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# Transcript of Meeting Of Chicago Transit Authority Board

**Date:** February 11, 2026

**Case:** Chicago Transit Authority Board Meeting, In Re:

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MEETING OF CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD

Chicago, Illinois

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

10:08 a.m.

Job No.: 613724

Pages: 1 - 73

Recorded By: Brianna Bramlett

Transcript of Meeting Of Chicago Transit Authority Board  
Conducted on February 11, 2026

1 Meeting Chicago Transit Board, held at the  
2 offices of:

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CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY

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567 W Lake Street, 2nd Floor

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Chicago, Illinois 60661

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Pursuant to agreement, before Brianna Bramlett,  
13 Notary Public in and for the State of Illinois.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

- LESTER L. BARCLAY - CTA Chairman
- REV. DR. BERNARD JAKES - CTA Vice Chairman
- NORA LEERHSEN - CTA Acting President
- SISAVANH BAKER - CTA Acting General Counsel
- GEORGETTE L. GREENLEE, ESQUIRE - CTA Board Secretary
- ROSA Y. ORTIZ - CTA Board Member
- ROBERTO REQUEJO - CTA Board Member
- NEEMA JHA - CTA Board Member
- ADRIENNE BROWN, ESQUIRE - CTA
- JACK SCHULEMAN - Speaker
- PATRICIA PUENTES - Speaker
- KEITH HILL - Speaker
- MIA GARZA - Speaker
- CRITTY MOHAN - Speaker
- MR. ISRAEL - Speaker
- LAURA SALUTZMAN - Speaker

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C O N T E N T S

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Proceedings

5

E X H I B I T S

(None marked)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I'd like to call to order the meeting of the Chicago Transit Board for February 11th, 2026.

Georgette, please call the roll.

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Here.

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jakes?

DIRECTOR JAKES: Here.

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Here.

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Present.

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

DIRECTOR JHA: Here.

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay, you have five Board members present and you do have a quorum.

CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you.

Our next order of business is public comment.

Georgette?

SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay,

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1 we have a number of public comments for today.  
2 Actually, I will note for the record that our first  
3 public comment was by -- was to be given by Critty  
4 Mohan by phone. We have called Critty Mohan by  
5 phone four times and have not been able to reach  
6 the speaker. I will call Jack Schuleman.

7 Mr. Schuleman, good morning.  
8 Welcome to our Board meeting. You have three  
9 minutes to speak. We ask that you come to this  
10 table and that you speak loudly. And you will  
11 actually be timed. I'll give you a little bit of  
12 notice when your time is coming to an end. And  
13 your time starts now.

14 MR. SCHULEMAN: Great. Hello. Thank  
15 you for accepting my public comment. My name is  
16 Jack Schuleman, and I'm a resident of the  
17 Andersonville neighborhood on the border of Uptown  
18 and Edgewater, near the intersection of Foster,  
19 Clark, and Ashland, which is a major choke point  
20 for buses that I'd like to propose a fix for today.

21 So currently, Clark and Ashland and  
22 Foster are only 250 feet apart at Foster with  
23 un-timed lights. And that creates a tight jam. At  
24 this intersection, the Clark and Foster buses get

1 bottlenecked by cars trying to turn at two busy  
2 intersections that jam such a short stretch of  
3 Foster between two busy streets. And backups get  
4 even worse during bus driver changes at Foster when  
5 the Clark bus is waited -- is waiting on both sides  
6 of the intersection. So this delay slows down  
7 18,000 riders per weekday on the Clark and Foster  
8 buses and eastbound buses that go that direction  
9 from the North Park garage. Plus, the stops  
10 currently don't follow CTA service recommendations  
11 because they're both too close together and  
12 nearside, not past the stoplights at the  
13 intersection.

14           So I'd like to propose a fix for  
15 this in my area, that would have queue jumps and a  
16 bus lane on the short stretch of Foster between  
17 Ashland and Clark, laid out like this. In that  
18 spot right there. And then I would also move the  
19 stops around. I'll walk through this in a second,  
20 but just a little reconfiguration of where the  
21 stops are to fit CTA service standards, which I'll  
22 run through right now.

23           So the Clark bus stop should move  
24 to the far side, past the stoplight, so cars can

1 clear the intersection and the bus can keep moving  
2 like the CTA service standards recommend. And then  
3 I would like to consolidate the Foster bus stops to  
4 just one stop between Clark and Ashland instead of  
5 stopping before both. This only adds 300 feet of  
6 extra walking for passengers and makes it within  
7 CTA service standard guidelines of bus stops that  
8 should be between 600 and 1,300 feet apart.

9 Getting rid of those two stops before that light  
10 and consolidating it just to one stop between  
11 Ashland and Clark still keeps spacing compliant  
12 with the surrounding stops for the bus between  
13 Paulina and Glenwood.

14 So that little stretch of Foster,  
15 between those two, has about 250 feet of street  
16 meters between them. There's about half of each of  
17 that stretch on both sides that is parking meters.  
18 However, the contract of the parking meter deal  
19 with the City allows for meters to move to new  
20 locations that are comparable based on, among other  
21 things, geographic proximity. Moving the meters to  
22 be -- because you only need about 250 feet of  
23 parking meters in this because it's such a short  
24 stretch and only half of it on each side. So

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1 moving the meters to be immediately after Ashland  
2 on Foster --

3 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Ten seconds.

4 MR. SCHULEMAN: -- just in front of  
5 Ebenezer Lutheran Church and Chicago Waldorf School  
6 would be in compliance with the parking meter deal  
7 and allow this to move through. The CTA has added  
8 queue jumps like this at other choke points. I'd  
9 love to see this added to mine.

10 SECRETARY GREENLEE: That's time.

11 MR. SCHULEMAN: It's just in a journey  
12 sense. Thank you.

13 MS. LEERHSEN: Appreciate you coming  
14 today. I'd like to connect you with our chief  
15 planning innovation officer, Molly Poppy, to kind  
16 of talk more about those details. Thanks for all  
17 the details YOU shared.

18 MR. SCHULEMAN: Great.

19 MS. LEERHSEN: Thank you.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Our next public  
21 speaker is Patricia Puentes Blancas.

22 MR. BARCLAY: She's not here.

23 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Our next public  
24 speaker is Keith Hill. And you have also received,

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1 from Mr. Hill, a statement or letter from the local  
2 Union 241, Amalgamated Transit Union.

3 Good morning, Mr. Hill.

4 MR. HILL: Good morning.

5 May I start?

6 Hello, Chairmanman and Board Members.

7 I'm writing you today to seek answers and  
8 extend an olive branch. Last month, the Board  
9 announced and approved the safety plan for the CTA.  
10 I would like to shed some light on a matter that  
11 might not be widely known. The safety plan must be  
12 annually approved by a joint Committee composed of  
13 management and union representative with an equal  
14 number of votes. The safety plan that was approved  
15 by the Board did not receive a single vote from the  
16 union. I would like to provide some background  
17 information and insight into the state of this  
18 Committee.

19 In November of 2024, the union  
20 requested that -- requested disband of the  
21 Committee due to lack of progress. The request was  
22 made to disband a Committee established by a safety  
23 bill and funded by the federal government, as there  
24 were a lack of genuine concerns for safety of the

1 riders and the workers. From the inception of the  
2 Committee to the present day, there has been  
3 limited progress; more lip service than actual  
4 results. The union has not been able to influence  
5 matters that benefit the members or the riders,  
6 while the CTA has used these efforts as a facade to  
7 appear concerned and proactive or just plain old  
8 saying something to hush the union up. The  
9 smallest requests have been met with resistance or  
10 ignored altogether.

11 I must clarify that I have had some  
12 success implementing changes through other means,  
13 such as bus operation leadership and former  
14 President Carter, rather than through the Committee  
15 as which it was created to do. I could elaborate  
16 on this further, but it would require at least a  
17 month of your time. However, I am here today to  
18 propose a new approach in 2026. I'm asking that  
19 the Board consider alternative methods of  
20 communication and collaboration with the union. I  
21 am seeking inclusion and a partnership to foster  
22 mutual understanding and address the concerns of  
23 both parties.

24 With respect, I request that the

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1 Board schedule quarterly meetings with the union to  
2 address concerns, needs, and issues. The union and  
3 its members are at the front -- at the forefront of  
4 the problem of safety concerns every day. This is  
5 why we are seeking this partnership. I assure you  
6 that we are a dedicated group of individuals who  
7 genuinely care about the wellbeing of our members  
8 and the riding public. I have significant concerns  
9 regarding safety, the direction and the future of  
10 the CTA, and the morale of the workforce. However,  
11 I'm hopeful that this time, we can build a bridge  
12 to ensure that the union has inclusion and a voice  
13 to help maintain the strength of the CTA and propel  
14 it towards becoming the best transit agency in the  
15 world.

16 Please do not hesitate to contact  
17 me to collaborate on this endeavor and create a  
18 better future for all. I also attached, in here,  
19 on the first page, if you go down, right before it  
20 say the Chairman -- these are minutes from the  
21 actual joint safety Committee. If you -- it say,  
22 The Chairman suggested a separate meeting to  
23 discuss the shields and alarm. The president of  
24 ATU 241 said there is no leadership --

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1 SECRETARY GREENLEE: You're at three  
2 minutes and 15 seconds. You want to just wrap it  
3 up? I'll give you a few more seconds.

4 MR. HILL: I appreciate you. Thank you.

5 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Okay.

6 MR. HILL: -- there's no leadership  
7 here, just a lot of talking back and forth and no  
8 listening. I propose disbanding the -- the joint  
9 Committee as it is not working as intended. Even  
10 the president of 308. CTA has been telling us for  
11 over two years. It's 200 police. It's 200 police.  
12 It was actually 66 police. We -- we don't see  
13 nothing that they say and they don't -- they don't  
14 collaborate with us. We are the frontline  
15 workforce. We deal with the safety concerns. When  
16 they get on drunk, sleep, fight. What we deal with  
17 them firsthand. We are your biggest stakeholder  
18 interests. Just hear us out. Let us collaborate  
19 together and come up with a plan better than what  
20 you're doing to protect the riders and the drivers  
21 and the workers of CTA.

22 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you. I just  
23 want to make one comment. I know that you and I  
24 were supposed to meet maybe about six weeks ago and

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1 you had a family member emergency at --

2 MR. HILL: Correct.

3 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: -- at that time.

4 MR. HILL: Correct.

5 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: But, you know, while  
6 we have some restrictions as to meet with the Board  
7 and with the union, because of the open meetings  
8 that -- you can talk with any of us almost at any  
9 time because, you know, we are -- we're open to  
10 hearing what the workers have to -- to say and the  
11 representation that they have to advocate on your  
12 behalf. So our -- our doors are open. All of  
13 these -- I can speak for all these Board members.  
14 They're all interested in the safety and wellbeing  
15 of our workforce as well as the general public.

16 MR. HILL: I appreciate hearing that.  
17 Thank you. And I will do that.

18 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Our next public  
21 speaker is Mia Garza.

22 MS. GARZA: This is in regards to local  
23 241 bus operators. On January -- Wednesday,  
24 January 28th to Friday, January 30th, I got off the

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1 metro and they told me it would be a smooth  
2 connection. No -- no long waiting time for the  
3 bus. So I arrived at Lou Jones, 35th and Federal  
4 bus stop. You have to watch because cars are  
5 zooming by, okay? That's not the point. It was  
6 snowy, icy. The -- the -- the bus area was not  
7 maintained, okay? The City, the -- and the CTAs,  
8 nobody accepts responsibility for clear passage,  
9 okay? I started out on Wednesday with a cane.  
10 Come Tuesday, I have the walker due to the bad  
11 employees, okay? He came, I'm standing at the  
12 street because I can't get over the pile, and it  
13 was maybe 20 feet to the corner where an open clear  
14 street was. When he pulled up, he turned around  
15 and he stopped further away. So I'm motioning him  
16 to come around to come to the clear opening, the  
17 street. He stood there and stood there and stood  
18 there, okay? He didn't give me any indication,  
19 move yourself. Do something. You know? He didn't  
20 signal. He didn't get up, get out, and say come to  
21 -- I'm going to lower the ramp or anything, nothing.

22 So I'm standing there and standing  
23 there. He pulls off and leaves me there. Twenty  
24 minutes later, the -- the next bus comes. I'm

1 standing with a cane. They put me in more havoc  
2 than I needed to be, okay? So then, I'm -- again,  
3 I'm still standing in the street. There's no -- no  
4 shelter. There's no benches, okay? So then, when  
5 the next bus comes, she -- I'm facing the bus with  
6 my walker now, day two, and she made a narrow  
7 passage where I couldn't get through. So -- so  
8 even if she would've came out where it was a wider  
9 space, she could've kneeled the bus, okay? But  
10 neither of that happened. She -- I'm signaling her  
11 to come into the open street. And reluctant to do  
12 so, okay? So I had to maneuver myself back, wiggle  
13 my way through, and get onto the sidewalk, okay?  
14 And then she drops the -- the -- the ramp. And --  
15 but she's like this far from the curb. If she was  
16 going to pull up, she should've curbed it to the --  
17 to the curb, the bus, okay? And now I have to go  
18 through maybe this much of ice and snow.

19 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Ms. Garza --

20 MS. GARZA: And then --

21 SECRETARY GREENLEE: -- you're almost at  
22 time.

23 MS. GARZA: And then I had to rock it.  
24 I had to rock the thing. And then on the third

1 day, they -- they do the (indiscernible) in almost  
2 the same situation, and she pulls the ramp and  
3 almost hits me three times. Everything is on  
4 video. I got video and I got pictures. Something  
5 needs to be done. Policy and procedure needs to be  
6 changed.

7 MS. LEERHSEN: Ms. Garza, thank you for  
8 being here. Thank you for sharing your experience.  
9 I -- I want to connect to you. We have management  
10 in the room from operations, Dalton Bonds  
11 (phonetic), the Chief Transit Officer, and Heather  
12 (indiscernible), the Vice President of Bus  
13 Operations. You can share a little bit more about  
14 your experience and we can take it to heart.

15 MS. GARZA: I'd just like to add that  
16 the -- the Secretary Board, she's the only one that  
17 -- that felt my compassion and gave me any time.  
18 She didn't cut me off just like here I get cut off  
19 when I call -- I got three CR numbers, and then  
20 people and the bus managers, they all cut you off,  
21 they don't want to hear it just like you don't have  
22 enough time for us to hear the whole ordeal.

23 SECRETARY GREENLEE: But we're going to  
24 follow up, Ms. Garza.

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1 MS. GARZA: Yeah.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Mr. Barnes, he's --  
3 he's standing to come and meet you right now.  
4 There he is.

5 MS. GARZA: That's your members. No  
6 good members that need to be terminated.

7 SECRETARY GREENLEE: We -- our next  
8 public comment is going to be Mitty -- critty. I'm  
9 sorry. Critty Mohan who is by phone in Zoom.

10 Critty, can you hear me? Critty  
11 Mohan? Critty Mohan?

12 MS. MOHAN: Yes. Good morning.

13 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Good morning. You  
14 have three minutes.

15 MS. MOHAN: All right. Thank you.

16 SECRETARY GREENLEE: You're welcome.

17 MS. MOHAN: So good morning,  
18 (indiscernible). My name is Critty Mohan, a senior  
19 at Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire. I'm a  
20 student advocate, a participant in Plan  
21 International USA's Youth Leadership Academy, and  
22 the founder of (Indiscernible), a nonprofit that  
23 supports women and families facing hardship.

24 Thank you for the opportunity to

1 speak today about Metra equity and public transit  
2 spaces. Public transit is known as just  
3 transportation. It connects people to schools, to  
4 work, healthcare, and to opportunities, but for  
5 many riders who (indiscernible) in unexpected  
6 periods during the week can quickly become a  
7 stressful and isolated experience. (Indiscernible)  
8 products are often treated as optional, yet they  
9 are a basic biological necessity, just like soap or  
10 toilet paper in a public restroom.

11 Think about a student traveling to  
12 class, or a worker heading into a long shift, or  
13 even a caregiver balancing multiple  
14 responsibilities. Without access to essential  
15 products, riders may feel forced to leave early,  
16 miss important commitments, or navigate public  
17 spaces with discomfort and embarrassment. These  
18 are small moments individually, but collectively  
19 they shape how inclusive and supportive a transit  
20 system feels.

21 I believe CTA has an opportunity to  
22 lead with a practical special solution. For  
23 example, a small pilot program providing free  
24 natural products in select high -- high traffic

1 stations could help address this need while  
2 remaining cost-conscious and data driven. Starting  
3 with a limited rollout would allow CTA to evaluate  
4 usage, gather rider feedback, and explore  
5 partnerships with community organizations or grant  
6 programs that support public health initiatives.

7 This proposal is not about creating  
8 a large operational burden, it's about recognizing  
9 a real everyday experience of riders, and  
10 responding with dignity and care. When public  
11 infrastructure acknowledges basic human needs, it  
12 strengthens trust and shows that every rider  
13 matters. I think that public transit connects  
14 people to their future. Metra equity helps ensure  
15 that everyone can participate fully and confidently  
16 in that journey. Thank you for your time and for  
17 your commitment to serving the diverse community of  
18 Chicago.

19 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Thank you.

20 MS. LEERHSEN: Thank you. I'd like to  
21 connect the speaker with Kim Robinson, our vice  
22 president of training and workforce development,  
23 who works with high schoolers throughout the year  
24 just to learn more about the proposal that she's

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1 brought forth.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Okay.

3 MS. LEERHSEN: So we'll be reaching out  
4 with that information.

5 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Mr. Chairman, we  
6 did receive a written comment from John Paul Jones  
7 from Sustainable Inglewood Initiatives about the  
8 Series 9000 rail cars and -- and public safety. We  
9 also did receive a request to speak, but it was  
10 turned in this morning from Mr. Israel.

11 Sorry, Mr. Israel, but on -- we  
12 would just ask that next month you get it in by the  
13 day before at 10:00 a.m.

14 MR. ISRAEL: I don't have -- I have to  
15 come next month to talk to who I need to talk to.

16 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Mr. Israel?

17 MR. ISRAEL: What?

18 SECRETARY GREENLEE: We're -- we don't  
19 do that right now.

20 MR. ISRAEL: Well, you addressed me.  
21 I'm addressing you back.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: I'm not threatening  
23 you, I'm just saying that you're not allowed to  
24 speak.

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1 MR. ISRAEL: I'd like to have a cup of  
2 coffee with you. That's all I got to say. And  
3 I'll say tell Gerald Nickels to stop calling me.

4 SECRETARY GREENLEE: And Mr. Chairman,  
5 that concludes our public comments for today.

6 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you to all of  
7 our public comments. Appreciate you coming in and  
8 taking the time this morning to share your  
9 concerns. Our next item of business on the agenda  
10 is a report from our ADA Advisory Committee, which  
11 will be given by our ADA Chairmanperson, Laura  
12 Salutzman.

13 MS. SALUTZMAN: Good morning, I'm Laura  
14 Salutzman. I am the Chairman of the ADA Advisory  
15 Committee, the senior policy analyst for access  
16 living. I will be providing a summary of the ADA  
17 Advisory Committee held on January 12th, 2026.

18 The Committee could receive the  
19 construction update from Bill Mooney, Chief  
20 Infrastructure Officer on the All Stations  
21 Accessibility Program, ASAP, The Red and Purple  
22 Modernization Project is -- one station's at  
23 Lawrence (indiscernible) right now complete, and  
24 replacement benches were installed at all of the

1 stations following customer feedback. I want to  
2 reiterate my appreciation that the CTA resolved  
3 this problem.

4 Also presented was the January 5th,  
5 2026, State and Lake Elevated Station closure which  
6 is a three-year reconstruction project to make the  
7 station BDA accessible. This is a (indiscernible)  
8 project. The Committee also learned about the  
9 Western Brown Line Station Project, which includes  
10 two (indiscernible) elevators and a fully  
11 accessible buster. Line work for the rail elevator  
12 rehabilitation program will start this year and  
13 includes 16 system-wide elevator fixes. There was  
14 a discussion about other elevators and what is  
15 required for planning for future repairs.

16 David Miller from the Chicago Department  
17 of Transportation, CDOT, presented the City's new  
18 accessible pedestrian signal program. These are  
19 the signals designed to provide non-visual queues  
20 for when people can cross the street. Following  
21 the May 2025 finalized remedial plan, CDOT is  
22 retrofitting the 2,800 signalized intersections  
23 Citywide over 15 years, with 70 intersections  
24 targeted in year one.

1           Public requests are the highest  
2           priority for determining installation locations, as  
3           well as intersections near CTA stations or bus  
4           transfer points. They discussed different types of  
5           APS and figuring out what would be best for  
6           residents. The Committee discussed the importance  
7           of coordinating APS installations near transit  
8           stops and encouraged members of the public to  
9           submit requests through [www.chicagoaps.org](http://www.chicagoaps.org) or the  
10          City's 311 system, as well as they can reach out to  
11          their local alderperson. A question was raised  
12          around if installing signals could lead to  
13          reassessment of crossing times for pedestrians,  
14          particularly by hospitals.

15                 It was also mentioned that as part  
16          of the plan, CDOT has an APS Committee, and while  
17          (indiscernible) focus is on APS or CDOT, it is  
18          possible that other ADA issues may come up.  
19          Quentin Shiply Melon, traffic planner, presented on  
20          CTA's bus stop accessibility program -- bus stop  
21          accessibility improvement program. Since 2021, 300  
22          previously inaccessible bus stops have been made  
23          accessible with 115 stops upgraded in 2025 alone.  
24          The Committee discussed coordination challenges

1 with other (indiscernible) projects, and that it's  
2 extraordinarily important to retain bus stop  
3 accessibility when infrastructure changes are made.  
4 The CTA noted they are updating their guidebook on  
5 bus stops. Look forward to the updated version and  
6 hope it provides helpful guidance for CTA and other  
7 departments to use when trying to assess what is  
8 appropriate for bus stops and ensuring they are  
9 accessible.

10 A concern was raised that there  
11 have been changes to the approval process for  
12 projects funded by the bond that may affect the  
13 inaccessible stop repair program work, and then  
14 delay or reduce the number of stops made  
15 accessible. I hope that is not the case. It may  
16 be worth having proactive conversations with City  
17 council and/or CDOT to try and ensure it is not  
18 effective -- try and ensure it's not affected. I  
19 believe the community would support CDOT in that  
20 effort if it is needed.

21 Jason Neether (phonetic), Senior  
22 Manager of Strategic Planning presented the bus  
23 priority quarter study, which is exploring ways to  
24 make bus travel faster and more accessible across

1 five corridors. The Committee encouraged disabled  
2 riders to participate in the ongoing public survey  
3 to ensure accessibility considerations are  
4 reflected in the final design recommendations  
5 expected by December 2026. I hope CTA, CDOT, and  
6 IDOT can move forward, and some of the designs  
7 presented can be implemented. We are long best due  
8 having serious improvements to bus infrastructure  
9 as (indiscernible) by Acting President Leerhsen at  
10 a recent presentation.

11 Under new business, the Committee  
12 discussed the importance of ensuring accessibility  
13 improvements -- ensuring accessibility improvements  
14 continue through the Northern Illinois Transit  
15 Authority transition. The Committee encouraged CTA  
16 to clearly communicate ongoing accessibility  
17 projects and funding needs during this period to  
18 ensure that the transition process does not  
19 unintentionally haul progress the -- that CTA is  
20 making to better serve disabled riders.

21 The next Committee meeting is  
22 Monday, April 13th, 2026. We appreciate the  
23 Board's support and look forward to continued  
24 progress in addressing important accessibility

1 priorities.

2 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you. Any  
3 questions of Ms. Salutzman?

4 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes. Thank you for  
5 the report and -- and -- so I appreciate you  
6 discussing improvements in infrastructure and  
7 elevators and, you know, those physical  
8 (indiscernible) environment issues, but we know  
9 that that alone is not a solution. That needs to  
10 be paired with people who are ready and willing to  
11 support (indiscernible) comment about a terrible  
12 experience from a person with a disability.

13 And so, I wanted to know what  
14 progress are we making on that people-based  
15 approach to handling, dealing with, supporting  
16 people with disabilities. That's one thing. The  
17 other thing is sometimes the worst pop moments for  
18 people with disabilities and with reduced mobility  
19 happen when CTA, even having all those ducks in a  
20 row, both the accessible buses and accessible train  
21 station and the personnel that are really trying  
22 hard, which is the majority, to support, but they  
23 are encountering streets, sidewalks, other areas  
24 that are the responsibility of the state or the

1 City of Chicago. So how are we -- where is the  
2 forum, I guess, where these multiple players come  
3 together to respond to the needs of the disabled  
4 community?

5 MS. SALUTZMAN: First question was the  
6 people question, right? So it was my understanding  
7 and, you know, presented -- we had a presentation  
8 meeting before this one about changes maybe to  
9 training, and then I think there are some changes  
10 being made to training to try and improve some of  
11 the issues around people. I also -- there's also  
12 the safe ride specialist program that hopefully we  
13 are onBoarding that can help with certain kinds of  
14 disabilities.

15 And then there is the question of  
16 how transit ambassadors, as in the past  
17 (indiscernible), what that will look like. I think  
18 some of that could look like maybe a senior CSA  
19 program where you can have folks who are better  
20 equipped and intended to kind of last longer and  
21 were like those better benefits on (indiscernible)  
22 also means more responsibilities and more  
23 consistency around helping folks and helping  
24 disabled folks, whether that's with way-finding or

1 gap fillers.

2           And then there's also the piece  
3 where I think a -- I -- and I mentioned this I  
4 think last time of however complaints are tracked  
5 and handled, and making sure there's kind of a  
6 program evaluation on if there are consistent  
7 complaints, because maybe someone is, you know,  
8 doing something wrong and they do not realize it,  
9 but -- and there is an issue with a folks and just  
10 making sure that they kind of get that intervention  
11 and just -- you know, maybe the training changed,  
12 but I think that there is something where it's,  
13 like, if we have repeated complaints, that needs to  
14 be handled because -- I will say, like, I know  
15 folks -- usually, if you're making a complaint,  
16 that is one out of every 20 times, right? That is  
17 not -- not -- you're not doing it every time, and  
18 so it is important that, like, if they are repeated  
19 complaints, that's followed up on.

20           So that's kind of why I've wanted  
21 to look at that system and just making it as easy  
22 as possible. I will say, I think CTA makes it much  
23 easier to do that than other agencies.

24           MS. LEERHSEN: Okay. Great, thanks.

1                   DIRECTOR REQUEJO: What is the  
2 assessment of that piece -- the people piece, from  
3 your Committee? Because you're often, I would say,  
4 positive and complimentary on the infrastructure  
5 stuff.

6                   MS. SALUTZMAN: Uh-huh.

7                   DIRECTOR REQUEJO: How is the other  
8 component --

9                   MS. SALUTZMAN: Well --

10                  DIRECTOR REQUEJO: -- assessed by the  
11 Committee?

12                  MS. SALUTZMAN: You mean both the  
13 Committee and, like, my day-to-day work? You know,  
14 I always hear about the worst instance. Like,  
15 there are definitely issues. Also, there are a lot  
16 of folks who are great and there -- there are some  
17 folks where they need to improve. And, like, there  
18 are -- and I think that sometimes it's people who  
19 are not aware. Like, I think that because of when  
20 the training changes, if you have not gotten any  
21 training, that can create some issues. And, you  
22 know, there's a problem because a lot of folks  
23 don't want to file complaints or they don't think  
24 that things will happen. And so, that is why it is

1     extraordinarily important every time something  
2     happens that, one, there be an intervention.

3             And two, I think communicating back  
4     with that person so that they know that they were  
5     heard is also really important because that, like,  
6     reinforces the need to do it.

7             Yeah, I mean, I think there are  
8     agencies where I hear more issues than with the  
9     CTA, as a percentage. There's certainly problems,  
10    like -- but that -- so that's --

11            DIRECTOR REQUEJO: I -- I appreciate  
12    your kindness. I don't want compare ourselves with  
13    --

14            MS. SALUTZMAN: Yeah.

15            DIRECTOR REQUEJO: -- that. That's not  
16    the part.

17            MS. SALUTZMAN: Yeah.

18            DIRECTOR REQUEJO: To me, I hear two  
19    themes here. One is trust from folks who may not  
20    believe that their complaint is going to be heard.  
21    That's one thing. The other one, which is a  
22    recurring one, is inconsistent experiences rather  
23    than having a common kind of interaction type, and  
24    quality of the interaction. Am I summarizing

1 correctly?

2 MS. SALUTZMAN: Yeah. And, like,  
3 anecdotally, it does seem to be that sometimes  
4 there are certain stations or certain routes where  
5 there are more consistent issues and so that's why  
6 I want there to be kind of, like, an overall  
7 evaluation of, like -- that is one of the things  
8 that I've heard.

9 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Okay.

10 MS. SALUTZMAN: Another thing that came  
11 up before is if there are changes -- and this is a  
12 complicated issue, but it is something where I -- I  
13 kind of, like, want it to be reported, but if a --  
14 if there's a change to a bus stop that then makes  
15 it harder to deploy a ramp, I think it's really  
16 important that operators then report that. Or if,  
17 like, the snow is blocking it and so you can't  
18 deploy that, I -- or if there is a City vehicle  
19 parked in a bus stop and so that you would have to  
20 deploy somewhere else, like, I think it is very  
21 important that that get reported to CTA if it's not  
22 reported because then we -- that ends up -- like,  
23 that's affecting disabled people and so that's kind  
24 of another thing.

1           Yeah, there are definitely -- there  
2 are problems. Like, I think there are definitely  
3 improvements that can be made. And I think that  
4 there's a -- you know, there has to be, like,  
5 really clear communication and making sure that  
6 everyone understands, like, there is a sincere  
7 commitment on disability and that, like, you need  
8 to treat people respectfully because there are  
9 times when people are not treated, I think, with  
10 respect, and that I don't think is the intent of  
11 folks here. And so, I think it is very clear that  
12 it be understood that people need to be treated  
13 with respect.

14           MS. LEERHSEN: And I -- I would just add  
15 -- I mean, thank you, Laura, for your report and I  
16 think you see the quality of the contribution that  
17 the Committee brings to CTA from this report and  
18 how much we value this partnership. And there's  
19 definitely more we can do on training in all the  
20 aspects that Laura is talking about and we're  
21 committed to that. You know, our 2026 budget added  
22 staffing dedicated to ADA issues for this reason.  
23 There's room to grow a brochure at CTA to make sure  
24 people are targeted on these issues, because you

1 hear the complexities of it and the work involved  
2 with following up on all of these myriad issues in  
3 great number across our entire City and our service  
4 area. So we are committed to that and I'll be  
5 getting reports from the work and -- and review  
6 training around this issue throughout this year.

7 MS. SALUTZMAN: And then there was, I  
8 guess, your infrastructure question, right?

9 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes. So some, even  
10 -- even when CTA is -- has it together, both  
11 infrastructure and people --

12 MS. SALUTZMAN: Uh-huh.

13 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: In some situations  
14 that jurisdiction is not CTAs.

15 MS. SALUTZMAN: Uh-huh.

16 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: It's the City, it's  
17 the state -- whoever is the owner of the road or --

18 MS. SALUTZMAN: Uh-huh.

19 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: And so, is there a  
20 forum or what is the forum where we solve these  
21 multi-agency issues?

22 MS. SALUTZMAN: Well, that is one of the  
23 reasons you guys have so frequently heard my  
24 concerns regarding those -- those other

1 departments. You know, I think there is that CTA  
2 working. There is now a working group, which is  
3 mostly folks at CTA, but there are -- there is a  
4 representative from CDOT on dealing with -- for --  
5 on trying to address issues that riders with  
6 disabilities face.

7 I don't think that there -- but,  
8 you know, I think that there is work to be done.  
9 I'm hoping honestly that CDOT uses the APS  
10 Committee and expands it to looking at all kinds of  
11 disabilities because they do not have an equivalent  
12 Committee in their space.

13 If it -- in terms of, like, overall  
14 coordination, like, they do not have this, right?  
15 They do not -- like, they do not have an ADA  
16 Committee that works on these issues and so the --  
17 the -- I think the fix was that they present  
18 consistently to our Committee, which I think has  
19 been an improvement. So I do think that we have  
20 seen some of those coordination improvements change  
21 since -- in the last couple of years. It's not  
22 ideal.

23 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: It's four times a  
24 year.

1 MS. SALUTZMAN: Yeah.

2 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: That's it. Okay.

3 MS. SALUTZMAN: So that's -- so I would  
4 love if -- if I -- if there was a more consistent  
5 commitment on transit, and with disabilities, and  
6 dealing with some of those thorny coordination  
7 issues. I think there are folks who are committed  
8 on it and I think that there are folks who could be  
9 more committed on it than they currently are. I  
10 know with NITA there should be at least more  
11 required coordination on the IDOT side. I think  
12 you then still have to deal with the CDOT side.  
13 And, like, that's -- I mean, that's -- also gets  
14 into the bus infrastructure.

15 So I -- the -- but that is also why  
16 I think it's very important to have that guidebook  
17 improvement that -- the update to the bus  
18 guidebooks on stops to make it clear what is an  
19 inaccessible stop and what isn't an inaccessible  
20 stop so that they're very clear on what that --  
21 what that is.

22 And that when there are changes  
23 made that might make it more difficult for ramps to  
24 deploy or for people to Board, that operators

1 communicate that up the chain, and so then that can  
2 get reported. And so, then we can intervene and --  
3 you know, that means I intervene in also my day  
4 job. Like, that's fine. But I think that that's  
5 -- that's the only way some of this is addressed.

6 I guess and the other thing is for  
7 folks who have relationships with -- with the City  
8 to (indiscernible).

9 THE REPORTER: Sorry. What was that  
10 last thing you said?

11 MS. SALUTZMAN: Oh, yeah. Sorry. If  
12 there are any members who have relationships with  
13 people at the City, to -- you -- to also  
14 communicate that. That is -- that is the only way.

15 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yeah. Thank you. I  
16 know we need to move forward. Any further  
17 questions?

18 THE REPORTER: I'm good, but thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you very much.

20 MS. SALUTZMAN: Thanks.

21 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our next item of  
22 business on the agenda is our President's Report,  
23 which will be given by Acting President Nora  
24 Leerhsen.

1 MS. LEERHSEN: Thank you, Chairman and  
2 Directors. Good morning.

3 In the winter, I'd like to start by  
4 thanking our employees for managing through very  
5 unpredictable, cold, changing weather during this  
6 period. I just always like to start with that  
7 because it's a complex time, with every day  
8 presenting a new set of circumstances around our  
9 system and I want to thank the employees for their  
10 commitment to that work.

11 Notably, our ridership actually in  
12 the past three weeks is up four percent from the  
13 same three weeks in the previous year, which I  
14 think is a telling example that, despite the deep  
15 cold and the winter, people are coming to CTA  
16 continuously in increasing numbers in this year  
17 compared to last. So I want to thank everyone for  
18 all the work they do to make that happen as well.

19 So notable developments in the past  
20 few weeks around 95th Street and the request for  
21 proposals in collaboration with the Department of  
22 Planning and Development. CTA has partnered with  
23 DPD to release a request for proposals for the  
24 CTA-owned land at 95th-and-State and this RFP was

1 posted on the website earlier this week. The  
2 intention for this site is to become a mixed-use  
3 development with affordable housing, and it's a  
4 notable time to do this because this marks a year  
5 since the anniversary -- it's a year anniversary  
6 since the release of the 95th Street Corridor Plan,  
7 which was a community-led plan for equitable,  
8 transit-oriented development on the two-mile  
9 stretch of 95th Street between Halsted and Cottage  
10 Grove. So we're excited to see where this goes  
11 next and I think it's a great symbol and testament  
12 to our commitment to developing communities around  
13 our stations.

14           Also, with regards to our places  
15 and our infrastructure, we're moving forward with  
16 the installation of children's furniture in 12  
17 stations in -- at the CTA in the coming weeks.  
18 This is something I announced earlier this month,  
19 but an exciting initiative to promote children and  
20 CTA and family use of CTA, and we're excited to  
21 move that forward.

22           On January 29th, 62 individuals  
23 were celebrated at our CTA Second Chance Program  
24 completion ceremony. I delivered a keynote address

1 there and it was a moving gathering of honorees,  
2 families, friends, delegate partners and the  
3 mayor's office to recognize this program, which we  
4 are so proud of here at CTA. And this is a regular  
5 completion ceremony that we have at CTA, but I  
6 wanted to take a moment to talk about it with the  
7 Board, because the Second Chance Program has had a  
8 historic number of permanent hires in 2025. We had  
9 135 permanent hires from the program; the most  
10 we've ever had in a single year. For example, in  
11 2008, we had ten permanent hires, so we're very  
12 proud of those increasing numbers and our  
13 commitment to that program.

14 We've had eight -- over 800 permanent  
15 hires since the program has started, and the  
16 position titles range from frontline employees  
17 to managerial positions, with over 60 different  
18 titles of those positions. And I just wanted to  
19 continue to express my gratitude for all the staff  
20 that works on this program that I really feel in  
21 many respects is the soul of our agency. And we  
22 are so proud of it and its continuing growing  
23 effect.

24 On February 6th, on Rosa Parks's

1 birthday, along with CTA planning staff, I attended  
2 and spoke at an event hosted by the Active  
3 Transportation Alliance and the Transportation  
4 Equity Network that brought together planners,  
5 elected officials, and advocates to talk about bus  
6 service and improving bus street infrastructure.  
7 It showcased the work of the outreach that CTA has  
8 done for its Bus Priority Corridor Study and  
9 included a ride-along together on Western Avenue.

10           And what struck me -- many things  
11 about that event -- and it's relevant actually to  
12 what Laura just spoke about, about bus street  
13 infrastructure, but I'm really committed in keeping  
14 an eye on using the momentum of advocacy and  
15 collaboration that brought us to transit Bill to  
16 move forward with transit improvements more  
17 generally.

18           And one of the areas I see that  
19 happening most openly already is around bus street  
20 infrastructure. And I have a lot of hope that the  
21 work there, and the collaboration and partnership  
22 that was brought together in the advocacy for the  
23 Bill will result in real improvements in our bus  
24 service, in terms of the bus reinfastructure. And

1 I'm committed from a CTA perspective to the  
2 leadership and what that means to make that happen.

3 We're also at a key point in the  
4 year in the transition to NITA, of course. So I  
5 just want to recognize there's a lot of work going  
6 on in terms of working groups with the RTA. Our  
7 staff is on several different working groups  
8 talking about different categories and a smooth  
9 transition to this new oversight Board and -- and  
10 the collaboration between agencies.

11 My hope is that you also witnessed  
12 as we brought the contracts forward. This month  
13 we'll continue to do this. We're highlighting,  
14 wherever appropriate, where regionalization is --  
15 is appropriate and will happen, and we will  
16 continue to push for that across many of our  
17 contracts we're looking at with fresh eyes to make  
18 sure that we are looking at how it will be seen  
19 under NITA, where we can collaborate more deeply  
20 with Metra and Pace to make initiatives happen in a  
21 regional way. And I think it's an exciting time  
22 for our staff with the skill that they have, to  
23 take those measures and look at our work in that  
24 new way.

1                   And in closing, I would just  
2 recognize Black History Month. And CTA is  
3 conducting a series of events, as it has in past  
4 years, to celebrate this month throughout the  
5 agency, including Spirit Day celebrations, music,  
6 cooking demonstrations featuring chefs from  
7 throughout the region. And we'll be closing out  
8 the month with a panel with Sherman Dillard Thomas,  
9 which we're very excited about at CTA as well. So  
10 I want to thank everyone for the work on those  
11 efforts to make that an exciting month at CTA as  
12 well.

13                   And that concludes my remarks,  
14 Chairman.

15                   CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you Ms.  
16 Leerhsen, for your report.

17                   I want to begin by commending the  
18 team for great work during the recent stretch of  
19 severe cold weather. During that time of extreme  
20 weather conditions, our employees did not pause and  
21 neither did our service. Operators, maintenance  
22 crews, supervisors, support staff showed up in  
23 difficult conditions to keep the City moving. And  
24 this is not just a one-time event. The team

1 extensively prepares our systems to continue  
2 service for winter conditions every year. That  
3 consistency matters to our riders, and on behalf of  
4 the Board, I want to extend my appreciation to the  
5 entire team, especially our frontline and  
6 operational teams, for their efforts to make that  
7 possible.

8 In my briefing, I was encouraged to  
9 hear about our updated approach to counting  
10 ridership by incorporating rides not reflected at  
11 the fair box. My understanding is that this  
12 approach is consistent with current industry  
13 practices by other transit agencies. Having a  
14 methodology that would accurately reflect how our  
15 service is being used is important, not only for  
16 transparency, but for decision making. Good policy  
17 begins with good data, and by improving how we  
18 measure ridership, we are strengthening our ability  
19 to make sound decisions as a Board.

20 I want to address the transition  
21 process that is underway in light of our new NITA  
22 legislation. As you know, I had an opportunity to  
23 attend the meeting with the governor's office and  
24 the service Board and look to partnering with them

1 to ensure a smooth transition period when the law  
2 becomes effective. At the same time, I expressed  
3 that in that meeting and will continue to emphasize  
4 that it is essential that this regional process  
5 prioritizes the security concerns of our riders.

6 During the legislative process,  
7 security concerns were often cited as one of the  
8 main purposes for establishing this new government  
9 structure. Our riders expect that the new  
10 structure and the transit funding attached to the  
11 legislation will address issues most pressing to  
12 them.

13 I won't be satisfied until riders  
14 on CTA feel as safe as riders on Metra and Pace.  
15 As the service Boards move forward, a more  
16 regionalized government structure and align certain  
17 administrative functions. We are a region -- as a  
18 region, should be equally intentional about  
19 aligning around the safety concerns of our riders.  
20 If we think regionally about governance, we must  
21 also act regionally on security as well. You heard  
22 President Hill this morning express concerns about  
23 safety and security for the rank and file here, and  
24 so we're equally concerned about the safety and

1 security of our riders and our employees. If the  
2 goal is for our riders to experience this system as  
3 one network, they deserve a coordinated, unified  
4 response to the issues that matter most to them.

5 Before I open the floor to my  
6 colleagues, I do have a question regarding new  
7 ridership counts and the methodology, and how we're  
8 going to implement that. I think that's very  
9 important. But equally, I'm concerned about the  
10 issue that was raised with -- by President Hill in  
11 terms of the involvement of the safety plan and  
12 what that actually entailed. Because it sounded  
13 like, from listening to him, that the union was not  
14 a part of that process, so I would like some  
15 insight to that as well. If you could just address  
16 those concerns, and then I'll open the floor to my  
17 colleagues for other comments.

18 MS. LEERHSEN: Sure. I'll let Molly  
19 speak to the ridership question, but absolutely  
20 hear President Hill about his concerns about the  
21 effectiveness and quality of the discussion in the  
22 Joint Labor Safety Committee. That has been a  
23 focus of ours. They were involved in the  
24 Committee, but as you heard, he -- he has

1 dissatisfaction with the quality of the  
2 conversations and the -- the aspect that has been  
3 turned around back to him. We will absolutely  
4 remain focused on that. I've had a lot of  
5 conversation with him about that and will continue  
6 to remain focused.

7           It is my hope that this focus on  
8 safety and security more broadly will produce  
9 enhanced aspects across many stakeholders in terms  
10 of what they're looking to see from CTA. And --  
11 and I'm committed to that and will continue to stay  
12 committed to that. And we can continue to give the  
13 Board updates on that Committee and the outputs of  
14 it and the discussions there. It's -- it's one  
15 aspect of our discussion about security across the  
16 Board.

17           MS. POPPY: So Molly Poppy, chief  
18 planning and innovation officer. On the ridership  
19 piece, starting with the January 2026 Ridership  
20 Report, we will be including an update for unpaid  
21 rides, and it will be reflected across branch level  
22 -- excuse me -- for -- for rail. And then we will  
23 have a -- a factor for bus that will both show a  
24 bus-wide number as well as route specific. So that

1 will be reflected, and then we're going to go back  
2 and update all of 2025 as well with the same  
3 methodology, so that we make sure that we are doing  
4 more than apples to apples comparisons. So that  
5 you will see the 2025 ridership reports will be  
6 updated as well as the 2026 report, which typically  
7 is posted in the next couple of weeks. And then  
8 going forward, we will have that -- have that as  
9 well.

10 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you.

11 MS. POPPY: Okay.

12 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Are there other  
13 questions from members of the Board? Comments?

14 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: I wanted to build on  
15 the Chairmanman's comments and concerns around  
16 relationships with our unions. I think -- I think  
17 now, two or three times situations like this where  
18 we hear them come here, address us, ask for  
19 meetings with us or more of a relationship. And  
20 what we have right now is just this -- this -- most  
21 of the interactions are disappointment, concerns,  
22 et cetera. So I do want to -- I encourage you all  
23 to find a way for us to have more of a relationship  
24 and an ongoing one where it's not just that. It's

1 also opportunities for positive feedback and  
2 understanding better. So that's -- that's one of  
3 the other things.

4 On the data assessment, just to  
5 make sure that the public understands, we -- sounds  
6 like we have been undercounting the people who use  
7 our system for a very long time; is that correct,  
8 that rezone for --

9 MS. POPPY: It hasn't -- so, we have  
10 had, and we've always had, a level of model data  
11 that reflects unpaid rides. So that has been true  
12 since the beginning of, really, we started doing  
13 ridership reports and reporting ridership data, so  
14 for many, many years. As we move forward with new  
15 Farebox, with the new (indiscernible) and Farebox  
16 that we now have installed, and we've started to  
17 look at how our automatic passenger counters match  
18 with what the Farebox is reporting as well as  
19 Ventra taps, we've noticed that delta has grown.  
20 And so, the team really spent the last year looking  
21 at the automatic passenger counters, modeling data,  
22 and understanding where that gap has occurred.

23 And so, we've always counted unpaid  
24 rides, we just didn't count -- we just were -- were

1 missing some of them, especially as we moved to the  
2 new Farebox. So I would say we've always counted  
3 it, it's better now and we're better reflecting all  
4 of the unpaid rides that we have on the system.  
5 And I know it's something we talked about with you,  
6 Director, and others, is unpaid rides come in lots  
7 of different ways. It is not just necessarily  
8 someone not wanting to pay. There's individuals  
9 who may not be able to pay. It may be the Ventra  
10 equipment or Farebox equipment is down and they're  
11 unable to pay. So there's a lot of different  
12 reasonings for this.

13           But on -- where we sat and I -- and  
14 where I know the Board has agreed, it is most  
15 important for us to count all the rides. It is  
16 most important that our service and what we are  
17 showing is reflective of all the ridership that we  
18 have. And just to be frank, we've used the  
19 automatic passenger counters, that's how we plan  
20 service, so that's how we have planned where we  
21 need to add more service for crowding and things  
22 like that. And so, these reports, really, that  
23 we're showing publicly and is -- is verified by  
24 NTD, which is the federal standard for data

1 reporting will -- will reflect these  
2 (indiscernible).

3 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So as a result, we're  
4 going to see a jump in ridership that includes this  
5 ride that we were not counting before, that were --

6 MS. POPPY: Yes.

7 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: -- unpaid for a  
8 variety of reasons. That may trigger new data,  
9 often triggers responses to new data. So how are  
10 we preparing for the day after publicizing more  
11 widely that there's X percent of rides that are not  
12 being paid?

13 MS. POPPY: Yeah. So we have a  
14 methodology, how we explain all of our methodology  
15 for how we do ridership counts. We are going  
16 through a process now of updating that so that that  
17 methodology is clearly defined. So when we are  
18 posting the ridership reports, we will make the  
19 updates and make that update to rider methodology  
20 and communicate that. We're also looking to see  
21 where we can go out in forums and talk more about  
22 the methodology. I will say our team, the planning  
23 innovation team, has had a lot of success when we  
24 talk about what we did around ghost buses and

1 GTFS-RT.

2           People really like to look under  
3 the hood and see how we're doing things. So we're  
4 also making sure that the folks that did the really  
5 hard work, because it certainly was a team of folks  
6 that did hard work and -- and our data analysts,  
7 and making sure that they're able to go and talk  
8 about, in detail, how they've done the reporting,  
9 how they got to this. And I think that's also  
10 really key to all of this, that is not just we put  
11 numbers out and have some -- some words on paper  
12 about how we did the methodology. That we also  
13 really talk through it and answer questions,  
14 especially for those folks who are interested. So  
15 we'll have a -- a transparent posting online, and  
16 then we're going to also look to get those folks  
17 out to talk more about it.

18           DIRECTOR REQUEJO: And is this one of  
19 those things that are part of the conversation with  
20 RTA and agencies to regionalize and make sure that  
21 we all keep similar standards for (indiscernible)?

22           MS. POPPY: Yeah. There's going to be  
23 different standards because we all -- we operate  
24 differently and we -- passengers pay differently.

1 Metra does do a model of data already, right,  
2 because they do visual verification of visual  
3 ticketing. So they don't have a tap. So they  
4 don't have a way to do the counts the way that we  
5 do. So they have a different modeling that they  
6 do. Similarly, Pace also has different modeling as  
7 well. But we have had conversations with them and  
8 we've been talking with the RTA, doing a followup  
9 conversation with the RTA, actually on Friday, to  
10 continue to talk through this with them.

11 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Great. Thanks for  
12 that. And before you leave --

13 MS. POPPY: Yeah.

14 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: -- this question for  
15 Nora maybe also --

16 MS. LEERHSEN: Okay.

17 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: -- to elaborate.  
18 You're really -- you're doing -- doing a great job  
19 of amplifying the reality of our bus infrastructure  
20 situation and that we are (indiscernible) in  
21 comparison with other cities.

22 How many miles do we have, like, 13  
23 or something like that?

24 MS. POPPY: That's right. It's --

1 MS. LEERHSEN: Yeah.

2 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: I -- I know we have  
3 less than Indianapolis, for instance.

4 MS. LEERHSEN: Yeah.

5 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: No disrespect, but  
6 you know, the size matters here. So I guess the  
7 question is, I haven't seen a lot of progress as a  
8 bus rider. And so, how are we, what are some signs  
9 of progress that are telling us this is actually  
10 going to happen?

11 Because the other thing is, I see a  
12 lot of additional train stations being in the  
13 pipeline for unfortunate reasons. But for the --  
14 so the bus is going to be -- it has to be it in the  
15 short term. What are some of those things that we  
16 should be looking forward to as riders?

17 MS. LEERHSEN: Yeah, I'll let Molly kind  
18 of talk about the next steps in our bus planning,  
19 priority course studies and bus vision, et cetera.  
20 I'd say from my perspective, the progress, as I  
21 mentioned, is that I -- I do see a real, tangible,  
22 strong advocate community around this issue. That  
23 has been moving -- moved from the transit fiscal  
24 cliff to this issue as a very primary focus.

1 You'll see it's the focus of the Second City Safe  
2 Street Show, so that same comedy show that was  
3 uplifting and socializing issues around street  
4 infrastructure or the transit cliff in the -- in  
5 the fall has now taken on street infrastructure as  
6 a focus, for example. And I -- I am really proud  
7 and interested in our partnership with the advocacy  
8 community in a new way, and I really want to see  
9 CTA produce actual, tangible results with them in  
10 terms of raising awareness.

11 I think the resistance to street  
12 infrastructure is often, you know, multifold from  
13 the business community and -- and communities. And  
14 that type of advocacy and uplifting the issue is a  
15 real, tangible thing that can change the narrative  
16 on this. So that's my first focus, currently. I  
17 think from a leadership perspective, it's working  
18 with CDOT and working with the leadership at CDOT  
19 to have a top-down approach to looking at these  
20 issues in -- in a new way, in a more committed way.  
21 And I'm committed to that as well from a City and  
22 CDOT perspective.

23 I think those two things combined,  
24 it's my hope that they will uplift the work that's

1 been going on for years and is continuing to go on.  
2 I'm going to let Molly talk about it, but making it  
3 actually translate into real change for riders.

4 MS. POPPY: So some of the -- the key  
5 areas that you will see in 2026 and continuing it  
6 through the next couple of years, there is \$13  
7 million that we have for bus priority zones. So  
8 those are pinch points where we see, like this  
9 gentleman talked about, there's just specific  
10 intersections that we see slow-downs. And so, what  
11 we are able to do with this 13 million, we've  
12 identified really -- excuse me -- beyond what 13  
13 million will fund, but we've identified eight to  
14 ten different quarters that we can start to make  
15 investments in, that will address pinch points.

16 So that will be bus boarding islands,  
17 that'll be sort of your small sections of  
18 dedicated bus lanes around a bus stop so that we  
19 can get through the intersection, also allowing us  
20 not to have to pull out of traffic to pick up a  
21 passenger and pull back in. That's a lot of the  
22 ways that we slow down. So bus priority zones is  
23 something that we have started to do some  
24 investments on. You see it on 79th Street, Halsted

1 and Chicago Avenue and Western. So we're expanding  
2 on those corridors as well and also looking to --  
3 to other corridors throughout the City.

4 And then on top of that, we're also  
5 moving forward with our transit signal priority  
6 plan. So this is not necessarily infrastructure  
7 that is visible to the customer always. They don't  
8 always see, you know, a TSP. But TSP allows us to,  
9 as a bus is approaching a streetlight, to get a  
10 longer green or to get green sooner, to allow us to  
11 move through the intersection. This has been a  
12 really good partnership that we've had with CDOT.  
13 We have a partner there that is not only interested  
14 in doing specific corridors, so we've done Ashland  
15 and we've done Western. We've only done Ashland  
16 after Urban Park. So I know Foster is the -- we  
17 need to go a little bit further north to address  
18 some of those other issues, but we have TSP on a  
19 good section of Ashland.

20 We're also working on a centralized  
21 TSP plan, so that it is not just corridor specific  
22 but could be all over the City. So we could be  
23 really dynamic in how we would deploy and utilize  
24 bus -- bus signal timing to get our buses to move

1 faster.

2 And then the bus corridor plan.

3 The bus quarter plan -- excuse me -- that is a long  
4 term project for bus infrastructure. That is  
5 something that talks about addressing, you know,  
6 whole entire swaths of -- of Western Avenue,  
7 Halsted -- or not Halsted -- excuse me -- Fullerton  
8 and a couple others. So we see the BPZs as the bus  
9 priority zones, starting to make that investment  
10 now. Putting those in place to start improving bus  
11 speeds and bus priority while we continue to plan  
12 for these longer term investments.

13 What we have found, if you look at  
14 like Western Avenue, for example, you have a fair  
15 amount of continuous bus lanes with the bus bump  
16 outs and the other dedicated bus lanes at the  
17 intersections that we've been able to get over time  
18 with BPZs. We kind of see the BPZs build upon each  
19 other and create some more continuous corridors.  
20 We saw that also on Chicago Avenue. When the  
21 Chicago Avenue bridge finally opens up, we will  
22 have four miles of dedicated bus lanes on Chicago  
23 Avenue, and Chicago is our busiest -- busiest or  
24 second-busiest route, sort of, depending on the day.

1           So we -- the BPZs we continue to do  
2     and -- and see that as sort of a midterm that  
3     allows us to really build towards what is in the  
4     bus priority. Which is that, you know, 13 miles of  
5     dedicated bus lanes, LoopLink style bus stops that  
6     you see downtown. And that is going to take time.  
7     We -- we will complete the planning this year, and  
8     then it will take another couple of years to  
9     identify funding, do design and engineering, and  
10    implementation. But we've learned lessons from  
11    Ashland. I'm not going to lie, we -- we had  
12    challenges with Ashland when we looked at that many  
13    years ago. And I think being able to show the bus  
14    priority zones and how it improves bus speeds and  
15    doesn't have a negative impact on vehicles, I think  
16    has been really helpful as we start to then make  
17    the -- the connection to we can have longer  
18    dedicated bus infrastructure.

19           Sorry, Director Requejo. That was  
20    a very long answer. I (crosstalk).

21           DIRECTOR REQUEJO: No, I appreciate what  
22    the detail. And I -- I want to encourage everyone  
23    to really make this a priority. And I know some of  
24    these things are invisible but we just saw that a

1 social media video on changing one stop, a bus  
2 stop, and adding some technology gathered one  
3 million views, right?

4 MS. POPPY: Yep.

5 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So for those  
6 invisible things, it's important to communicate to  
7 the public too, and tell them, here's another thing  
8 for you and get people excited about it. Because  
9 advocates are very important and critical. The  
10 best advocates are going to be always the riders  
11 pushing for this. And then I'll say, for these  
12 improvements, I know they are long term, I know  
13 they're complicated, but people need these  
14 yesterday. People need this improvement yesterday.

15 When COVID hit, there was a bunch  
16 of pop up --

17 MS. POPPY: Yes.

18 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: -- things that we  
19 did, and we didn't wait because there was a crisis  
20 there. So I would love to revisit what can we pop  
21 here in the short term that doesn't require the  
22 bureaucracy and all the negotiations, and can start  
23 demonstrating and proving that these things are  
24 actually good for everybody including the business

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1 community? So just that.

2 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I know we have some  
3 time constraints so, anyone else? Okay. Thank you  
4 Ms. Leerhsen for your report.

5 Our next order of business is the  
6 approval of the minutes of the regular Board  
7 meeting of January 14th, 2026. May I have a motion  
8 to approve?

9 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So moved.

10 MS. JHA: Second.

11 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
12 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha. The  
13 minutes from the January 14th, 2026 Board meeting  
14 be approved as submitted. We'll take a roll call  
15 vote.

16 Director Jha?

17 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

18 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

19 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

21 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

23 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

24 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jakes?

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1 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Motion passes.

3 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our next item on the  
4 agenda is executive session. Counsel Baker, it's  
5 my understanding that today we have an executive  
6 session?

7 MS. BAKER: That's correct, Chairman  
8 Barclay. There will be an executive session today,  
9 pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS  
10 120 Section 2C, 11 and 21. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I will now entertain  
12 a motion to recess into executive sessions for the  
13 reasons stated by Counsel.

14 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So moved.

15 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

16 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
17 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha that the  
18 Board move into executive session. We'll take a  
19 roll call vote.

20 Director Jha?

21 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

23 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

24 MS. GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

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1 MS. ORTIZ: Yes.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

3 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

4 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jakes?

5 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

6 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Motion passes.

7 (A RECESS WAS TAKEN.)

8 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I will now entertain  
9 a motion to return to open session.

10 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So moved.

11 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

12 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
13 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha that the  
14 Board return to open session. We'll take a roll  
15 call vote.

16 Director Jakes?

17 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

18 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

19 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

21 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

23 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

24 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

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1 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Motion passes.

3 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: May I please have a  
4 motion to approve the closed session minutes for  
5 January 14th, 2026?

6 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Moved.

7 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

8 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
9 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha to  
10 approve the closed session minutes for January  
11 14th, 2026. We'll take a roll call vote.

12 Director Jakes?

13 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

14 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

15 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

16 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

17 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

18 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

19 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

21 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Motion passes.

23 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: We will now address  
24 Board Agenda Item 7, Board Matters. Georgette, do

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1 we have any Board matters today?

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Mr. Chairman, there  
3 are two Board matters for consideration today. The  
4 first is to approve an ordinance appointing Sonja  
5 Noble, Assistant Treasurer of the Chicago Transit  
6 Authority.

7 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: May I please have a  
8 motion to approve the ordinance appointing --  
9 appointing Sonja Noble as the assistant treasurer  
10 of the Chicago Transit Authority?

11 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So moved.

12 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

13 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
14 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha that  
15 Sonja Noble be appointed assistant treasurer of the  
16 Chicago Transit Authority. We will take a roll  
17 call vote.

18 Director Jakes?

19 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

21 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

23 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

24 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

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1 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

3 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

4 SECRETARY GREENLEE: The motion passes.

5 Chairman Barclay, the second Board matter for today  
6 is to approve an ordinance appointing an alternate  
7 to the Board of trustees of the retirement plan of  
8 the Chicago Transit Authority employees.

9 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: May I please have a  
10 motion to approve an ordinance appointing an  
11 alternate to the Board of trustees of the  
12 retirement plan for the Chicago Transit Authority  
13 employees?

14 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So moved.

15 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

16 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
17 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha to  
18 approve an ordinance appointing an alternate to the  
19 Board of trustees of the retirement plan of the  
20 Chicago Transit Authority employees. We'll take a  
21 roll call vote.

22 Director Jakes?

23 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

24 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

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1 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

3 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

4 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

5 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

6 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

7 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

8 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Motion passes.

9 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our next order of  
10 business is a report from the Committee on finance,  
11 audit, and budget.

12 DIRECTOR JAKES: The Committee met  
13 earlier this morning and approved the February  
14 11th, 2026, Committee minutes and reviewed the  
15 finance report. The Committee reviewed the  
16 following two ordinances. Review of an ordinance  
17 authorizing a first amendment to the sublease with  
18 National Able Network, Inc. for space located at  
19 567 West Lake Street, Chicago. And review of an  
20 ordinance authorizing an assignment, assumption,  
21 and amendment to the amended and restated easement  
22 agreement, the property located at 1801 West Grace  
23 Street in Chicago.

24 The Committee also reviewed 13 contracts.

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1 The Committee placed the two ordinances and 13  
2 contracts on the omnibus. The Committee approved  
3 and recommended for Board approval two ordinances  
4 and 13 contracts. This concludes the report of  
5 finance, audit, and budget.

6 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: I will now entertain  
7 a motion to approve the omnibus.

8 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Moved.

9 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

10 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
11 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha, that  
12 the omnibus be approved. We'll take a roll call  
13 vote.

14 Director Jakes?

15 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

16 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

17 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

18 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

19 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

21 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

23 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

24 SECRETARY GREENLEE: The motion passes.

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1 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our next order of  
2 business is the construction report, which we have  
3 deferred to next month.

4 SECRETARY GREENLEE: May we have a  
5 motion to amend the agenda to defer the  
6 construction report to next month?

7 DIRECTOR JAKES: So moved.

8 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

9 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
10 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha to amend  
11 the agenda to defer the construction report to next  
12 month. We'll take a roll call vote.

13 Director Jakes?

14 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

15 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

16 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

17 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

18 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

19 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

20 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

21 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

22 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

23 SECRETARY GREENLEE: The motion passes.

24 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Our final order of

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1 business is new business. Georgette, is there any  
2 new business?

3 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay,  
4 there's no new business, but Sonja Noble did just  
5 enter the Boardroom and we'd like to say  
6 congratulations.

7 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Since there is no  
8 further business to come before the Board, may I  
9 have a motion to adjourn the Chicago Transit Board  
10 meeting of February 11th, 2026?

11 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: So moved.

12 DIRECTOR JHA: Second.

13 SECRETARY GREENLEE: It's been moved by  
14 Director Requejo, seconded by Director Jha that the  
15 meeting be adjourned. We'll take a roll call vote.

16 Director Jakes?

17 DIRECTOR JAKES: Yes.

18 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Chairman Barclay?

19 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Yes.

20 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Ortiz?

21 DIRECTOR ORTIZ: Yes.

22 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Requejo?

23 DIRECTOR REQUEJO: Yes.

24 SECRETARY GREENLEE: Director Jha?

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1 DIRECTOR JHA: Yes.

2 SECRETARY GREENLEE: The motion passes.

3 CHAIRMAN BARCLAY: Thank you.

4 (Off the record at 12:44 p.m.)

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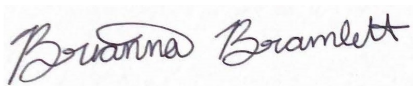
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1 CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER - NOTARY PUBLIC

2 I, Brianna Bramlett, the officer before  
3 whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do hereby  
4 certify that any witness(es) in the foregoing  
5 proceedings were fully sworn; that the proceedings  
6 were recorded by me and thereafter reduced to  
7 typewriting by a qualified transcriptionist; that  
8 said digital audio recording of said proceedings  
9 are a true and accurate record to the best of my  
10 knowledge, skills, and ability; and that I am  
11 neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by  
12 any of the parties to this case and have no  
13 interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

14

15 

16

17 BRIANNA BRAMLETT, NOTARY PUBLIC

18 FOR THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

19 February 18, 2026

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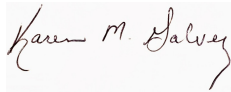
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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, Karen M. Galvez, do hereby certify that this transcript was prepared from the digital audio recording of the foregoing proceeding; that said proceedings were reduced to typewriting under my supervision; that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings to the best of my knowledge, skills, and ability; and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.



---

KAREN M. GALVEZ  
PLANET DEPOS, LLC  
February 18, 2026

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