 1700s that are still on the road. That
16 will help our reliability and customer comfort
17 both on the para and on the fixed side.

18 We have begun also working with the county
19 and Department of Public Works on procuring 6
20 battery electric buses or BEBs with
21 infrastructure. Those will be the first
22 alternative true alternative zero emission
23 vehicles that we have on site. You remember we
24 run a complete CNG fleet here, which is an
25 alternative vehicle already and Nassau County

1 was one of the largest full fleets of CNG
2 vehicles in the country. So, the BEB vehicles,
3 the electric bus vehicles, will certainly add
4 to a zero emissions footprint here, so we're
5 very excited to have those here.

6 There's a combined heat and power project
7 that will replace the HVAC systems here at
8 Mitchell Field. We have an outdated HVAC
9 system. This is a pretty innovative system
10 that, again, harnesses green power and we're
11 pretty excited about getting it installed here.
12 It's a major project that will take a few
13 years, but it will add to the efficiency of the
14 building greatly.

15 Fuel island upgrade: Our CHG island will
16 get an upgrade, a new canopy, some additional
17 infrastructure.

18 And lastly, but not least, we'll start the
19 OMNY implementation replacing the old MetroCard
20 system with the new OMNY system, which is a
21 smart card, a chip embedded smart card system
22 over the next few years. Again, that's a
23 multi-year project. Most of these projects are
24 multi years. So, in some cases 3, 4, 5, 6
25 years out, but we'll start that pretty quickly.

1 Small, but this is our operating budget
2 capital plan one of two. We have a lot of
3 large projects. We have a lot of projects that
4 we manage on behalf of the county and with the
5 county's support. The previous slide kind of
6 highlighted the more exciting projects.
7 There's other projects here that are much more
8 mundane, but they are projects nonetheless that
9 we have to manage over time to keep the
10 facility and the fleet in state of good repair.
11 So, I'm not going to go through and read each
12 one of these but they're fairly mundane.

13 I kind of ran through the budget
14 relatively quickly only because in general it's
15 fairly good news. Again, transit throughout
16 the state and throughout the country is
17 thankful to have the support our governors, our
18 county, and certainly the federal government to
19 come in and help and keep the buses rolling,
20 and keep those front line workers getting to
21 their jobs, and you know everybody back to
22 recovery status. So, we're very, very grateful
23 for that. And once I finish with service
24 updates, I'll certainly answer any questions
25 for anyone as we go through.

1 So, this is our first quarter score card.
2 We again -- the county grades us on our
3 performance and I'll go through this fairly
4 quickly here. Again, the liquidated damages or
5 the incentive isn't actually paid but used as
6 credit or debits as future score cards come.
7 On-time performance, our goal needs to be
8 adjusted upwards so we'll do that in the next
9 quarter. Our goal was 70 percent when we
10 started this project back just a year or two
11 after we serviced. At the time when we took
12 our on-time performance was in the 50s and I'm
13 happy to say now that we're running about a
14 91 percent on-time performance which we're
15 very, very proud of for a system this large,
16 with this many stops. To have a 91 percent
17 on-time performance is something to be pretty
18 proud of. We have a good team that works on
19 this every day and we want to get it higher but
20 I think that's a great way to go.

21 On the dependability side, this pull outs
22 due to mechanical errors we've had zero over
23 the last quarter. Again, pretty impressive
24 considering how many pull outs we have a day.

25 Accidents per 100,000 miles, again very

1 important that we keep that below where we need
2 to be. And you can see we have met that goal.

3 I'm sorry. I got to go back one slide. I
4 flipped the two. On the missed pull outs, we
5 actually had less than 1 percent. I apologize.
6 I was reading on the goals side. Less than 1
7 percent of all pull outs, I believe we have
8 about 780 pull outs a day, so that represents
9 less than 1 percent is pull outs due to
10 mechanical failures. I'm sorry. I was reading
11 the wrong side of the slide.

12 Accidents, again, we met our goal on
13 accidents and those don't necessarily have to
14 be severe accidents. Those are as minor a
15 mirror tap or if a low hanging tree branch
16 scrapes the top of the vehicle that's what we
17 consider an accident also.

18 So, we did pretty well on the fixed route
19 side.

20 On the Paratransit side, we measured
21 things like call-answer ratios and you can see
22 our call-answer ratio is almost at 100 percent,
23 so we're pretty happy about that. Again, we
24 want to get to the 100 percent. Our clients
25 depend on us to get to the phones and not have

1 them hang on the phone too long. Our on-time
2 performance again is continuing to climb
3 upwards. We're at almost 90 percent on on-time
4 performance.

5 Missed pull outs was one-third of 1
6 percent on the Paratransit. I do want to
7 emphasize on the Paratransit that does not mean
8 anyone did not get picked up. Everyone got
9 picked up. It just meant we had to scramble
10 and get another vehicle out the door, so that's
11 good to hear.

12 Our accidents for the Paratransit side
13 were a little higher than we would like though
14 they still met the goal. We'll continue to
15 work on that. We've got some new protocols in
16 place now that will help us keep those
17 accidents low. Again, those are fairly minor
18 accidents.

19 And then, our productivity is right on par
20 with where it should be, that's passengers per
21 hour on the Paratransit side.

22 So, you can see even through the pandemic
23 and with the challenges we have operationally,
24 we're still performing at a high level. We
25 still have a ways to go. There's still some

1 things we need to achieve, but I'm proud of the
2 team here.

3 And just to kind of bring it up right now
4 just so everybody knows, our fixed route
5 ridership right now is at about 58 percent of
6 pre-COVID levels. Our Paratransit is at about
7 55 percent of pre-COVID levels. Every week it
8 climbs back up slightly, so we still have a
9 long way to go but we do have quite a bit of
10 ridership every day.

11 Some great news out there. A few years
12 ago, Transdev started a foundation called
13 Everyone Rides NICE. It was started with about
14 a million dollar grant from Transdev. And this
15 quarter -- what we do with that grant is we
16 provide free rides to agencies throughout
17 Nassau County in partnership with the United
18 Way. So, the agencies such as Nassau Community
19 College, Hempstead Works, Long Island Council
20 of Churches, and many others use these cards to
21 give to their clients so that their clients can
22 access transportation and access services. So
23 far since we started the program, we have given
24 away \$720,000 worth of free rides and we've
25 just finished this year's grant of \$190,000

1 worth of MetroCards. Again, we're very proud
2 of this process. It really helps out the most
3 needy riders who need to get to agencies to
4 access service and working with United Ways has
5 really helped the agencies get their clients
6 where they need to go. So, we're going to
7 continue this. It's been very rewarding for
8 everybody and it really provides a need of
9 service.

10 Some new vehicles we talked about it a
11 little bit in the capital plan, but I just
12 wanted to make sure that I share this with
13 everybody because we're very, very happy to
14 have 15 new Paratransit vehicles delivered this
15 year. Those are going to replace some diesel
16 vehicles that were somewhat disappointing in
17 our fleet but they'll comfortable 4350 front
18 ends, I believe that's what they are, so
19 they'll continue to again make for a much more
20 comfortable ride, a much more reliable ride.
21 So, very happy to come in to those. And the
22 big news is 100 new fixed-route vehicles both
23 Gillig and New Flier vehicles, so far 15 have
24 been delivered already. They're going through
25 the DOT inspection process now and they'll be

1 on the road very shortly. We'll retire some of
2 the oldest vehicles in the fleet which have
3 come to the end of their useful life. Again,
4 we'll see by mid year the majority of these
5 vehicles delivered and in service.

6 MR. BERSE: Excuse me, Jack. Are there
7 any articulated buses in that?

8 MR. KHZOUZ: Not in the new vehicle
9 purchase at this time, Mr. Berse. We're
10 staying with 40-foot vehicles right now. We
11 have articulated buses in the fleet currently
12 and we have to look a little bit further in the
13 future to see plans on adding anymore to the
14 fleet.

15 MR. BERSE: Thanks.

16 MR. KHZOUZ: Certainly a little later on
17 in the Paratransit side, again, we're not
18 standing still, we're trying to move things
19 forward, we are launching a new online feature
20 for our clients on the Paratransit side.
21 They'll be managing their own transit bookings
22 by going directly online and booking their
23 trips, or canceling trips, or moving trips
24 without having to call in, without having to
25 hold or interact that way. This is much more

1 convenient. They can do it at any time. Not
2 all of our clients will take advantage of it
3 but many will, so we're excited about this.
4 This adds to the features that we added the
5 last 24 months which include realtime on your
6 phone time and bus arrival information on your
7 phone, or your e-mail, or your tablet, so we're
8 continuing to upgrade the technology on the
9 Paratransit side and it's really meant a big
10 change in the way our clients interact with us.
11 They really like it, so we're continuing on
12 with it to continue to add additional benefits.

13 Happy to say we're going back to Jones
14 Beach this year starting with air show service
15 Memorial Day weekend. There's still some
16 things to work out there but that'll be neat to
17 see again as we return to normal or what we
18 consider normal.

19 Also too, daily beach service will return
20 assuming everything stays the way it is or gets
21 better. It'll start in June. Normally, that
22 starts the third week of June. We don't have
23 an exact date yet but we'll get that date out
24 to everyone. Again, just to let everybody
25 know, that goes from Freeport Long Island

1 Railroad Station to Jones beach West Bathouse.
2 Service will run every day from 8:30 a.m. until
3 8:30 p.m. so we're looking forward to that.

4 There are some restrictions on capacity
5 there -- capacity at the beach. The Parks
6 Department is going to close the parking lot
7 after 50 percent capacity. NICE bus will
8 continue to service the beach throughout the
9 day though, so it'll give everybody an
10 alternative to get to the beach instead of
11 having to drive.

12 Capital plan projects again just want to
13 cover this very quickly. Final phase of Rosa
14 Parks HTC upgrade the six battery electric
15 buses in partnership with the Nassau County
16 Department of Public Works, they've been a
17 great partner here with us and we're excited
18 about this project.

19 The CNG fuel island upgrade as we talked
20 and the combined heat and power project, again,
21 that's a big project that'll take a couple
22 years to complete but will add a lot of
23 efficiency to this building. Then, the OMNY
24 implementation, again, that will take a few
25 years to fully roll out, but we're excited

1 about that also.

2 So, I'm sorry, we kind of ran through that
3 kind of quickly. I realized how quick I was
4 speaking and I apologize for that, but the
5 takeaways really are stable service with stable
6 funding thanks to our support from our county,
7 state, and federal partners, no fare increases.
8 That's really the big takeaways, obviously
9 large projects to continue to improve service
10 and service levels with technology and
11 infrastructure. Again, with your support, I
12 think we continue to improve service throughout
13 Nassau County.

14 MR. SHRENKEL: Thank you very much,
15 Mr. Khzouz. That was a very detailed
16 presentation both on the budget and the service
17 issues. I for one think you've done a
18 wonderful job also in helping the community. I
19 think you ought to be commended for it. NICE
20 ought to be commended for it.

21 Before we take any public comments, I'd
22 like the committee members to have an
23 opportunity to ask you any questions regarding
24 your presentation. So, if any members would
25 like to ask Mr. Khzouz a question, please do

1 so.

2 Mr. Berse?

3 MR. BERSE: Of course I'm guilty of that.

4 Jack, I want to compliment you. That was
5 very comprehensive. And as you were
6 presenting, I wrote down seven questions. Two
7 of them got crossed off because you answered
8 them in the presentation, and one you answered
9 me in person, and the others I kind of figured
10 out from what you said, but I do have a couple
11 left.

12 With the reduction in ridership and I'm
13 assuming we cut back on some of the service
14 that wasn't necessary, is there any surplus
15 left over from '20?

16 MR. KHZOUZ: No. What we did is we
17 reduced service right after April. The
18 pandemic came to us in March. Right in April
19 we chose to reduce some service because our
20 service -- we were only carrying at that point
21 about 10 percent of pre-COVID level ridership
22 so we thought it was prudent to work with the
23 county and come up with a plan, but we quickly
24 restored that service back in June and actually
25 ended up putting more service out on the street

1 in order to have social distancing on the
2 buses. We did a lot of nonscheduled service
3 deployed. As we saw buses filling up, we get
4 another bus out there as quickly as possible.
5 There's no necessarily surplus on the operating
6 side.

7 MR. BERSE: It also sounds like there was
8 no deficit which is good.

9 MR. KHZOUZ: Correct.

10 MR. BERSE: When you're talking about
11 increasing service potentially we know we heard
12 from the public at a number of hearings over
13 the past couple of years are we going to be
14 doing anything with that Port Washington area?

15 MR. KHZOUZ: Port Washington, we do run a
16 shuttle in Port Washington currently and that
17 hasn't stopped. It took a big hit because a
18 lot of that ridership was going to Long Island
19 Railroad. It's very dependent on Long Island
20 Railroad traffic. Though it's coming back
21 slowly, it is coming back. Again, we'll
22 continue to look at that as we go forward.
23 Currently, there's not any plans to add
24 additional service there, but certainly we'll
25 continue to measure that.

1 MR. BERSE: Okay, I guess you can stop
2 listening to me.

3 MR. SHRENKEL: Thank you very much,
4 Mr. Berse.

5 Are there any other committee members that
6 would like to ask any questions from Mr.
7 Khzouz?

8 MR. DUROSEAU: I don't have a question per
9 se for Mr. Khzouz, but I can say man, oh man,
10 you're doing a good job. And just like I said
11 before, there's room for improvement and I'm
12 confident and know that you will meet all the
13 requirements to do better so I commend you.

14 MR. KHZOUZ: Thank you. We have a great
15 staff here.

16 MR. DUROSEAU: Yes, we do.
17 That's all.

18 MR. KHZOUZ: Thank you, sir.

19 MR. SHRENKEL: Any other questions for
20 Mr. Khzouz from our committees members.

21 I don't think there are any others. I
22 don't have any.

23 At this point, can you please read a few
24 of the salient comments that we received from
25 the public and what answers you have for them?

1 And I assume those you have selected have a lot
2 of similarities and a lot of commonality.

3 MR. KHZOUZ: Certainly, yes. What we kind
4 of did is just boil the questions down a little
5 bit. We're trying to read them all but they've
6 been boiled down quite a bit and we'll go
7 through very quickly.

8 Mr. DeSousa of Queens on behalf of
9 Passengers United asks what temperature are
10 NICE buses fully air-conditioned? Are there
11 filters inside the bus to refresh the air
12 inside? What is NICE doing to encourage riders
13 to wear masks?

14 So I'll hit those real quickly.

15 Yes, temperatures normally we start
16 air-conditioning the buses fully when the air
17 temperature is a consistent 70 degrees, at that
18 point that's when we start full
19 air-conditioning or when we really start
20 hearing from the public. It depends on a lot
21 of things. It depends on humidity and things
22 like that, but we try to start at least when it
23 hits 70 and we'll keep the buses as comfortable
24 as possible for everyone.

25 There are filters on the inside of the

1 buses and they are changed three times more
2 often than they were pre-COVID, so we're on top
3 of that pretty well. We are also looking into
4 the potential of adding UV filters to those
5 HVAC bus systems so that'll certainly improve
6 the safety of inside area.

7 What are we doing to encourage riders to
8 wear masks, well there is a mask mandate. We
9 do give out masks at Hempstead Transit Center
10 and other transit priority centers that we
11 visit. Our transit center employees there do
12 have masks on hand. We have interior signs, we
13 have exterior signs, it's on our website. We
14 do what we can to encourage everyone to wear a
15 mask. That's just bottom line safety.

16 Joe from Levittown is requesting more
17 service on the N49 weekdays and Saturdays.
18 We'll continue to look at Saturday weekend
19 service in general. We seem to see an uptick
20 right now in weekend service or weekend
21 ridership. We'll continue to look at that and
22 see if we can shift resources around. I'm
23 happy to say that we have a flat budget. It's
24 not one that allows us to add a lot of service,
25 but we'll continue to look at that and look at

1 Saturday service, and again on any route that
2 sees growth. But that's a good question.

3 Joy asks to bring back the N36 on the
4 south shore that was a Freeport route. That
5 was eliminated a few years ago. Prior to
6 COVID, there was a study going on to
7 potentially bring that route back. Again, with
8 COVID, and ridership being the way it is, and
9 being in a resource strict environment I'm not
10 sure that we're able to do that, but it's
11 certainly on top of mind right now, so that's a
12 good question, Joy.

13 Matt of East Meadow and Rob Perez of Long
14 Beach asks why is the N15 no longer servicing
15 Rockville Center Long Island Railroad. I want
16 to clarify that a little bit. Our mission
17 right now is to do a couple different things,
18 ensure buses are on time and to speed up
19 travel.

20 What we do in consolidating stops and
21 looking at different friction points is that
22 making sure that people can get back some
23 travel time that they lost because a bus gets
24 stuck in traffic.

25 Clarifying, we are servicing Long Island

1 Railroad Station. Instead of going into the
2 station, having to deal with traffic, turn the
3 bus around in the station, and come back out,
4 we're going to stop at the street across the
5 street or stop at the stop across the street.
6 It still means we're servicing the station.
7 We're asking our passengers to potentially walk
8 across the street but that could save 10
9 minutes each way on the ride. Is it ideal,
10 it's not ideal but it's certainly better --
11 it's better than getting a bus stuck trying to
12 turn around in a station. So, we're going to
13 give it a try, see how it works, and I think
14 we'll all be better off it once we can see how
15 it works.

16 John of Glens Head asks bring back weekend
17 service on the N27. Again, we'll continue to
18 add service as the finances and demand require.
19 We'll continue to look at weekend service on
20 the N27 is certainly one that's the tie on that
21 priority. And Christian Ruiz also asks on the
22 weekends for N27 service and add N16 service.
23 On the 24, we need service weekends even when
24 because the Long Island Railroad is shut down.
25 Understood. Again, that's something that's

1 high on the priority list for weekend service.
2 Good points there.

3 Andy Pollack, Fresh Meadows, please sync
4 the N25 in Lindbergh to Long Island Railroad
5 connections to adhere to times. We'll continue
6 to try as best we can to sync our buses with
7 Long Island Railroad. The problem is if we
8 sync them with the railroad, it breaks a
9 connection somewhere else. There's pluses and
10 minuses to that. When we can, we do it. We
11 don't want to disrupt upstream and downstream's
12 connections for one connection for Long Island
13 Railroad all the time, it may not be ideal, but
14 it's going to be close. We'll study that.
15 That's a good point.

16 Michael asks -- he submitted a bunch of
17 suggestions regarding service. Most of them
18 were kind of intricate details involving
19 schedule and planning so we're passing that
20 along to schedule and planning that they can
21 study the suggestions. Michael, thank you very
22 much.

23 Daniel Huang of Flushing suggests
24 eliminating the 20G and 20H and connecting
25 those back together. That's a very long route.

1 It routes from Hicksville to Flushing. It's a
2 very long route. In order to keep it on time,
3 what we did is we split it in half. It keeps
4 both segments on time but it does force a
5 transfer in between so customers have to
6 transfer from one bus to another to continue
7 the route through. It's, again, not ideal to
8 push that transfer, but it does keep the buses
9 on time overall. There's pluses and minuses to
10 that, but we'll, again, continue to look for
11 ways to maybe bring that back in one singular
12 route. Who knows? I can't promise anything
13 there because in general those buses are
14 actually running better now than they did
15 before.

16 MS. MILLER: It does look like we have one
17 new submission from a David Jackson. It says I
18 remember that you were planning to introduce
19 three shuttled bus routes in the spring of
20 2020, Bethpage, Merrick, and Oceanside
21 shuttles, however, the COVID outbreak got in
22 the way. Will these three new routes be
23 introduced in 2021?

24 MR. KHZOUZ: That's a great question.
25 Before the COVID outbreak, we were one of the

1 first -- or one of the only agencies in the
2 country that actually had increases in bus
3 ridership. We were pretty proud of that and
4 then COVID hit. We were really building a
5 great ridership. Unfortunately, we've had to
6 shelf the idea of additional shuttles. I don't
7 think the ridership will support that right
8 now. Certainly, our budget won't support it.

9 All these suggestions are great
10 suggestions: Weekend, additional service, more
11 frequency, single rides, that's all things
12 we're working for also and certainly high on
13 the priority list as we get back to growth
14 again in both ridership and resources.

15 MS. MILLER: I did want to recognize Yuki
16 Endo of Jackson Heights. We did get a lengthy
17 submission from him which we will certainly
18 pass on to the board, as well as to you Jack,
19 and we can forward to schedule and planning to
20 kind of dive in deeper to these comments.

21 MR. KHZOUZ: I thank everybody for
22 submitting questions, it just shows how
23 passionate everybody is about transit. We love
24 our customers. We very much appreciate the
25 input very much.

1 MR. SHRENKEL: I'd still like to offer our
2 committee members to ask any further questions
3 as to how your presentation or these comments
4 relate and if they have any suggestions,
5 recommendations, or just simple questions.

6 MR. BERSE: The one last thing that I was
7 just concerned about it always hits us around
8 now, are we certain of all the STOA
9 contributions? I don't think all of the
10 budgets have been finalized.

11 MR. KHZOUZ: Well, yes. What we base our
12 budget on is what we know, right. So, from
13 what we understand working with the folks in
14 Albany is this is what we can count on,
15 100 percent count on for now. So -- and that's
16 how we're perceived. If things change, we have
17 to make adjustments. Last year, there was a
18 budget proposed and the governor enacted an
19 option to be able to reduce the STOA payments
20 throughout the allocation and that's what
21 happened. So, my hope is that certainly -- I
22 don't believe it's going to happen this year,
23 so we'll hope for a stable budget, but that's a
24 good point. We'll have to react as we see
25 things change and hopefully we'll see things

1 change on the positive.

2 MR. BERSE: Thank you.

3 MR. SHRENKEL: Based on the information we
4 now have and the budget presentation, I'd like
5 someone to make a motion to authorize the
6 budget.

7 Would someone like to make a motion?

8 MR. BERSE: I make a motion that we vote
9 to accept the budget as presented.

10 MR. SHRENKEL: Thank you very much.

11 Can I have someone to second that, please?

12 MR. DUROSEAU: I second.

13 MR. SHRENKEL: Mr. Duroseau, thank you
14 very much for seconding it. With that, we'd
15 like to take a vote.

16 Carrie, if you don't mind, you can call
17 the members so you can put the camera on each
18 member as they vote.

19 MS. MILLER: Mr. Sheldon Shrenkel?

20 MR. SHRENKEL: I vote to approve the
21 budget at \$135 million as of April 1, 2021 as
22 presented.

23 MS. MILLER: Mr. Joel Berse?

24 MR. BERSE: I vote in favor especially
25 looking in the rear view mirror of our NICE bus

1 to April 1.

2 MS. MILLER: Ms. Jaclene D'Agostino?

3 MS. D'AGOSTINO: Yes, I also vote in favor
4 of the budget.

5 MS. MILLER: Mr. Jean Duroseau?

6 MR. DUROSEAU: I vote in favor of the
7 budget.

8 MR. SHRENKEL: Mr. Tony Rosario.

9 MR. ROSARIO: I also vote in favor of the
10 budget.

11 MR. SHRENKEL: Okay, so there are no nays
12 and there are no abstentions. We have a
13 quorum. We have a majority. We have unanimous
14 consent for the budget for the members who are
15 present; therefore, the budget should be
16 approved, and noted accordingly, and documented
17 accordingly.

18 I think that concludes our main function
19 today, so I'd like a member to make a motion to
20 adjourn our meeting.

21 MR. ROSARIO: I move to adjourn the
22 meeting.

23 MR. BERSE: Second.

24 MR. SHRENKEL: Second, is that Mr. Berse?

25 MR. BERSE: Second.

1 MR. SHRENKEL: We have a second.

2 All in favor of adjourning the meeting say
3 aye.

4 (A round of ayes.)

5 MR. BERSE: I want to stay forever with
6 you, Shelly.

7 MR. SHRENKEL: Mr. Berse, I think you love
8 these meetings. I think you ought to have a
9 weekly meeting with NICE.

10 MR. BERSE: As long as someone can turn on
11 the stuff on the computer, I'm fine.

12 MR. SHRENKEL: We have a unanimous vote.
13 We have no abstentions and, therefore, I'd
14 officially like to adjourn our meeting.

15 Thank you very much all those attending,
16 and for the public who have tuned in, and for
17 the comments that were sent in. Thank you very
18 much and everyone enjoy the day. Have a nice
19 week. And thank you, again.

20 (Time noted: 6:13 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, ESTAMARIE CASTELLI-VELEZ, a Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and accurate transcript to the best of my knowledge and ability.

I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or by marriage and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Estamarie Castelli-Velez

ESTAMARIE CASTELLI-VELEZ

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