

****Transcript used in place of meeting minutes****



8367 Greenvale Drive, Nashville, TN 37221
615-646-1386 / 1-888-377-0085

**WeGo Access Policy Advisory Committee Meeting
July 24, 2019
Nashville, TN**

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>>JAMES BROWN: All right, everybody. It is 1:01, so we're going to call the meeting to order here. So the first thing I want to mention is this meeting is being live captioned and so that's a good deal. And what that means is if you want the floor, what you have to do is say, and I'll sort of role play for you, I'll say Brown and the chair will go-go ahead, Brown, something to that extent and you can go ahead and speak, okay? And what that's going to do is allow our live captionist to capture your name, okay? Because we want -- and it's a good way to run a meeting too, right? And as a blind person allows me to know who you are because you know when there's 20 people in a room, sometimes it's hard to differentiate all the voices. All right.

So that is very good and also don't speak over each other because that might be hard for the captionist to catch as well.

The first thing we're going to do is the role call and I'll start out, my name is James Brown. I am the AccessRide Policy Advisory Committee chair. And to my left, John, if you want to introduce yourself.

>>JOHN FORBES: This is John Forbes and I am president of the Tennessee organization of the deaf blind.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: Patricia Valladares with the support and training for exceptional parents.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Gerome Bowen.

>>WALTER SEARCY: I'm Walter Searcy. Member of the WeGo board of directors.

>>LINDA BROWN: Linda Brown with Tennessee Disabilities Pathfinder.

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>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Debbie Chadwick.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Patrick Neazer, little ole me.

>>SHEILA HANSEN: Sheila Hensen.

>>JACK JAKOBIK: Jack Jakobik, Vanderbilt.

>>BILL ZAGORSKI: Bill Zagorski.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Natasha Wilkins, consumer.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Tanesha Simmons, A.D.A. coordinator and APAC liaison.

Wait a second.

>>TOM HINKSON: We have Lorri here. Tom Hinkson, and you have Lorri.

>>LORRI MABRY: Lorri Mabry.

>>JAMES BROWN: So we had the minutes sent out. Anything anyone wants to talk about the minutes? Anything that was missing, anything that needs to be changed?

>>GEROME BOWEN: Bowen.

>>JAMES BROWN: Good job. First time we got it.

>>GEROME BOWEN: I want to make sure we have the minutes all the people we brought in from January. I know we nominated people to the committee but I haven't seen in the minutes that they were recognized as being accepted.

>>JAMES BROWN: We will go back and look at those.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Thank you, sir.

>>JAMES BROWN: We did not have any new members the last meeting so it wouldn't affect those minutes but we'll go back and look for sure. Any other comments about the

minutes, questions? All right, if there are no objections we'll adopt a motion to accept the minutes. Hearing none. Motion is adopted.

>>JOHN FORBES: John Forbes seconds.

>>JAMES BROWN: We don't have to motion second on that one, John.

>>JOHN FORBES: Okay.

>>JAMES BROWN: That's okay. But if I do say can I get a motion, then we'll proceed from there. All right. So the first thing we have on our agenda of real important significance is the bylaws committee report given by our past chair, Debbie Chadwick.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Thank you, James. As you know, we have been charged with working on this for a period of time. Natasha Wilkins, James, myself, and Patrick Neazer has expressed some interest in serving on this committee as well. Have been working toward correcting and making some changes to the bylaws that will hopefully be meaningful. I will briefly go over those because we have people present who may not be aware of some of the changes. The bylaws that we currently have in place were adopted in July 2015. So the bylaws during the purpose of our committee is the Metropolitan Transit Authority Advisory Committee, APAC, shall advise the MTA board of directors on changes and improvements needed to pursue excellence in transit service for the disabled or elderly of Davidson County. We would like to just include in that transit services of Davidson County. So is this already is accessibility committee so that was something that we felt like would clarify.

Section 2, in section 2 of this it states membership shall at least comprise of one,

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consumer or service users and two, members who represent specific agencies or organizations, the representatives from the Metropolitan Transit Authority MTA or ex officio members. Members cannot be an owner or employee of any MTA vendor. We have discussed in there, I know one of the other Metropolitan Government committees that advises that's the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, clearly lists the expectations of membership of whose input they seek as well as others and who I would ask you to think about those agencies and organizations should they be listed for this and then there was also section 4. There shall be no more -- the current bylaws state there should be no more than 18 and no less than 12, and there has been a request to change that to no more than 24 and no less than 18. I'm just going to quickly go through the changes that we are looking at and then another change that was recently proposed.

And please, keep in mind that these bylaws have to be submitted to MTA and they -- so they are the ones who actually approve this. We work under MTA as an advisory committee. Our purpose is to advise on changes and improvements needed to pursue excellence. We have no day-to-day operational responsibility.

Section 4 in meetings, article 5, it says meetings should last no longer than 60 minutes.

Well, we all know that that is an impossibility and that we --

(Laughter)

-- are requesting to change that to possibly 90 minutes. I have -- I will be honest, I have never served on a board where they outlined exactly how many minutes the meeting is,

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but we also appreciate and understand the purpose of this meeting is for excellence in transportation, many of which people use AccessRide and that is a finite schedule that must be done to make rides available and consistent in timely for persons who possibly attend this meeting. So we know that a time frame for this is realistic. So therefore, we are requesting 90 minutes rather than 60 minutes.

We also are requesting an addition to -- to the bylaws stating the -- how public comments are provided. For those of you that may have visited or attended any of our meetings over the past certainly two years that I was chair, sometimes those can be rather heated and sometimes they can be rather --

>>JAMES BROWN: Emotional.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Let's just say not delivered in such a civil and collegial manner that we wish to do that because we know that we all listen better when people are talking to us and not with loud voices and such. So this is quite lengthy because this is a new addition and then I'll cover the other one that we just recently have. Persons attending an APAC meeting have the opportunity to address the community during a regularly-scheduled business meeting, public comments are after introductions of the committee. Members present and approve the minutes of the prior meeting. A time limit of three minutes will be allowed for presentation of each speaker. If the speaker is reading from a prepared text, a copy should be provided for the secretary. MTA staff will ask for anyone requesting to make public comments prior to the start of the meeting.

Names and addresses will be requested for follow-up that will be provided after the

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meeting. The following guidelines should be observed, and I'm not sure whether we should say shall there or should because shall is mandatory. The following guidelines should be observed when a speaker is addressing the committee during public comments. When called upon the speaker should begin promptly, speak clearly stating name and address. The speaker should identify the organization being represented, if any. The speaker must limit remarks to three minutes. The speaker may direct questions only for follow-up by MTA staff after the meeting. Questions will not be responded to on the day of the meeting. Members of the audience must refrain from audible comments and/or applause during the meeting. Under no circumstances may any audience member interrupt a speaker or otherwise attempt to intimidate or discourage a speaker from addressing the committee with audible comments or noise maker. No speaker may indulge on personal attacks on any committee or staff member. The chairperson will revoke the speaker's privilege to address the committee if this rule is violated. Once a public comment has been closed no further audience participation is allowed. Violating this rule may result in the violator being removed from the meeting room.

And then we had, and I'm going to -- an article 9, in the amendments, it currently states that the bylaws are to be reviewed for change every two years. Again, I've never served on any national board or board where there was a requirement for those to be changed. Bylaws should be changed as needed. Once we change the bylaws, they could -- there could be a change in any type of service delivery or participants or

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anything that could be create a bylaw change or for us to review. So I just think that that's something that could be done as appropriate and as needed.

And then there is a recommendation that -- and I don't have -- I apologize, I don't have that printed out for me but let me see if I can pull it up on my phone, regarding an APAC -- the APAC committee having a voice but no vote at the MTA board meetings.

Let me -- please be patient while I pull this up.

It would be, what we would like to add is if the chairperson or their designee shall report in person at the MTA board of director's meeting a minimum of two times a year to advise MTA on how to provide excellent transit services for people with disabilities who live or work in Davidson County. And I think that it's not so much as a report because we know that the MTA ex officio members are chairing our comments with board of MTA, but I think that when we discussed this for a very long time, and Patricia, if you recall, we discussed this when you were chair and you were chair prior to me being chair, that just to have someone in addition from the committee that represents the public at large to be there to explain -- express and explain what APAC's thoughts are on some of these things that are close to the service delivery could be important. So with that, I will tell you hopefully we will have all of these completed. If anybody would like to -- the bylaws committee has a maximum of six people on it, currently we have four. If anyone has a burning desire to certainly go through all of the information because James and Natasha have done a lot of work and had to suffer through my typos and some of my things of completely retyping all of this and making sure I had it completely

correct, please let James know and he will share that with me. But we would like to have all of this presented at the next meeting in September so this would be able to go into effect. It says article 9 amendments, any proposed amendment along with the date it is to be voted on shall have been certified by the executive committee which is the chair, the vice chair, the secretary, and the past chair. It shall be presented in the agenda information packet for each member to review and a two-thirds majority of those present is required for ratification. So once we get this approved -- and my hope is to be able to show and highlight where the changes are and it will show underneath each one so it will be easy to follow and then I will need to get with Ms. Simmons to make sure that we can get this out to everyone in the medium that is easily -- easy to understand and that's our preferred way that we can review this. Then my hope is that we would -- we would be able to vote on this. This will require us going, once we get finished, in the past our liaison and certainly Patricia you will recall when Paul Ford was the chair of this committee and you and I were on the committee and Dan Dillon, Dan Freudberg served as our liaison with the MTA board and was helpful because this will go to them as well for their review and approval because at the end of the day we are a committee that shall advise them and so the changes in everything that we do is subject to approval for the MTA board. And that's all I have to say.

>>JAMES BROWN: Any questions for Debbie?

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: Boing.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yes.

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>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: I have --

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Say your name, Patricia.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: Two things. These past two meetings it has been more than two hours and I know when we were talking about originally the change for an hour definitely not being enough time, I don't know if we can put a maximum of, you know, 120 minutes or two hours. If there's no need to have a long meeting, you know, it can -- you know, depending on the agenda, but it seems like the 1:00 to 3:00 as it has been right now has been giving us enough time to cover a lot of things. So I want to suggest that.

And the other thing that I had in mind, and I don't know if you added because in the previous bylaws it says, you know, every other month, but it's stated January, March, May, July, and September and we are -- we added -- was to add November so I don't know if that had been added in the bylaws, the month of November, because didn't want to leave, you know, too long a time without meeting.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Right.

>>JAMES BROWN: So let me ask a question. Would everyone -- last year was kind of a different situation, I do believe. A lot of things going on. Do you all prefer to meet in November or take November off?

>>TOM HINKSON: I think probably the issue is we're scheduled on the third Wednesday of the month and that would be very close to Thanksgiving. I would suggest if we could do a November meeting we do it on the first or second Wednesday of the month.

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>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: That's how -- this year is like scheduled on the second of November. I think last year that's what we did.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Bowen.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yes, sir.

>>GEROME BOWEN: For clarification there's a lot of members not aware of the bylaws. I'd like to see a show of hands understand exactly what you are talking about from the committee this year because we're operating off the past bylaws and I don't know if anybody received the past bylaws.

>>WALTER SEARCY: I haven't received them but I understand what we're talking about.

>>GEROME BOWEN: A lot of new members, wonder about the new members.

>>JAMES BROWN: That's a good point, Gerome. When I first became chair I sent the bylaws out but they have not been sent out to the new members. I'm going to make a note to do that right now.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: This is Tanesha Simmons. I sent the bylaws out this week.

>>JAMES BROWN: That is true.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: I sent the whole packet out this week. It's the same information we had previously. It hasn't been rebranded, but I have sent that out.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Thank you.

>>JAMES BROWN: Tanesha, you mean you send out emails?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Really? That's what we're doing.

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(Laughter)

Yes, I send them out. Plenty of them.

>>JAMES BROWN: I'm just joking.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: That's right and you sent all the schedule for the meeting for the board and for APAC also.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Great packet.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Thank you, Ms. Tanesha.

>>WALTER SEARCY: This is Searcy. While we're talking about bylaws, I'd like to volunteer as an ex officio member of the committee.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Excellent.

>>WALTER SEARCY: I'm a lawyer and I do a lot of bylaws.

>>JAMES BROWN: Okay.

>>JOHN FORBES: And this is John Forbes. If the meeting calls for 60 minutes in the bylaws, if you want to keep that why not add a phrase or 90 to 120 minutes as called for by the chair or substitute leader. So that way it would become flexible.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yeah, John, I would -- if it were my preference I would take the time limit out altogether. I know currently it says "should" instead of "shall," which means you can have the meeting as long or as short as you want to.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Correct.

>>JAMES BROWN: But I think it does deal with a little confusion when you do that.

Especially people reading a lot of "shalls" in a row and a "should" pops in there, the brain

tends to keep going along with the "shalls." That's just my preference, but we're definitely -- the committee, the subcommittee is definitely taking all of these things into consideration and we will report back to you all again next meeting. But yeah, thank you for that.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: And this is Tanesha Simmons. I wanted to address Tom's question about November's meeting. It's actually November 5.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: 5th?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: 5th. Hold on a second. Wait a second, that's the wrong meeting. That's mayor's advisory meeting. Sorry.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: You know, I saw it this morning, so I knew it was on the second. It was on the -- I think 13th or 12th. Something in there.

>> 13th.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Okay. The 13th, yes, it is on the 13th. I was looking at the wrong date.

>>WALTER SEARCY: That will be the second Wednesday.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: So this is Debbie Chadwick, so in article 5 where it says "committee meetings will be held at 1:00 p.m. the fourth Wednesday of January, March, May, July and September and as determined necessary at the discretion of the executive committee. I can put in there the fourth Wednesday of January, March, May, July, and September and the second Wednesday of November and then include that would still remain the same and as determined necessary at the discretion because

there could be a special-called meeting of some sort that could become necessary.

>>JAMES BROWN: Right.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Point of order.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Yes.

>>WALTER SEARCY: This is Searcy. Let's take these suggestions to committee and any curative measures proposed, bring them back after the committee's deliberated on them and not deal with them as a committee as a whole.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Right. Thank you. That's the end of my report.

>>JAMES BROWN: Any more relevant comments? Okay. All right. We'll move on. Patrick Neazer is going to chair one of our subcommittees and he's going to tell us about what that's going to consist of. Come on. Come on. Patrick, I heard you're not dressed up today either. I was shocked.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: No, I'm not. Before I begin, is -- do we have copies?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Yes, yes, I did make copies for you.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: May I have one? I don't need one but I'd like one.

>>JAMES BROWN: It's going to be his prop, right?

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Yes, that's exactly it. It is right side up?

>> Yes.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Just making sure.

>> Looking good.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Yeah, right. Patrick Neazer for the notetaker whose name is

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Karyn, by the way. Well for some of you who do not know me and some who do, I was asked to join this committee and I was nominated and certified in March and my first official meeting this administration is in May. I've been acquainted with this committee for years, either as an audience member or as a member. I was asked to consider this because of the fact that as anyone knows me, the committee has had questions, issues, concerns over the last three years about technology. And somebody in their right mind thought I was going to be good at this. I will get them for that.

>>JAMES BROWN: Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that, Patrick.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: However, there is a few things at work here. The committee in November expressed a intent to form a access audit committee, accessibility audit committee which has been created and which the chairperson was April and she decided for whatever reason, probably really good ones like family, that that might be more than she'd want and she decided that would not be her best calling at the moment. So I was asked to consider a technology committee. Now, according to the rules and according to the scope of the accessibility audit committee, they have a mission for things like doing audits from TAIL (phonetic), budget line items and interactions with contracting for companies for MTA. And those sound like laudable goals for the committee. However, given what my understanding was for the technology committee, and James, chairperson -- the chairman had asked me to consider this, I'm not really sure what the committee's -- what the expressed desires of this committee in past for technology really fits in to the accessibility audit committee and to be blunt, which is

always a dangerous thing in this room, I don't really wish to impose any thoughts on the committee that's already been created. That committee was formed, that committee was appointed, that committee has its own mission and for somebody, from some New York short kid to ride in and say this is what it's going to be now really seems inappropriate at best and bad spirit of another committee that's already been created at worst. So if the chairperson persists, if we wishes for a technology committee to be created, which I believe the chairman has the right idea because there are some things that need to be addressed, I am -- I am laying before you today, which I will ask somebody else to read because they're just a better reader, I am laying before you today a motion for the creation of a technology committee known as the Digital Solutions and outreach committee. The Digital Solutions is what it is, digital and the outreach is the scope by which all digital decisions will be made. And I will ask Ms. Simmons if she would to read the motion as written.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Okay. I would like to make a motion to the APAC committee create to create a Digital Solutions and outreach committee which will be referenced as DSOC going forward. The DSOC will have a chairperson who will be non voting, facilitating committee member whom will be appointed by the APAC chairperson. The DSOC will have five members who will be voting members selected from the APAC committee by the DSOC chairperson. The DSOC will have two members from MTA staff as MTA representatives. The DSOC will have the right to have technical experts presenting at any meeting of the DSOC whose identities will be made public in all reports

issued to APAC by the DSOC. The DSOC will have a creation date which is blank and will operate until the next annual meeting where its reauthorization will be considered.

Take care and I wish you enough. Patrick Neazer.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: That's the motion. Now, I will cover a couple of points and I will entertain questions. That should be the point of order, I think that should say technical -- we have the right to be present at the meeting. And the reason is real simple, nobody knows everything. I hate to point that out in here. I hate to point that out anywhere that I go. But nobody knows everything. And the second thing, and I know -- I know Debbie will roll her eyes at me but bear with me. The last part at the starting point date of whatever it was to be announced, and reauthorization at the annual meeting. If this committee actually produces something, I am optimistic that it will, we'll have to keep that going. The goal is at the end of the first year of work to be reauthorized to have it be considered a standing committee. If we get things working someone has to wind the watch, whether I like it or not. And this will be whoever does it, one of the legacies of this committee which is to build something that we can claim that actually, and this is my last remark, that actually serves and it's not written here, but the committee is intended for the technology committee to serve three pillars, serves us at this table, the people in the audience and the people outside of this room. That is the criteria, if I am the chairperson. I'm not telling what it's going to look like. I'm not telling you what the proposal is going to be. I'm not telling you what's going to happen but I am saying that's the pillar by which if the chairperson appoints me as the chairperson

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given this motion that I will use to guide what happens. And hopefully that will go on for a very long time. Those are the ends of my comments. I will entertain any questions.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Bowen.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Sir.

>>GEROME BOWEN: What you're saying you're actually just going to chair the technology committee, sir?

>>PATRICK NEAZER: It will need to be created. Good point. I do believe that the audit -- accessible audit committee and the technology committee should be separate. I do not believe that -- let me just be blunt here. I do not want to be the chairperson of a committee that's already formed that has a scope. I don't want to tell them what to do. They are smarter than me on that topic.

>>GEROME BOWEN: I just wanted to make sure I was understanding what you were saying. Thank you, sir.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Any others questions?

>>WALTER SEARCY: Let's call this the DSOC committee.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: I knew you were going to say that.

>>JAMES BROWN: If you're going to be present and have a meeting and take your socks off, I'm not going to be present at that meeting.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: There's no S.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Boycott that meeting?

>>JAMES BROWN: That's right.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: I was warned about that. Bless you. Any other questions?

Then if there are no other questions of me, I lay this motion before the committee.

>>JAMES BROWN: There's been a motion. Is there a second?

>>GEROME BOWEN: Second.

>>JAMES BROWN: Any discussion? All right. All in favor say aye.

[Ayes respond.]

Any opposed say no.

>>JAMES BROWN: Lorri, is that a no? Motion carries.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Mr. Forbes had his hand raised. John.

>>JAMES BROWN: John. You know I can't see you.

(Laughter)

So John, did you want to say something?

>>JOHN FORBES: No, I was raising my hand for the aye.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Oh, okay.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: What?

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: For the yes. For the ayes.

>>JAMES BROWN: The motion carries. For future notice, if you would like this APAC committee to have a subcommittee that really works on an issue, just let me know. As chair I can appoint any committee and so that would be up to my discretion. But if the committee has a purpose, I would -- I would love to see it go forward, especially if it's one like Patrick was talking about, one that's going to last, one that's going to make a

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difference. It's very important to me.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Mr. Chairman.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yes, sir.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: You'll need to appoint a chairperson. The motion does not address who a chairperson will be.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yeah, I can do that at any time.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: No, for this one, the committee just passed, are you going to do that now, are you going to do that later?

>>JAMES BROWN: I'll do it later. But, I mean, it should be the way you would like it, I would think. Okay.

(Laughter)

>>PATRICK NEAZER: No, because if it is me, I would like to get -- if you are going to appoint me and I'm not presuming anything, if you are going to appoint me then I'd like to get started on forming a committee.

>>JAMES BROWN: Sure. Yes, I was going to appoint you. Persistence pays off, Patrick.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: No. So now I want to inform people, I'm going to be calling some people to get their feedback on what they want to see. So please take my call.

>>JAMES BROWN: All right. Public comments. First of all, do we have anyone here to give public comments? You know what's so crazy, I've become chair of the committee and all the public comments go away. That's so interesting. Okay.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: I have a -- I guess it could be a public comment. It's not overly serious.

>>JAMES BROWN: Go for it.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: My last name is Wilkins. I went and purchased my AccessRide tickets today. And I remember we talked about it very briefly last year at some point before I was a part of the committee. And as of now, for more security, which I think is great, the customer service windows have the drawers in it. However, the challenge with that is if you have -- if you need accessibility or help with the -- with the card machine, they have to call someone around to come and help you. Which they are more than willing to do, but that takes kind of time, they have to call somebody, the person has to come around the window, and that kind of holds up the line and takes time. So I definitely appreciate that someone is willing to do that, but I don't know what the exact remedy could be, but if there's a more streamlined way that that could be done, I just wanted to put that out there.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Natasha, I'll check into it.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: Boing. This is Patricia. Two things. One for what -- somebody have already said that issue before that you stated, Natasha, about how difficult the card machine is. The other thing that I wanted just to bring it up, it is that somebody order tickets and those tickets were mailed but none were mailed to her, to her house. They were mailed to another person's home with her name. Thank God this other person knew her and let her know she had received her tickets and sent them

directly to her. So, you know, I -- I don't know what happened there, but I think it's something that needs to be pointed that has to be very careful when somebody orders tickets. They're going to be sent and addressed to, you know, the right person, to the right address. Because I know that if you have not received your ticket, you have to wait 15 days more until to make sure that you haven't get them before you replace them. So I just wanted to say that.

>>JAMES BROWN: All right.

>>TOM HINKSON: I do have a question. So it's a question for MTA. When packages such as tickets are mailed out, do you retain the information of the mailing address and would it be possible if you did get a complaint, hey, I ordered tickets, it's been two weeks, I don't have them could you check records of the address you sent them to and match it up to the address of the person, do you have that?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Yes, we do have that. It is trackable.

>>JOHN FORBES: This is John Forbes. I would like to share with the committee my experience on a ride. I call it the tour of Davidson County.

(Laughter)

They picked me up, I was supposed to go northward but I went southeast ward all the way to the corner of Davidson County, then up to east Davidson County, then to my destination and I was 45 minutes late. I suspect it could be a dispatcher geography problem. So I'm hoping that a message can get to the supervisor to watch for this with the dispatcher. That's what I think it is. But I'm not sure. But it seems like that's what

the issue was.

The second thing I would like to make a comment, are there any plans in the future to allow the use of a debit card or a credit card to pay the fair?

>>WALTER SEARCY: Remotely. You can buy tickets. You mean as a swipe on the bus itself?

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: You hear that?

>>JOHN FORBES: Yes, a swipe it when you get on. You may have to have two cards, one your ID card and then your pay card.

>>JAMES BROWN: So John, I can answer this question for you. Can you hear me okay?

>>JOHN FORBES: Go ahead.

>>JAMES BROWN: So one thing that we are looking to do as far as WeGo is you can go in a store and purchase almost like a debit card, like a gift card, you can put the balance you want to put on it and swipe that card to then pay for your ride. I'm not sure when that's going to be implemented exactly, but it's coming hopefully when would you guys say, in the next --

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Should be sometime next year.

>>CAROLYN RIGGS-FARRAR: It is part of the new fair collection system. I don't have the date. Dan is not here.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: That's the mayor's office.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Sorry, this is Marilyn.

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>>JAMES BROWN: John, does that answer your question?

>>JOHN FORBES: Yes, that will be fine. Just some kind of system to be able to pay to avoid using money, cash.

>>JAMES BROWN: Right. I'm with you on that.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: That's the plan. That's the plan.

>>JAMES BROWN: And so John, if you can make sure and get with Marilyn to talk about the issue you had with your tour of Davidson County and hopefully she can get that figured out. Okay? Any more public comments?

>>TOM HINKSON: One from the audience.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: James.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yes, who's about to speak here?

>>AUDIENCE MEMBER: This is Roger Womack. I have a question on the cards. Since the fare is going up on August 2, right now it's \$3.40. If somebody has cards that are \$3.40, are they going to have to pay any extra after August 2?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: No, sir. You would just use your normal AccessRide ticket. You wouldn't have to pay the difference in the cost of the fare.

>>AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's kind of the question. I knew I had some cards and I didn't know if it was -- mean extra charge or not. Thank you.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: You're welcome.

>>TOM HINKSON: This is Hinkson. One added comment on that. It's kind of like a forever stamp at the post office. The recommendation would be if you use the tickets

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frequently, I would stock up now while it's a little bit cheaper.

>>AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's kind of where I was coming from.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Excellent point.

>>JAMES BROWN: Got to save where you can. All right. Last call. Any more public comments? MTA report.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: This is Marilyn and I'm going to keep this short and sweet I have the May statistics in front of me as discussed at previous meetings. I will be presenting the same statistical month we present to our board of directors which tomorrow they will have a summary of the May stats.

Overall we're -- we remain relatively flat, if you compare May '19 to May '18. We carried 28,000 people in May of '19 as opposed to 28,500 in May of '18 and that's in our core service. If you add Access On Demand, we did see a significant uptick. May '18 2,100 used our same-day program. In May of '19, we were at about 3,800. So that's --

>>JAMES BROWN: Point of clarification. Is that people or rides?

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: That would be trips. Whenever I talk and a point of clarification, I'm talking trips. I'm not talking -- because one trip could have six passengers. So I'm talking actual trips, one vehicle went to a point of pickup, boarded persons on that vehicle and dropped them at a destination. That's one trip. Our on-time performance did take -- in-house did take a percentage drop in May of '19. Unfortunately in May of '19 we did experience some manpower issues system wide which resulted in us having to not only reduce some of our in-house service on Access but also take some of our

routes that we had routed fairly efficiently and have to combine them up. Debbie can speak to that. We're -- you know, people that wouldn't normally ride together from the Rochelle Center did have to be doubled up on the vehicles. So that did drop our on-time performance down to about 82% in-house. The good thing is our taxi on time for May increased by 5%. And that's even as some of you may be aware, the month of May started the beginning of the month of Ramadan for the Muslim community. A significant number of our third-party providers did experience a somewhat difficulty in having their drivers come up. I mean, you have to respect their religious preferences.

>>JAMES BROWN: Sure.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: But we all worked together. Each of my four providers actually gave me times of day when they knew that they would be short, so we put some more of those -- so we used our vehicles during that time and then they actually had some incentives for their driver that even if it was their time to stop fasting, that, you know, if you came to work there might be some incentives for them. And that was done on a provider-by-provider basis. So I just want to say thank you to my four overflow providers for the month of May of really doing whatever it took. There were some bumpy nights and there were some bumpy days but we got it done. So I thank them all for that.

We did see a slight downtick -- or uptick in our passengers carry per complaint. On MTA we had one complaint for every 325 passengers we carried. Our taxi service had 140 -- we had one complaint for every 146 passengers. Most of our complaints

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are -- are related to our on-time performance. And as I alluded to some of the on-time performance issues with our taxi providers did have to do with the Ramadan holiday period.

Our after-hours calls we saw an increase of 3%, if you compare May over May. We answered 82 1/2% of the calls that were received after the call center closed in our dispatch center. Access On Demand had an improvement on their on-time performance. In May of '18 96% and May of '19 it was 97%. We on boarded Music City taxi as our fourth provider for the On Demand. Prior to July it was You Serve, Mobility Solutions, and Taxi USA. We did want to wait until the board of directors to approve our Access On Demand became permanent before on boarding Music City onto that platform. We didn't want to on board them on a platform that was going to go away. As of July they did some Access On Demand trips. For the first two weeks they did about 200 trips on Access On Demand. So I just want to bring that out there. And that concludes my report. Unless anybody has any questions for me.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Boeing.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Yes, sir.

>>GEROME BOWEN: One quick question. In the incident a cab have a trip for say between 1:00 and 2:00 and at 2:00 they have On Demand trip and for some reason they run behind, does most understand On Demand means one person in a car? How do they work it out?

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: There are clear business rules that differentiate between the two

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programs. Access On Demand is a shared program. At no time should an on-demand trip meaning Access On Demand and an ADA trip be combined in the same vehicle.

>>GEROME BOWEN: They do understand that.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: That is clearly stated in the business rules and if that occurs, please bring that to my attention and I can address it with the provider.

>>GEROME BOWEN: We'll talk later. Thank you.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Thank you.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Marilyn, this is Searcy.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Yes, sir.

>>WALTER SEARCY: One other thing, please have dispatchers refer to 400 Martin Luther King and not 400 Charlotte.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Amen.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And to WeGo and not MTA.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: I will address the 400 Charlotte as opposed to Martin Luther King. Some of the GPS technology does not recognize Dr. Martin Luther King so the way we will put it going forward in our system is we will put the actual address and then we'll put in the comments, formerly known as Charlotte Avenue.

>>WALTER SEARCY: That will work.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: We had to do that with Eighth Avenue and Rosa Parks when that name first changed, so that's something I can make happen. And I will address it with our dispatch manager to make sure that it's WeGo, not MTA.

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>>WALTER SEARCY: Let the record show marvelous.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Is there anything else?

>>JAMES BROWN: There is. So I recently have gotten some complaints and I know you've heard this same complaint, Marilyn. Christy Satterfield, back around three or four months ago, had some issues with UZURV based on her being charged too much for her trips.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: I'm aware.

>>JAMES BROWN: Some very sporadic things where she was charged incorrect things and UZURV said they had it taken care of and now it's cropped up again. Can you explain to us why that's happening?

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: I actually exchanged some emails with Satterfield this morning and looped into those emails were the call center manager of UZURV and can I -- I'm going to point -- Michael French is our account manager with UZURV and as convenience and coincidence would have it he actually came to Nashville today where he's doing a site visit and that's one of the issues that we're going to address. Michael is actually in the audience here today. I invited him to come to the meeting.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Have him stand.

>>AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good afternoon, everyone.

(Applause).

Definitely nice to be here. My name is Michael French I'm the director of programs with UZURV and we're excited to work with WeGo and any issues there would be.

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>>MARILYN YOKLEY: See, we were proactive without even knowing we were being proactive.

>>WALTER SEARCY: That's the best way.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Maybe I should buy a Lotto ticket.

>>JAMES BROWN: Well, my fear is if it's happening to Christy then it's happened more than once and if it's been addressed already one time, then it's happening to other people, too.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: And that is part of the technology piece that myself and Michael are going to be going through tomorrow, along with Brittany. It's the Google matrix, how their system is devised. But Michael is actually going to show myself and Brittany how that is calculated and how that platform actually works tomorrow. So that's one of the reasons why Michael came to Nashville.

>>JAMES BROWN: So if it's not human error, it's computer error.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: But a computer is only as good as the person that programs it, correct. So we are -- we are aware. Ms. Satterfield was actually kind enough to send me screen shots today of the two to three routes that she does take to go home and that's something I will share with Michael tomorrow when we meet in my office.

>>JAMES BROWN: Okay. All right.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Chadwick.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yes, ma'am.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Marilyn, if you will we had these same issues when the taxi

overflow initially began and it took a little bit of time to get it -- because our concerns were the same as Ms. Satterfield and they were occurring with the folks at Rochelle Center. And on a quite frequent basis that we would have to intervene to explain, it's tickets, it's not cash, it's not a certain amount of cash over. So I know Marilyn's tenacity and I feel like with Mr. French this will get worked out. But I think overall, based on the issue of On Demand and implementing that, testing it, and now having it be a part of the service delivery for MTA, I think overall it has really improved the lives. When you look at the number of people in On Demand that's gone on from 2100 in 2018 to 3800 in 2019, it can be quite -- it's been quite successful and it will only continue to grow. So it's -- it's very heartwarming for this committee to see Mr. French here in person to really be able to make sure that the people that are riding are getting the service at the rate that is being asked and not at a premium rate or some other reason for that. So I just wanted to let the record show that this is -- has really been a great benefit and that yes, there will be little hiccups, but moving forward I think the success of this speaks for itself. That's all I have. Thank you.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: I believe Patrick Neazer had his hand up earlier.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: And in case does not know how to spell that N-E-A-Z-E-R. If I have trouble spelling it I'm sure everybody does. UZURV brought me here today. And they're going to take me home if I get out of here. A couple of questions. In the name of full disclosure, I want to echo what Ms. Chadwick had said. I have -- the customer service people at UZURV are quite agreeable and come compliant because I had a -- I

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had a misquoted price and they did take care of it. While that is not an excuse to have it go on for a regular basis I do give them props for being cordial. To echo Ms. Chadwick's comment, we have a willing partner that wants to get it correct as opposed to overlook it. Because they could have easily said sorry, pal, you're out of luck. I've had that experience before with others and that's not how it's working, so I think there's promise there.

But the question I had had to do with this, we're talking a lot about the On Demand service. We're talking a lot about it is my first question and now we've got a fourth provider. And we know that MTA makes decisions about how this plan is going to be implemented based on trip numbers and stuff. What I'm wondering is, the first question, can we get some numbers about the rides that are taken, like -- because we hear a lot about how it's being used. So can we get some stats on like from mile to mile, what's the number of people taking one-mile trips, two-mile trips, three-mile trips, et cetera, over a period of time. And I'm asking for two reasons. One, it is going up so the committee might want some numbers on how to see what the patterns are. And the second reason is we now have a fourth provider and I'm curious to see what the impact of that's going to be. Is there any way we can get one-mile incremental numbers and if so, over what period of time?

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: So just let me make a point of clarification. What you want is the number of trips that are from zero to one mile, then the number of trips that are from 1.1 mile to 1.99 mile and 2 to 2.99. I can do that. I would just need you to give me

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some direction of what time frame would you like to look at. I have data all the way back from last March.

>>JAMES BROWN: Are you necessarily wanting one-mile trips or looking for more five miles and under ten miles, 6 to 10 mile, that kind of thing?

>>PATRICK NEAZER: The median -- the average -- I'm sorry, the median is somewhere around 9.72.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Uh-huh.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: So I'm looking for really what I would like to see, if I could get it is 3 to 4 as a floor to 12. Because I'm trying to establish, we know what the median is, but these decisions are not only going to be made at the median. They're going to be made -- for example, we have -- we know there are a lot of under 3 miles statistics. We know that. So how many and how far does that pull down the median because that's going to determine, again, let's be frank, that's going to determine budget considerations. And if this committee is going to be in an advisory capacity, which we are, then we need to have -- we need to be able to wrap our mind around some of those numbers so we can make recommendations that actually coincide with what everybody else is looking at.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: If I may suggest, if you would give me, you know, a month --

>>PATRICK NEAZER: I was about to do that, you asked that.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Which month you want me to do and to start with, I could do it in one-mile increments and let you suss out that information and then going forward, if you

decided you wanted to do from 0 to 2.99 and 3 to 4.99, but my suggestion would be to pick a month and I can pull that statistical data for you and then we move forward to how you actually want to present it.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Let me ask a follow-up question if I may. You just reported we have a new -- a new provider coming on this month. In your estimation is the person does this all beep, beep day long, would it make sense to gather the information for this month, for example, since we have a new provider, or are some of -- or in your opinion do the numbers before the new provider being brought on are applicable, because now we have a new provider and some of the numbers have to change.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: In order to get -- in my opinion, and you can take that for whatever it means, to me I would wait and do -- do July of '19 which has all four providers, then that would give you a true representation of how the trips were being -- which provider people are choosing. You know, I know there are people that choose a certain provider for longer trips and a certain provider for other trips. So people -- this is a premium program, and our consumers and the people that which we serve are very smart with their dollars and they're going to -- you know, they're going to choose the provider that gives them the best service. But they -- but they're also very smart in that they know that certain providers are very efficient at the shorter trips and certain providers are very efficient at the longer trips. So they -- people are learning, after a year and a half of this program, to pick and choose, depending on what their mode of transportation or where they're going on that particular day. So I would do July

of '19 and I can have that available for the September meeting.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Mr. Chairman, that would be what I would ask that the committee ask for are the -- the information -- the data points in the month that Ms. Wilkins suggested for July of 2019 and that brought in September.

>>JAMES BROWN: Well, I was really hoping you could have them by the end of the meeting.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Let me put on my executive hat and tell you what's going to happen on the 31st of July. Again, I should buy a Lotto ticket tonight if I could do that.

>>JAMES BROWN: So Patrick, would you sort of write up a brief explanation of what you're talking about?

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Sure.

>>JAMES BROWN: And I think that would be helpful, too.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: I can do that.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: And actually I was going to -- to make that recommendation because this will now become a record as part of the public record, so if I could have something, an email or something in writing saying exactly what you're looking for and then it becomes part of the public record which would become part of the statistical presentation each month.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: I will get that to the necessary people for my request by the end of the week, if not before.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Chadwick. So the new provider comes on 8-1 or came on

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7-1?

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Came on on 7-1.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Is there a way that we can show you have March to March data and then you have the new data that starts April. And I'm not suggesting, I certainly don't want to create more reports, more work, but it would be interesting after maybe a three-month period of the new provider of it being four to show, and I know you report on the month-to-date increase in AccessRide On Demand trips, but I think that would be very interesting to show because we know that because of the use of this, having an additional provider may not split the trips that are currently being given but be giving more accessibility to people who were unable to reserve trips because of the volume. So that's what -- in that way it will give you some benchmarks to be able to show at what point might you be looking for another new provider to make sure, because there -- when I worked in retail there are only so many ways you can slice a pie until no one tastes a bite. So it has to be productive for everyone and it has to be financially beneficial for them. But I was just thinking that would be interesting at some point. And I'm not certainly suggesting it this month, but to give them a period of time where we might have time frames from last year to compare with it and to be able to look at that. Because I think that -- being Patricia and myself and some of the people in this room that were really pushing the On Demand service and really wanting to get that out there, that really will show the success rate of the users.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: What I can do is we just finished Q2, so I can actually do that as

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a quarterly report. Because I have to create a quarterly report for another entity. So I could do that and then so it would be July, August, and September which would be presented at the November meeting, should we have one.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: I don't want to create more work, but just in thinking about metrics that could show volume and show something that, you know, this is -- this is really a project that was difficult in the beginning that has moved to success and this would be the growth and it helps show trend on a different level that we're going to be needing to show that to be able to increase the transportation opportunities for Nashville.

>>JAMES BROWN: And is the fourth provider -- go ahead.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Mr. Chair, when I get the written recommendation to do July for Patrick's report, could you please include in there that starting with Q3 that we do a quarterly report as well?

>>PATRICK NEAZER: I'm willing to put that in there. Debbie, do you want me to put that in the draft that I send and I'm happy to loop you in on it. Do you want me to put it in there, so we want the numbers for July and we want numbers for quarter 3 as a comparison.

>>DEBBIE CHADWICK: Yes, sir. That way it will save some emails.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Right.

>>JAMES BROWN: All right any more things that you want Marilyn to do?

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: I have the hours from 2:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. where I'm only sleeping.

(Laughter)

>>WALTER SEARCY: One more to fill up.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Yes, Mr. Neazer.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: This is not for Marilyn but it is an MTA question which I think you cover. This one is a hard one for me because I just don't know and I know that's scary for people to admit but I just don't know. We are charged with talking about persons with disabilities across the MTA transit system which includes, if my understanding is correct, the mission of this committee, AccessRide riders and fixed routers. I don't have any statistics on fixed routers. I don't -- now, I don't have any. You might. I don't know how many riders we've got. I have nothing -- do we have anything? Complaints? Do we -- because I know that when I asked a question when we were talking about this from the perspective of the fare rates last year, Dan reported back to me in an email that it was difficult to get some information with the special cards because the special cards don't actively reflect the population. I get that. And it's hard to get that information. And I get that. And I know that there's going to be promises of getting, and I understand the technology there's going to be promises of getting that information when we get the new fare card system. I get that. Do we have any statistics that we can start being able to -- because again, budgets come around next year. Do we have any data, complaints, ridership, throwing rocks through windows, anything. Do we have any information that sort of gives us a window, if not a number, into what our fixed rider brothers and sisters are talking about?

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>>MARILYN YOKLEY: I don't live in the fixed route world, so that's not something that I can answer with any sort of confidence.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: It's my understanding we don't have a way to get that data to you at this time.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Not even things like complaints?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Yeah, we can get the ADA complaints.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Can we get that?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Yeah.

>>JAMES BROWN: What is classified as an ADA complaint? Is there other parameters for that?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Are you talked about fixed route complaints related to ADA?

>>JAMES BROWN: Yeah.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Yeah, I can provide that to you. We have a system that has that information, and I can provide those complaints for you. And any certain reason -- certain way you would like that? Not reason but like do you want -- like if it's related to service animals, would you like them in categories? Or just the complaints?

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Whatever is easiest for you because what I'm looking for is snot looking for hard numbers because I get that.

>>JAMES BROWN: Trends.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Right. Because to sit here and we are supposed to be for persons with disabilities across the system, I have no idea from something that's not in

my own brain, and that's a tough neighborhood to live in, that says what our brothers and sisters on the fixed route are talking about. We've got nothing. Or at least I've got nothing, and I hate working with nothing.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Okay.

>>SHEILA HANSEN: Hansen speaking. I am a fixed rider and probably some of those complaints came from me.

(Laughter)

>>JAMES BROWN: There you go, Sheila. We probably need to move on. It's been some good stuff here. Actually, Walter.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Yeah.

>>JAMES BROWN: Would you give us a brief update on some of the changes that occurred at the last MTA board meeting?

>>WALTER SEARCY: Well, the principal changes of course I think you've already been briefed on regarding the consolidation of routes, the elimination of routes, and the fare increases.

>>JAMES BROWN: Right.

>>WALTER SEARCY: The -- and of course at the instigation of one of our public comments, the change date was moved from August 1 which is election day to August 2.

(Laughter)

Which made a lot of sense.

>>JAMES BROWN: Right.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Quite considerate.

>>WALTER SEARCY: The menu -- menu. The agenda has been published for tomorrow's meeting and we certainly welcome any of you who can attend to please do so. And if there's anything from this meeting that you would like to bring to the entire board's attention, because my attention span is not very long, you can reiterate that to us at that time and we can consider it as a full group. That's it. That's all from me.

>>JAMES BROWN: Thanks, Mr. Searcy. So one of the things that came out of the conversation when we were talking about the fare increases was the fact that people with disabilities who use AccessRide and in many cases cannot get to the fixed route system are at somewhat of a disadvantage. So not only are many of us unemployed and live off, you know, \$700 a month Social Security, but we also don't have the same opportunity as the fixed route system. For example, if you ride the fixed route, if you ride the regular bus system, and you use it frequently, you're going to buy a monthly pass. And that monthly pass, I don't remember exactly whether it's 55, 60 bucks, something like that.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: 65, I think.

>>JAMES BROWN: And so that drastically decreases how much it's going to cost you to get around to get to work, to get to wherever you're going, grocery store, et cetera. But we don't have that option. We don't have anything like it. Not even a sniff of it. And if you look around the country you'll find I think quite a few systems, if you go and you buy 30 bus passes, you'll get a 20% discount or 30% discount. And if you buy 20, you'll get

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a little less of a discount, but the discount is still there. So I want us as a committee to look at some ways where we can help out especially those among us whose incomes are very low. When we're talking about a person living on \$700 a month, that's not a lot.

>>WALTER SEARCY: That's ouch.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yeah, it's not a lot. So is there anyone in this room who would be willing to sort of do some research, find out what other cities are doing, some pretty good low income options, and eventually bring the report to the full committee and make some recommendations for what we can endorse to help those among us who need the most help?

>>WALTER SEARCY: Here's what we're going to do, Mr. Brown.

>>JAMES BROWN: All right.

>>WALTER SEARCY: We're going to get staff, we're going to staff this question.

>>JAMES BROWN: All right.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And not put it on the backs of volunteers. We'll get staff to come up with the information that you're seeking and once you have it, what I'd like you to do is come to the board and make a specific request.

>>JAMES BROWN: Okay.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Regarding that.

>>JAMES BROWN: Perfect.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Bowen.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yes, sir.

>>GEROME BOWEN: How are we going to determine someone who makes \$700 or less?

>>JAMES BROWN: That's what we're going to research.

>>WALTER SEARCY: We don't even -- I'm looking at it more microscopically than that. We don't need to know who's making \$700 a month. What we need to know is what cities do they have initiatives and that those initiatives, what's to prevent those initiatives from being adopted here.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Now we're in the bacon.

>>WALTER SEARCY: If there's discounts being offered in Cleveland, particularly for our differently abled persons, then we need -- that needs to be presented to us and we need to then be burdened with the notion of why not adopt it, you know. If there's no reason not to adopt it, then we should adopt it.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yeah, Gerome, I think the main thing to think about is sort of finding a successful program, you know, or two throughout the country and sort of having their format, having their formula and adopting that formula, if it's something we think will be good for us.

>>GEROME BOWEN: We change the whom format, correct? Because to my understanding we're program now it has no regards about money or age as -- for qualification for AccessRide, right?

>>JAMES BROWN: It's the MTA board to decide about the budgeted. So that's not our job.

>>GEROME BOWEN: That's what I'm saying.

>>JAMES BROWN: We're here to represent and make excellent, you know, transportation for the people of Davidson County. We'll let MTA decide if it's too much money or something like that. That's their job. The mayor's tasked them with that.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And you're talking about two different --

>>JAMES BROWN: It's our job to advise.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And you guys are talking about two different monies.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Absolutely.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Bowen is talking about salaries -- income.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Income, exactly.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And Brown, you're talking about overall cost to the program. We won't worry about it because yes, whatever benefit is provided will be provided to all users.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Thank you, Mr. Searcy, you made clarification about what I was talking about.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Neazer.

>>JAMES BROWN: All right.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Mr. Searcy, I just want to piggyback on that one. I understand the distinction that you're making, being someone who's not from Nashville, the only question I've got if it's going to become a -- if it's going to become an MTA responsibility with federal regs as I read -- as I read part of regulation number 37 is it's about there

are -- there are distinct challenges with making any sort of allocations based on income. Now, I'm not saying there's not a way around that, but how do we talk frankly about legal restrictions if there are any that are tied to how MTA gets funding.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Patrick, let me reiterate again, we're not predicating our assessment on the basis of income. Income is not the basis.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Okay. Then let me shift. May I ask then what the basis would be?

>>WALTER SEARCY: Cost.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Just cost.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Yeah, cost. Can we bear the cost of the discount. That's it. Yeah.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Wilkins. James to -- and Mr. Searcy, can -- in addition to those metrics can we also look at in-house what the percentage of discount is for the fixed route. Just as another slice of comparison or, you know, if you use fixed route, if you buy the 30-day pass, this is the difference in discount and see where that differential is, you know, AccessRide doesn't have that option to have a 30-day pass discount, so the fixed route are allowed to save -- I think you said like roughly 20%, so we can get confirmation on that, too. Just to kind of add an extra page to the research, that might be a good thing to look at also.

>>WALTER SEARCY: That's actually the first page.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Gotcha.

>>WALTER SEARCY: What you're describing is the first page.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: And Cleveland will be the second page.

>>WALTER SEARCY: What Cleveland is doing regarding that.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Gotcha.

>>WALTER SEARCY: It will be a lot simpler, I pray, than we've discussed it.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: That makes sense.

>>TOM HINKSON: Hinkson. I brought that up at a previous meeting when we had CEO, my recommendation at that point since we have a shortfall of \$8.7 million and now discussing discounts which would impact on that, my recommendation at that time was to reach out to third-party private providers to -- that would provide supplemental or replacement services. For instance, there's companies called Ships or Instacart which deliver groceries to you. For every person currently on AccessRide that would have groceries delivered, that eliminates at least two trips which would be a humongous cost savings. My recommendation would be there's challenges in getting certain people access to Shipped or Instacart or similar services such as navigating the applications. I would suggest reaching out to a number of these third-party providers, offering them office space here to train any current AccessRide enrolled person to come in, learn about their offerings, get them, you know, their phone situated because I think the average cost of AccessRide is something like \$35 to WeGo whereas the service fee is very similar to the co-pay, it's about \$5. So maybe we could do some sort of a partnership where the Instacart is shipped or any other provider would lower their co-pay

to what ours is equivalent. Possibly since WeGo would be saving money by not giving two trips at an average cost of \$70 to pay directly the service cost of these third-party providers, providing that we can show that there's a revenue benefit for an expense benefit rather.

>>JAMES BROWN: I'll translate. He wants a fee Shipped account for all AccessRide users. I give that the thumbs up. It actually might work is the funny part about it.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Let me not overpromise too much.

(Laughter)

Let me say though that the person at the pay grade you want to discuss that with is Ed Oliphant. Ed is our chief financial officer and I would suggest -- my struggle is how much mobility you have but I would suggest that if there's no restrictions on that, that you minimally call him up and share some of what we just -- what we're discussing now with him. I have no clue about the third-party providers and frankly don't, you know, want to find out a whole lot about them. But it sounds interesting. And it sounds like something that if we can actually put into -- we can actually have a policy outcome from that discussion then maybe we can consider. You're absolutely right. You started by talking about an \$8.7 million hit, you know, to our budget. And that's why all the cascade of things that have negatively impacted us we've been discussing in recent weeks. So that if you -- if you're willing to do that --

>>TOM HINKSON: I can provide a proposal directly to this committee or whomever else would like.

>>WALTER SEARCY: You and Mr. Brown can collaborate on making that approach.

>>JAMES BROWN: I think a pilot program might work out well to see, you know, if it's actually saving us money and, you know, then we could, you know -- if it does come to fruition, we could take it to the MTA board and say hey look, we're projecting this does this much cost over a year, or something like that. So yeah, I think it might be an idea we can look at.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: May I -- I think that's a great idea, but one thing we do have to be mindful of, for some people that trip to the grocery store may be their only trip they get out of the house. So we have to be mindful of, that while we're making those decisions, because it is a social activity. And isolation is, you know, not always --

>>WALTER SEARCY: Excellent point.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: So that's just something to kind of think about and consider as we're --

>>TOM HINKSON: The recommendation would be as an option.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Yeah, as an option.

>>TOM HINKSON: I represent the Middle Tennessee Council of the Blind so I do represent the visual impaired community, and in my caucus, people I represent, we've had several issues where a blind person will go to a store and ask, you know, Kroger or Walmart for assistance in shopping. Sometimes they're told that that store doesn't have anybody, so they've wasted two hours of their day, go back empty-handed. I've had one of my members get mugged outside while waiting for an AccessRide. And then

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also if you're waiting in the checkout line and your AccessRide has arrived and you miss that ride home, now you're going to wait another hour, maybe your ice cream you just bought melts. So there's a lot of separate issues that can be resolved by, you know, passing this to a third-party provider and having one step delivered to you. But again, it would not be a requirement, it would be an option for people to try if they so choose and it would also, as a by-product, save a lot of money hopefully for WeGo.

>>JAMES BROWN: Valid point though. Very valid point.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And thanks for making me aware of that issue. I'm glad you particularized it more with what the actual problem on the ground is.

>>JAMES BROWN: All right.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: James?

>>JAMES BROWN: Last one, unless it's really important.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Anytime I speak. I'm joking. Maybe we need Patrick to say again, we don't know everything.

(Laughter)

>>NATASHA WILKINS: If I don't believe it, nobody else will. I want to make sure this is in order since we're talking about the discounts and things, can we bring up the idea or the suggestion of possibly waiving the process fee for the mailing of the tickets? I know that was kind of tossed around lightly, and I didn't know if this was a good time to kind of bring it up a little more heavily.

>>JAMES BROWN: Sure. Do you have more?

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>>NATASHA WILKINS: Yes in coming out of some of the public comments and conversations as things were change earlier this summer there was an idea to possibly offset some of that increase in cost for the AccessRide users to waive the \$3-- I think it's \$3.50 process fee to have our tickets mailed to us for a couple of reasons. Just as an offset, it's a nice gesture, you know. Technically the cost of the first 10 tickets would technically be the same. If you offset it by that \$3 processing fee. Secondly, that might encourage or give more people the opportunity to have their tickets mailed to them and purchase them. I know there's an issue with the whole change situation with putting in \$4 and there's going to be no more change card. If more people are able to have access to physically purchasing the AccessRide tickets, that might eliminate a lot of the quagmire in dealing with the change when it comes to the AccessRide users. It's not a lot, but it's a good will gesture and it might open up some opportunities for other riders to be able to get tickets mailed to them by offsetting that processing fee.

>>WALTER SEARCY: You're saying that or the discount?

>>NATASHA WILKINS: No.

>>WALTER SEARCY: You're saying the discount and --

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Yeah, we're shooting for the stars.

>>JAMES BROWN: Two different proposals.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Two totally different things so if one falls it doesn't collapse the other.

>>JAMES BROWN: That's the way negotiation works, right?

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>>WALTER SEARCY: This is not negotiation. You may have an opportunity to do that, but this ain't it.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Gotcha. I'm just putting it out there. Just putting it out there.

>>JAMES BROWN: Okay. All right. Let's move on. I think we're going to get done a little bit earlier than normal. I think so. I don't know how this next topic is going to explode. Has anyone been to the airport?

>>SHEILA HANSEN: Yes.

>>JAMES BROWN: How did that go recently? I know the last time we talked about let's go to the airport, let's ask them if they know where the WeGo or the AccessRide stop is and see if they know how to get us there. Any reports?

>>SHEILA HANSEN: I didn't ask -- this is Sheila Hansen speaking. I didn't ask anybody there. I just kind of followed the crowd. It was kind of near the Uber and Lyft pickup area.

>>JAMES BROWN: Right.

>>SHEILA HANSEN: There were some signs. But not everyone can read the signs.

>>JAMES BROWN: Right. Anybody else?

>>JOHN FORBES: John Forbes speaking. Exactly where is the pickup and drop-off for AccessRide at the airport? I've asked but nobody knew where it was. Is it on the third level down, the lowest level?

>>JAMES BROWN: John, it is on the second level, I do believe, right above the baggage claim. If you get in the elevator and I think go up one floor and go out the doors there

and turn to the right and walk a really long way and then you will be --

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: About two football fields.

>>PATRICK NEAZER: Run forest run.

>>JOHN FORBES: John speaking. You mean on the baggage claim level?

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: Up.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Up one. In other words on the departure level. That's one -- isn't that one step above?

>>JAMES BROWN: I think it is and it's the same as ground transportation. So all the ground transportation is going to be on that floor. And so whether that's ride-share, whether that's taxi.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Ride-share is below.

>>JAMES BROWN: I might be telling him all wrong.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Ride-share is the final floor, where rental car is.

>>JAMES BROWN: Then that must be where it is. I could have swore it said 2. So it's where the cabs are, the limos are, but you might have to go a different direction. But it's all -- if you go out the door and go to your right, that's where it's at. I've been there twice. I've asked both times and they've told me where it is. Actually one of the ladies said well, I don't know but if you ask that lady over there, she'll tell you. And so that was successful for me. Now, Christy Earheart sent me a message saying she had been injured at the airport. That a -- you know, I guess one of the stewardesses was getting the luggage out of the overhead and dropped it on her head. And then she went to go

and try to find the WeGo bus stop and was unable for anybody to tell her where it was.

So we still need some education on this issue. I'm probably, as a member and chair of the Mayor's Advisory Committee, going to approach the airport and come in and give them some training because I mean the people want to get us in the right place, right?

They don't want to lead us to the wrong place. They just don't know.

>>WALTER SEARCY: That's right.

>>JAMES BROWN: And there's also, you know, we've all met Mr. Airport guy who's tried to take us and jerk us around the airport or do something to us when we don't want it done just because we have some kind of disability. So hopefully I can also speak to Mr. Airport guy as well and educate him a little bit. If anybody -- if anybody wants to tag team that effort with me, just let me know.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: I'd love to do that.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Question, this is Bowen. One of the things that you have to be mindful of and I've been talking about this for two years, the first thing we have to find out from any organization is what do they have in play for people with disabilities and what you want to know is how many people travel a day with a disability. That's how you basically get the answer that you want. If you only have like two or three people traveling a day and when you call in to buy a ticket and you don't let them know you have a disability, then you go there and you get to the counter, when you get to the counter you say look, I have a disability they'll give you a guide. I think when you're going to the airport, because it's -- it's the beginning, you have to figure out how many

people are actually traveling a day with a disability. And then it's how you get the answer you want instead of saying well, we don't know where the WeGo drop-off place is, you know, then you have to say what do you have in place for people with disabilities? How many people a day travel. Because they can't give you an answer. Because they haven't researched it themselves. So you have to go in with the answer and the problem. Not just the problem.

>>WALTER SEARCY: You also have to -- excuse me. This is Searcy.

>>JOHN FORBES: John speaking again. Is the fixed route at one location, AccessRide at another location?

>>JAMES BROWN: It's all at the same place, John.

>>MOHAMED: James, this is Mohamed. The airport have a new terminal, a whole new terminal whereas the ground transportation is the fixed route, AccessRide they got sign which is purple sign, the sacks twosie the ride-share, but it's involved quite a distance from the baggage claim to get to the ground transportation. But airport build the brand new terminal where ground transportation is. There's information desk when you get to the information desk you can ask them for the AccessRide pickup. They will guide you to get there. But it's whole brand new different.

>>WALTER SEARCY: It is.

>>MOHAMED: Person who have walking difficulty, maybe they need to get on a wheelchair, person blind need a guide to get there. It's going to involve quite a distance from the terminal to the new terminal. We've been there quite some time to pick up

AccessRide customers, we're successful picking them up but there's everything brand new.

>>JAMES BROWN: Yeah.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: This is Patricia.

>>JAMES BROWN: If you need assistance, it's always good to get that assistance. For sure. And am I correct, everybody, in saying that the WeGo fixed route pickup is the same place as the AccessRide pickup?

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: This is Marilyn, that is correct. The one thing we don't offer our access customers going to the airport, you can get dropped off at the airline of choice for departure, so you can get dropped off at the southwest entrance or Air Alaska entrance or whichever you want. But for your pickup, for your return trip from the airport, it's at ground transportation at the same place at the fixed route.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: This is Patricia. There's a group of us that we were talking actually exactly about the issue of the airport. And it was -- there had been a conversation and it's understanding, you know, the airport is still having construction. There's construction going on at the airport and that is the reason why the -- the WeGo pickup and all that pickup of ground transportation pickup is so far away. Supposedly when they finish with the construction they're doing -- I don't know how long it's going to take, there's going to be in a more accessible way as it used to be after, you know -- on the baggage claim that you just have to cross one way or two, something like that.

That's what we were told. I don't have anything definitely about it, but since you're

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going to be going there, James, and going to be talking with people and training them, if -- depending on the time and date, I'd be glad to go with you. But that's something else we need to find out because somebody said something about the construction and then when it's done things are going to change, but we need to make sure that that's the case so people -- you know, so we are going to be -- right now people still need to know until that happens. Because it can be still one more year or two, I don't know.

>>JAMES BROWN: Based on Natasha's dialogue -- Tanesha, I'm so sorry, I did it again. Based on Tanesha's dialogue with the airport authority it's going to remain in that place, even after the new construction is over. So that will be the permanent location. Is that your understanding?

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: That is correct. I've talked to the ADA coordinators at the airport.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: That is not acceptable.

>>WALTER SEARCY: This is Searcy. One thing cannot be overemphasized. You have to get assistance. Don't try to navigate it on your own. Particularly sight-impaired people. Don't try to get in a wheel -- have them roll you in a wheelchair from --

>>JAMES BROWN: Walter, you'd be a great Mr. Airport guy. I just want you to know.

>>WALTER SEARCY: You really have to do it, because it's so remote. Not only that, but you have to cross some traffic barriers.

>>NATASHA WILKINS: Two lanes.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And sometimes they have a monitor there, sometimes they

actually have an armed -- not armed, but a security guard.

(Laughter)

A security person, a uniform is what I'm trying to say, a uniformed security person there.

But sometimes they adopt. I've been there when they don't. And I -- dealing with it in a wheelchair is hairy enough, but trying to do -- so you want to have an escort with you.

But as I say that, I can see that easily being done when you are coming back from a trip.

If you are riding public transportation or an AccessRide and you are -- now AccessRide is a little different because I think that you can actually, Marilyn correct me if I'm wrong, but you can actually get some assistance from the AccessRide driver to some degree until you can liaison with somebody from airport staff to take you to your --

>>JAMES BROWN: They can get you to the front door.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: They'll drop you off at your airline of choice or the closest entrance to your airline of choice.

>>WALTER SEARCY: Very good. So you don't have -- yeah. So that's great. How about WeGo? How about the normal surface transportation, not Access.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: I can't answer that.

>>JAMES BROWN: It's probably that same drop-off point.

>>WALTER SEARCY: It's going to be drop-off.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: If you're riding fixed bus route then it will only go to the ground transportation, to the stop, whether you're coming -- going to the airport or coming home.

>>PATRICIA VALLADARES: To drop off or pickup.

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>>MARILYN YOKLEY: But if you use Access or Access On Demand, the -- with the same-day program you --

>>WALTER SEARCY: They drop you at the departure gate.

>>MARILYN YOKLEY: Airline of your choice. And from there you can flag down a sky cap or someone like that to help you with your luggage.

>>JAMES BROWN: And I never get assistance at the airport. I might get assistance one out of every 20 times or so. If I'm like really tired. But -- so I do a pretty good job. I know our airport like the back of my hand, for the most part. And I find it much more efficient and fast if I go versus waiting on someone. But -- you know, and I never take AccessRide usually from the airport. I'm doing ride-share typically. Because I just want to get home.

(Laughter)

The reason I say that is because you have to gauge your own level, your own expectations and what you want to accomplish at the airport. So take -- take Mr. Searcy's advice. If you need that assistance, you can call ahead. You can call southwest and say, listen, I'm going to be arriving at the airport at 5:00 -- 5:00 p.m. on Thursday and I would like someone to meet me right there at the door at 5:00 p.m. And they'll pick you up and they'll take you right to your -- your airline and they'll ask you, you can tell them hey, I'm going to be in Cincinnati at 7:00, can I have someone meet me there and take me to my connecting flight or take me to the departure place. So there's all those options available. You know, so instead of us getting into funny situations

where we're really tired and we need some help, just take those options, if that's what you need. Okay?

>>GEROME BOWEN: Bowen. I'm going to say this one more time James once more and we have to go.

>>GEROME BOWEN: This is very important because I deal with the airport all the time. If you call them when you make appointment for your ticket and you tell them, you have to tell these folks that you have a disability so they have everything --

>>WALTER SEARCY: And what it is.

>>GEROME BOWEN: Right. So they can have everything ready for you. If you get to the airport and they're busy and you say okay, I'm blind, you know, that's basically on you, you know? Because, you know, everybody's busy. I'm just telling you, you have to make your own conception for yourself. You're going around the airport good and fine and dandy but I don't do it. I'm not going to be going blind from state to state.

>>JAMES BROWN: It's about your preference. I don't like people who are bugging me and pulling me around the airport.

>>WALTER SEARCY: And you have assistance, too.

>>JAMES BROWN: Not everybody does it, I don't want to say that. So it's all about your preferences and what -- we're all different. And we all want -- because it's not even -- I do things differently, it's not because I have a disability, it's just because my personality is different. And -- that's right. So guys, we got to move on because I did promise we will be done, or at least maybe a couple of minutes early. So just a few

points to note the transforming disability transportation conference, we're going to push that to the spring because the Mayor's Advisory Committee is moving towards a different sort of evolution. We are going to becoming a more of a policy driven committee. That's what the mayor's office is wanting us to go to. They think we can be most effective in that role. We're looking at getting rid of subminimum wages paid to people with disabilities in Nashville which is a good thing and so we're going to be a little bit busy doing things here. But we're going to get to that transportation conference I promise in the spring.

Not attending two consecutive meetings without letting the chair or AccessRide know, if one of our members does that, our bylaws say that you're automatically off the committee. So please let us know, okay? Because we're going to start enforcing that because it's been a little bit lax. Gerome can tell you about that, you know, as the nominating committee chair. So we want to just let everyone know that, you know, that's what our bylaws states and that's what we're going to go by. Next, don't call people names. I know I sound like I might be an elementary teacher, but if you are on our committee, please don't call people names, especially publicly. If you've got a beef with them, try and get me or somebody else and go with them and talk to that person and work things out. If you can't work things out, sometimes that happens, end. But let's not -- let's not be -- let's just please don't call people names because that's not the place for it, okay?

And that happened a little bit over the past couple of months.

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>>WALTER SEARCY: Oh, okay.

>>JAMES BROWN: Also live captioning, I want to mention that. It's something that we're doing. It's something that John asked for. And so John advocated for himself to have a better meeting, to be more productive in the meeting, and I am really, really glad he did it. And Karyn's here, let's give her a hand. She's been typing all this stuff up. (Applause).

But I'm proud of you guys, I'm proud of what you're doing, I'm proud of where we're going and the meeting is now adjourned.

>>JOHN FORBES: Oh, okay.

>>TANESHA SIMMONS: Before everybody leaves I need to see Patrick, Sheila -- Sheila's done. Jack and Bill very quickly. And Tom.

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