



Deposition of:
Regular Monthly Board Meeting

March 25, 2021

In the Matter of:
SEPTA- Board Meeting

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1 SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA TRANSPORTATION
2 AUTHORITY
3 REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

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8 March 25, 2021

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15 3:00 P.M.

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22 VERITEXT LEGAL SOLUTIONS, LLC
23 MID-ATLANTIC REGION
 1801 Market Street - Suite 1800
24 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT IN THE BOARDROOM:

2

Pasquale T. Deon, Sr., Chairman
3 Honorable Kenneth Lawrence, Jr., Vice Chairman
Thomas Jay Ellis, Esquire

4

5 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT ON THE WEBEX:

6

Thomas E. Babcock
Michael A. Carroll, P.E.
7 John F. Cordisco, Esquire
Mark H. Dambly
8 Robert D. Fox, Esquire
Kenneth L. Johnson, P.E.
9 Obra Kernodle, IV
William J. Leonard, Esquire

10

Deborah Mahler
Esteban Vera, Jr.

11

Honorable Martina White

12

STAFF PRESENT IN THE BOARDROOM:

13

Leslie S. Richards, General Manager
14 Richard G. Burnfield, Deputy General Manager
Robert L. Lund, P.E., Deputy General Manager
15 Gino Benedetti, Esquire, General Counsel
Carol R. Looby, Secretary
16 Stephanie Deiger, AGM, Employee Development
Relations
17 Jody Holton, AGM, Government & Public Affairs
Francis E. Kelly, AGM, Government & Public
18 Affairs
William Webster, AGM, Communications
19 Michael Liberi, Chief Surface Transportation
Officer

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1 CHAIRMAN DEON: Good afternoon
2 everybody.

3 The Regular Meeting of the Board
4 will now come to order. The Special
5 Meeting which was noticed has been
6 canceled.

7 We'll start off with attendance.
8 Vice Chairman Lawrence?

9 VICE CHAIRMAN LAWRENCE: Here.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Tom Babcock?

11 INAUDIBLE

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Skip Brion?

13 INAUDIBLE

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Skip?

15 NO RESPONSE

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Mike Carroll?

17 MR. CARROLL: Present.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: John Cordisco?

19 INAUDIBLE

20 THE CHAIRMAN: John?

21 INAUDIBLE

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Mark Dambly?

23 MR. DAMBLY: Present.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Tom Ellis is

1 here.

2 Robb Fox?

3 MR. FOX: Here.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Kevin Johnson?

5 MR. JOHNSON: Here.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Obra Kernodle?

7 MR. KERNODLE, IV: Here.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Bill Leonard?

9 MR. LEONARD: Here.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: No? Bill?

11 Debbie Mahler?

12 INAUDIBLE

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Esteban Vera?

14 INAUDIBLE

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Representative

16 White?

17 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Here.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Start off

19 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

20 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. All right.

22 Good afternoon. Thanks for joining us

23 today for the first Board Meeting.

24 Please note that the Board met in

1 executive session just prior to this
2 meeting to discuss legal matters.

3 Start off with, SEPTA continues
4 to face unprecedented challenges from
5 COVID-19 pandemic. We know that SEPTA is
6 critical for this region's recovery, and
7 this Board will continue to work closely
8 with staff to ensure the system is ready
9 for riders when they return.

10 We have some short-term help,
11 thanks to COVID-19 relief funds. I would
12 like to thank the Southeastern
13 Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation for
14 their continued advocacy.

15 SEPTA's dedicated workforce
16 continues to be a source of great pride
17 throughout this crisis, and I know they
18 will keep providing the essential service
19 this region needs.

20 On that note, I would like to
21 recognize an employee that's been a huge
22 part of this Authority for nearly four
23 decades, Mike Liberi.

24 MS. LOOBY: Liberi.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Mike oversees --
2 he's Italian. I see him all the time.
3 Sorry, Mike. He is a good guy. All
4 right -- all of SEPTA's bus and trolley
5 operations. He will now start his role
6 of retirement, making a true SEPTA
7 success story. He started 37 years ago
8 when he was hired as a bus driver. His
9 understanding of the rigors of that job
10 helped him as he moved into management.

11 Mike has always understood that
12 SEPTA doesn't move without the workers on
13 the front lines. He has had a huge
14 impact on everyday operation of this
15 Authority, as well as our ability to do
16 big things.

17 Mike was at the center of our
18 efforts to get people to and from the
19 Eagles Championship Parade, the
20 Democratic National Convention, the Papal
21 Visit, and the U.S. Open. When our city
22 and region had these special moments,
23 dedicated employees like Mike Liberi --
24 better, Carol?

1 MS. LOOBY: (Inaudible).

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you -- were
3 there to make sure they were a success.

4 And a heartfelt thanks. Mike
5 has been a rock for me and the Board for
6 years here. He is just a spectacular
7 employee, so we're going to miss Mike.
8 Thank you for your hard work to the
9 Authority. On behalf of the Board, we
10 wish you a happy retirement.

11 Thank you, Mike.

12 APPLAUSE

13 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Sure
14 you don't want to come back, Mike?

15 MR. LIBERI: (Inaudible).

16 THE CHAIRMAN: First item on the
17 Agenda is the approval of the February
18 25th minutes of the Regular and Annual
19 Board Meeting. These minutes have been
20 circulated. I'll entertain a motion to
21 approve the minutes.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN LAWRENCE: So
23 moved.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Second?

1 MR. ELLIS: Second.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Any comments or
3 questions?

4 NO RESPONSE

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Hearing none,
6 I'll call the question. All in favor
7 say, "aye."

8 ALL: Aye.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Minutes are
10 approved.

11 Moving to the Financial Report.
12 Mr. Burnfield?

13 MR. BURNFIELD: Thank you, Mr.
14 Chairman.

15 Revenue for the month of
16 February was \$27.7 million below budget.
17 With several snowstorms throughout the
18 month, transit ridership remained at 35
19 percent of pre-COVID levels and regional
20 rail ridership at 15 percent of pre-COVID
21 levels.

22 After the first eight months of
23 Fiscal Year 2021, revenue is \$233.3
24 million below budget.

1 Operating expenses continues to
2 be carefully managed, the expenses here
3 today are \$85.9 million below budget.

4 Federal CARES relief funding
5 continues to provide operating assistance
6 to offset these revenue shortfalls, and
7 SEPTA has been able to operate a balanced
8 budget during the fiscal year.

9 This concludes my report.

10 Thank you.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Rich.

12 I'll entertain a motion that the
13 Financial Report be received and filed.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN LAWRENCE: So
15 moved.

16 MR. ELLIS: Second.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Moved and second.
18 Any comments? Questions?

19 NO RESPONSE

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Hearing none,
21 I'll call the question. All in favor
22 say, "aye."

23 ALL: Aye.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: February's

1 Financial Report has been received and
2 filed.

3 Please note that all written
4 comments and voice mail messages have
5 been received and will be included in the
6 transcript, which will be then posted to
7 the SEPTA web site.

8 The following are comments
9 submitted via e-mail:

10 From: Eric Von Hofen.

11 Sent: Wednesday, March 24,
12 2021.

13 Time: 11:10 p.m.

14 Subject: Somerset MFL Station
15 Closure.

16 Hi Ms. Looby,

17 Hope you're enjoying this spring
18 weather. I'd like to submit this public
19 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
20 Meeting.

21 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
22 Somerset El stop and station with no
23 timeline for return, and no increase in
24 service to make up for the closure. This

1 is inconsiderate not only to riders in
2 the neighborhood, but also to all El
3 riders in all neighborhoods north of
4 Kensington.

5 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
6 management to immediately meet the
7 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, Impact
8 Service, TWU Local 234, the Philly
9 Transit Riders Union, and other advocates
10 and organizations:

11 1.) Run shuttle service between
12 Allegheny and Huntingdon. There should
13 be a shuttle bus waiting for riders
14 getting off every single train at both
15 stops.

16 2.) Publicly announce a
17 reopening date for Somerset.

18 3.) Safe conditions for the
19 SEPTA riders and workers by ensuring an
20 environment free of syringes and human
21 waste.

22 4.) Increase bus service on
23 Kensington Avenue.

24 Please do what is right for the

1 riders and for the Kensington community.

2 I look forward to your immediate
3 action on these demands.

4 Sincerely,

5 Eric Von Hofen

6 Philly Transit Riders Union

7 He/Him

8 - - -

9 From: John Schoen-McCullough

10 Subject: Somerset El stop
11 closure.

12 Hi there,

13 Hope you're enjoying this spring
14 weather. I'd like to submit this public
15 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
16 Meeting.

17 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
18 Somerset El stop and station with no
19 timeline for return, and no increase in
20 service to make up for the closure. This
21 is inconsiderate not only to riders in
22 the neighborhood, but also to all El
23 riders in all neighborhoods north of
24 Kensington.

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2 management to immediately meet the
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6 and organizations:

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8 Allegheny and Huntingdon. There should
9 be a shuttle bus waiting for riders
10 getting off every single train at both
11 stops.

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13 reopening date for Somerset.

14 3.) Safe conditions for the
15 SEPTA riders and workers by ensuring an
16 environment free of syringes and human
17 waste.

18 4.) Increase bus service on
19 Kensington Avenue.

20 Please do what is right for the
21 riders and for the Kensington community.

22 I look forward to your immediate
23 action on these demands.

24 Sincerely, John

1 Schoen-McCullough

2 In solidarity with the Philly
3 Transit Riders Union.

4 - - -

5 From: Sam Lifson-Neubardt.

6 Sent: Wednesday, March 24th,
7 2021

8 Time: 10:42 a.m.

9 Subject: Somerset El stop
10 closure

11 Hi Ms. Looby,

12 Hope you're enjoying this spring
13 weather. I'd like to submit this public
14 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
15 Meeting.

16 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
17 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
18 return and no increase in service to make
19 up for the closure. This is
20 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
21 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
22 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

23 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
24 management to immediately meet the

1 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
2 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
3 Transit Riders Union:

4 1.) Run shuttle service between
5 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should
6 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
7 off every single train at both stops.

8 2.) Publicly announce a
9 reopening date for Somerset.

10 3.) Maintain safe conditions
11 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
12 ensuring an environment free of syringes
13 and human waste.

14 4.) Increase bus service on
15 Kensington Avenue.

16 I look forward to your immediate
17 action on these demands.

18 Sincerely,

19 Sam Neubardt

20 Philly Transit Riders Union.

21 - - -

22 From: TD

23 Sent: Wednesday, March 24, 2021

24 Time: 10:20 a.m.

1 Subject: Somerset El stop
2 closure.

3 Hi Ms. Looby,

4 Hope you're enjoying this spring
5 weather. I'd like to submit this public
6 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
7 Meeting.

8 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
9 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
10 return and no increase in service to make
11 up for the closure. This is
12 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
13 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
14 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

15 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
16 management to immediately meet the
17 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
18 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
19 Transit Riders Union:

20 1.) Run shuttle service between
21 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should
22 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
23 off every single train at both stops.

24 2.) Publicly announce a

1 reopening date for Somerset.

2 3.) Maintain safe conditions
3 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
4 ensuring an environment free of syringes
5 and human waste.

6 4.) Increase bus service on
7 Kensington Avenue.

8 I look forward to your immediate
9 action on these demands.

10 Sincerely, .

11 Toni Dang

12 Philly Transit Riders Union

13 - - -

14 From: James Cartwright

15 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

16 Time: 10:59 p.m.

17 Subject: Somerset El stop

18 closure.

19 Hi Ms. Looby,

20 Hope you're enjoying this spring
21 weather. I'd like to submit this public
22 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
23 Meeting.

24 On March 21, SEPTA closed the

1 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
2 return and no increase in service to make
3 up for the closure. This is
4 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
5 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
6 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

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8 management to immediately meet the
9 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
10 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
11 Transit Riders Union:

12 1.) Run shuttle service between
13 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should
14 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
15 off every single train at both stops.

16 2.) Publicly announce a
17 reopening date for Somerset.

18 3.) Maintain safe conditions
19 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
20 ensuring an environment free of syringes
21 and human waste.

22 4.) Increase bus service on
23 Kensington Avenue.

24 I look forward to your immediate

1 action on these demands.

2 Sincerely,

3 James Cartwright

4 Philly Transit Riders Union

5 - - -

6 From: Luke Mills

7 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

8 Time: 8:24 p.m.

9 Subject: Somerset El stop

10 closure.

11 Hi Ms. Looby,

12 Hope you're enjoying this spring
13 weather. I'd like to submit this public
14 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
15 Meeting.

16 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
17 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
18 return and no increase in service to make
19 up for the closure. This is
20 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
21 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
22 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

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24 management to immediately meet the

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6 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
7 off every single train at both stops.

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9 reopening date for Somerset.

10 3.) Maintain safe conditions
11 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
12 ensuring an environment free of syringes
13 and human waste.

14 4.) Increase bus service on
15 Kensington Avenue.

16 I look forward to your immediate
17 action on these demands.

18 Sincerely,

19 Luke Mills

20 (860) 519-3784

21 - - -

22 From: Scot McBride

23 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

24 Time: 7:33 p.m.

1 Subject: Somerset El stop
2 closure.

3 Hi Ms. Looby,

4 Hope you're enjoying this spring
5 weather. I'd like to submit this public
6 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
7 Meeting.

8 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
9 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
10 return and no increase in service to make
11 up for the closure. This is
12 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
13 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
14 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

15 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
16 management to immediately meet the
17 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
18 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
19 Transit Riders Union:

20 1.) Run shuttle service between
21 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should
22 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
23 off every single train at both stops.

24 2.) Publicly announce a

1 reopening date for Somerset.

2 3.) Maintain safe conditions
3 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
4 ensuring an environment free of syringes
5 and human waste.

6 4.) Increase bus service on
7 Kensington Avenue.

8 I look forward to your immediate
9 action on these demands.

10 Sincerely,

11 Scott McBride

12 Philly Transit Riders Union

13 - - -

14 From: Caroline slama

15 Sent: Tuesday, March 23rd, 2021

16 Time: 7:16 p.m.

17 Subject: Somerset El stop

18 closure.

19 Hi Ms. Looby,

20 Hope you're enjoying this spring
21 weather. I'd like to submit this public
22 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
23 Meeting.

24 On March 21, SEPTA closed the

1 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
2 return and no increase in service to make
3 up for the closure. This is
4 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
5 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
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15 off every single train at both stops.

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17 reopening date for Somerset.

18 3.) Maintain safe conditions
19 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
20 ensuring an environment free of syringes
21 and human waste.

22 4.) Increase bus service on
23 Kensington Avenue.

24 I look forward to your immediate

1 action on these demands.

2 Sincerely,

3 Caroline Slama

4 Philly Transit Riders Union

5 - - -

6 From: Brooke Garcher

7 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

8 Time: 7:02 p.m.

9 Subject: Public comment -

10 Somerset El stop closure.

11 Hi Ms. Looby,

12 Hope you're enjoying this spring
13 weather. I'd like to submit this public
14 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
15 Meeting.

16 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
17 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
18 return and no increase in service to make
19 up for the closure. This is
20 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
21 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
22 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

23 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
24 management to immediately meet the

1 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
2 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
3 Transit Riders Union:

4 1.) Run shuttle service between
5 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should
6 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
7 off every single train at both stops.

8 2.) Publicly announce a
9 reopening date for Somerset.

10 3.) Maintain safe conditions
11 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
12 ensuring an environment free of syringes
13 and human waste.

14 4.) Increase bus service on
15 Kensington Avenue.

16 I look forward to your immediate
17 action on these demands.

18 Sincerely,

19 Brooke Garcher

20 Philly Transit Riders Union

21 What I'm reading: The hundred
22 years' war on Palestine by Rashid
23 Khalidi.

24 - - -

1 From: James Tosto
2 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021
3 Time: 1:16 p.m.
4 Subject: Somerset El Stop

5 Closure.

6 Hi Ms. Looby,

7 Hope you're enjoying this spring
8 weather. I'd like to submit this public
9 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
10 Meeting.

11 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
12 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
13 return and no increase in service to make
14 up for the closure. This is
15 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
16 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
17 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

18 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
19 management to immediately meet the
20 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
21 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
22 Transit Riders Union:

23 1.) Run shuttle service between
24 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should

1 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
2 off every single train at both stops.

3 2.) Publicly announce a
4 reopening date for Somerset.

5 3.) Maintain safe conditions
6 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
7 ensuring an environment free of syringes
8 and human waste.

9 4.) Increase bus service on
10 Kensington Avenue.

11 I look forward to your immediate
12 action on these demands.

13 Sincerely,

14 Janice Tosto

15 Philly Transit Riders Union

16 - - -

17 From: Kim.

18 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

19 Time: 10:55 a.m.

20 Subject: Somerset El stop

21 closure.

22 Hi Ms. Looby,

23 Hope you're enjoying this spring
24 weather. I'd like to submit this public

1 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
2 Meeting.

3 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
4 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
5 return and no increase in service to make
6 up for the closure. This is
7 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
8 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
9 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

10 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
11 management to immediately meet the
12 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
13 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
14 Transit Riders Union:

15 1.) Run shuttle service between
16 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should
17 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
18 off every single train at both stops.

19 2.) Publicly announce a
20 reopening date for Somerset.

21 3.) Maintain safe conditions
22 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
23 ensuring an environment free of syringes
24 and human waste.

1 4.) Increase bus service on
2 Kensington Avenue.

3 I look forward to your immediate
4 action on these demands.

5 Sincerely,

6 Kimberly Gordon

7 Philly Transit Riders Union

8 - - -

9 From: Katrice Cheaton

10 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

11 Time: 8:46 a.m.

12 Subject: Somerset El stop
13 closure-do better SEPTA

14 Hi Ms. Looby,

15 I'd like to submit this public
16 comment for the March 25 SEPTA Board
17 Meeting.

18 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
19 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
20 return and no increase in service to make
21 up for the closure. This is
22 inconsiderate not only for riders in the
23 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
24 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

1 SEPTA's classist behavior is
2 unacceptable. Instead of adding to the
3 problem by trying to avoid the poverty
4 and drug issues in our city by closing
5 the station. Work with Philadelphians
6 who are poor, low-income and recovering
7 drug users in Kensington to solve the
8 social issues at hand. And pay them for
9 their time and lived experience solutions
10 equitably. Don't ask them to help you
11 for free.

12 With that said, being classist
13 and discriminatory by closing the station
14 under the guise of safety, giving no
15 alternative and doing this all amid a
16 pandemic is immoral and bad for your
17 bottom line.

18 So I'm calling on the SEPTA
19 Board and management to immediately meet
20 the following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
21 services, TWU Local 234 and silly transit
22 riders union:

23 1.) Run shuttle service between
24 Allegheny and Huntingdon. There should

1 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
2 off every single train at both stops.

3 2.) Publicly announce a
4 reopening date for Somerset.

5 3.) Maintain safe conditions
6 for the SEPTA riders and workers by
7 ensuring an environment free of syringes
8 and human waste.

9 4.) Increase bus service on
10 Kensington Avenue.

11 I look forward to your immediate
12 action on these demands.

13 Sincerely,

14 Katrice Cheaton,

15 LifeLong Philadelphian and SEPTA
16 customer

17 Philly Transit Riders Union

18 - - -

19 From: Lindsay McCormick.

20 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

21 Time: 2:23 a.m.

22 Subject: Somerset El stop
23 closure.

24 Hi Ms. Looby,

1 Hope you're enjoying the spring
2 weather. I'd like to submit this public
3 comment for the March 25 SEPTA Board
4 Meeting.

5 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
6 Somerset El stop with no timeline for
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8 up for the closure. This is
9 inconsiderate not only to riders in the
10 neighborhood, but also to all El riders
11 in all neighborhoods north of Kensington.

12 I'm calling on SEPTA Board and
13 management to immediately meet the
14 following asks of NKCDC, HACE, impact
15 services, TWU Local 234, and the Philly
16 Transit Riders Union:

17 1.) Run shuttle service between
18 Allegheny ask Huntingdon. There should
19 be a shuttle waiting for riders getting
20 off every single train at both stops.

21 2.) Publicly announce a
22 reopening date for Somerset.

23 3.) Maintain safe conditions
24 for the SEPTA riders and workers by

1 ensuring an environment free of syringes
2 and human waste.

3 4.) Increase bus service on
4 Kensington Avenue.

5 I look forward to your immediate
6 action on these demands.

7 Sincerely,

8 Lindsay McCormick

9 Philly Transit Riders Union

10 - - -

11 From: Duncan Gromko

12 Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021

13 Time: 12:43 p.m.

14 Subject: Somerset El stop

15 closure

16 Hi there,

17 Hope you're enjoying this spring
18 weather. I'd like to submit this public
19 comment for the March 25, SEPTA Board
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21 On March 21, SEPTA closed the
22 Somerset El stop and station with no
23 timeline for return, and no increase in
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2 the neighborhood, but also to all El
3 riders in all neighborhoods north of
4 Kensington.

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8 Service, TWU Local 234, the Philly
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11 1.) Run shuttle service between
12 Allegheny and Huntingdon. There should
13 be a shuttle bus waiting for riders
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15 stops.

16 2.) Publicly announce a
17 reopening date for Somerset.

18 3.) Safe conditions for the
19 SEPTA riders and workers by ensuring an
20 environment free of syringes and human
21 waste.

22 4.) Increase bus service on
23 Kensington Avenue.

24 Please do what is right for the

1 riders and for the Kensington community.

2 I look forward to your immediate
3 action on these demands.

4 Sincerely,

5 Duncan Gromko

6 Philly Transit Riders Union

7 (End of e-mail messages)

8 - - -

9 We have no speakers on the
10 Agenda, correct?

11 INAUDIBLE

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Move on to
13 the Consent Calendar, which consists of:

14 "Award of Contracts Pursuant to
15 Request for Proposals;"

16 "Authorization to Award
17 Contracts for Various Procurements;"

18 "Award of Contracts for Sole
19 Source Procurements;"

20 And

21 "Authorization to Execute Change
22 Orders and Amendment."

23 All the items on the Consent
24 Calendar have been reviewed by the

1 appropriate Board Committees in public
2 session.

3 I'll entertain a Motion to adopt
4 these Resolutions.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN LAWRENCE: So
6 move.

7 MR. ELLIS: Second.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions?
9 Any abstentions?

10 NO RESPONSE

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Hearing none,
12 I'll call the question. All in favor
13 say, "aye."

14 ALL: Aye.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: The Resolutions
16 are adopted.

17 Move on to the report of the
18 general manager, Ms. Richards.

19 MS. RICHARDS: Sure. Thank you,
20 Chairman.

21 Following up on the chairman's
22 comments about our funding, we are very
23 grateful for the funding we have received
24 from our Federal government, and we would

1 not have made it this far without it, but
2 I do want to be very clear, we continue
3 to lose \$1 million a day to continued low
4 ridership and fare box revenues. Just to
5 put that in context, we normally spend \$4
6 million a day to run our system. The
7 Federal COVID relief packages passed last
8 year, and the recently signed American
9 Rescue Plan may seem like we have
10 sufficient funds to ease the impact of
11 this crisis, but funding we received to
12 date is being used to make up from what
13 we're not getting from the fare box. In
14 less than one year we've used nearly \$400
15 million of federal funds to cover that \$1
16 million a day deficit and massive
17 additional pandemic-related costs for
18 supplemental cleaning, sanitizing, and
19 supporting and protecting our employees.
20 These additional costs would have been a
21 burden even during a year when finances
22 were strong.

23 During the COVID pandemic, as
24 our riders stayed home, these costs

1 further stretched our already depleted
2 budget.

3 Ridership is expected to return
4 slowly. We hope to reach 80 percent of
5 pre-pandemic ridership levels in the next
6 two years. Our COVID relief money will
7 not last until our ridership returns to a
8 sustainable level, but we must make it
9 last until we recover, and we are working
10 very hard to ensure that happens, and
11 that the future of SEPTA is strong.

12 One of the issues we are
13 concerned about is the proliferation of
14 the vulnerable population who seek refuge
15 on our system. SEPTA Police and Social
16 Workers are paired up through the SEPTA
17 SAVE Program to get people connected to
18 services.

19 We are teaming up with other
20 partners to address these issues for the
21 benefit of the vulnerable community, the
22 safety and security of our own employees,
23 and those riding the system. To make
24 sure we can welcome back other customers

1 to a clean and secure system, we are
2 working aggressively here internally, as
3 well as with external agencies and
4 partners to make sure that happens.

5 I'd like to close by once again
6 recognizing our front-line employees who
7 go above and beyond to keep our system
8 clean, safe and operating. I also want
9 to thank our employees who keep the
10 business of SEPTA running every day, and
11 throughout this entire pandemic.

12 We commemorated National
13 Employee Appreciation Day last week, but
14 we very much appreciate what our
15 employees do every single day.

16 And as we end Women's History
17 Month, I want to thank all of the women
18 of SEPTA, as well as to the men who
19 support us.

20 And that concludes my remarks,
21 Mr. Chairman.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I
23 would like to thank the main woman here,
24 you, Leslie. You have done a great job

1 during this year. Thanks for all your
2 help and work here.

3 This concludes my report, and
4 then I'll move on to the speakers.

5 Cameron Adamez. Mr. Adamez?

6 MR. ADAMEZ: Speaking. Can you
7 hear me?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: We can hear you.

9 MR. ADAMEZ: Okay.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: You're good.

11 MR. ADAMEZ: Good afternoon. My
12 name is Cameron Adamez, and I'm a member
13 of 5th Square, Transit Forward Philly.

14 5th Square is a political action
15 committee which supports local
16 candidates... change in the areas of
17 transportation, land use, and public
18 space. We work with our partners in the
19 Transit Forward Philadelphia coalition
20 who work to advance the transit system
21 from an organizational perspective of
22 economic development, business community,
23 social justice, public health, and public
24 policy in our case.

1 SEPTA employees and riders
2 deserve to feel safe, and riders should
3 not have to question the biased views or
4 ethics of the people that they trust to
5 protect them.

6 At the January SEPTA Board
7 Meeting TFP members, Tariem Burroughs and
8 Melody expressed their concern about the
9 conduct of the seven SEPTA police
10 officers who attended the January 6th
11 rally, before the insurrection.

12 Following the event, two officers posted
13 on social media that they supported the
14 insurrection. SEPTA's spokesperson,
15 Andrew Bush, acknowledged that by saying,
16 quote, by endorsing the storming of the
17 Capitol, they were condoning criminal
18 activity, which is unacceptable for any
19 police officer. That support of illegal
20 behavior is in direct opposition of the
21 department's...

22 The hearing cited in January,
23 Chuck Wexler, interim director of the
24 Police Executive Research Forum said,

1 Police needed this investigation to
2 evaluate more than just clear criminal
3 behavior and must also consider how their
4 actions affects the department's
5 credibility. Wexler states the officers'
6 First Amendment rights don't extend to...
7 that may be violent or may express some
8 prejudice because that's what's going to
9 reflect on what they are doing when they
10 testify in court. So given these
11 statements and their credibility issue,
12 it seems that the coupe only rendered a
13 three-day suspension, which is just a
14 token gesture, instead of addressing the
15 root cause of the problem, and I would
16 like to ask the Board if they support
17 this simple punishment for the unusual...
18 policy violation, and I'd like to allow
19 the Board members the opportunity to
20 clarify their positions on record.

21 MR. BENEDETTI: Good afternoon.
22 Mr. Adamez, this is Gino Benedetti,
23 SEPTA's general counsel.

24 The police internal affairs

1 department has investigated this fully.
2 We followed our normal process in
3 applying discipline, and afforded the
4 officers all due process rights, and we
5 have accepted the discipline that's been
6 handed down, but at the same time, sir,
7 we are looking very carefully at these
8 processes, including, and bringing in
9 citizens from the community to assist us
10 in evaluating our current procedures, and
11 to improve them where we can, so that we
12 can continue to have a trustful
13 relationship with that community that we
14 serve.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

16 Daniel Trubman. Mr. Trubman?

17 MR. TRUBMAN: Hi, can you hear
18 me?

19 THE CHAIRMAN: We can hear you.
20 You're on.

21 MR. TRUBMAN: Hello, my name is
22 Daniel Trubman from Philadelphia, also
23 speaking on behalf of 5th Square.

24 At 5th Square we sincerely

1 believe that SEPTA's Trolley
2 Modernization Project deserves priority
3 in the Agency's forthcoming capital
4 budget.

5 The trolleys make up SEPTA's
6 busiest surface routes, hailing more
7 ridership than any big single bus line
8 and most regional rail lines. Our
9 trolley cars are a decade past their
10 30-year useable life, and are becoming
11 increasingly unreliable.

12 This is a matter of equity and
13 racial justice because our trolley lines
14 serve lower-income, higher-minority
15 communities, connecting these
16 neighborhoods to opportunities in Center
17 City and University City. The current
18 trolley cars are also not fully
19 ADA-accessible to people of all ages and
20 abilities.

21 Our region's trolley
22 neighborhoods deserve a modern system.
23 In replacing the aging trolley fleet,
24 SEPTA has the chance to transform the

1 trolley system to resemble modern light
2 rail. This means increasing speed and
3 reliability through off-board fare
4 payment, transit signal priority, and
5 stop consolidation.

6 This project has larger,
7 regional economic benefits. Our
8 functional trolley system is crucial for
9 our region's economic recovery, by
10 serving and connecting people to jobs and
11 amenities.

12 It's crucial that when it comes
13 to infrastructure spending, we Fix It
14 First. As secretary of transportation,
15 Pete Buttigieg, recently commented, "A
16 lot of what we've got to do is dealing
17 with a maintenance backlog."

18 We want SEPTA to prioritize the
19 Trolley Modernization Project by stepping
20 up its timeline and increasing its
21 Capital Budget investment allocation.

22 Thank you.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

24 Gavin Stecher?

1 NO RESPONSE

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Stecher?

3 Hello?

4 Can you speak up? We can't hear
5 you.

6 NO RESPONSE

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Hello? All
8 right. We will come back to Mr. Stecher.

9 Let's move on to Joel Arnold.
10 Mr. Arnold?

11 MR. ARNOLD: Yeah, can you hear
12 me?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: We can hear you.

14 MR. ARNOLD: Good afternoon, I'm
15 Joel Arnold, a planner with SEAMAAC, a
16 nonprofit that serves immigrant refugees
17 and in the neighborhood near Mifflin
18 Square Park in South Philly, and we are
19 also a member of Transit Forward
20 Philadelphia coalition.

21 SEAMAAC and TFP are grateful for
22 the adoption of the SEPTA Forward
23 Strategic Plan, which recognizes that
24 transit is at the core of a sustainable

1 economic inclusive and such an ambitious
2 framework helps SEPTA, our communities,
3 and our whole region. We see that
4 Strategic Plan is responsive to our call
5 to build healthier, safer and inclusive
6 communities centered around transit, and
7 we really are grateful to SEPTA Board and
8 the strategic planning innovation group
9 for their listening to our calls. Values
10 that the strategic plan champions at
11 SEPTA became a proactive and responsive
12 organization, making the most effective
13 use of public resources. So today,
14 SEAMAAC and TFP is calling for
15 accelerated progress on full rail transit
16 network accessibility and to move up the
17 timeline on all ADA projects in the rail
18 transit network, in the next Capital
19 Budget, ensuring that we have a
20 successful bus network redesign, and
21 that's something that doesn't need to
22 mirror the rail transit network because
23 it lacks accessibility for all users,
24 which is an inefficient use of our public

1 dollars.

2 Today many projects in our
3 Capital Budget ties station accessibility
4 to full station renovations, but SEPTA
5 does fiscally constrain the Agency and we
6 need elevators now. We can do full
7 renovations later.

8 My community in South
9 Philadelphia is one that will benefit
10 from... project delivery method that
11 drives the goal of the strategic plan.
12 Snyder Station is currently scheduled for
13 a full station rehabilitation to become
14 ADA compliant in 2024, which is a whole
15 year after the Bus Network Redesign is
16 complete, so let's adjust the scope and
17 prioritize South Philly's seniors, equity
18 and capital budget efficiency now. We
19 look forward to a capital budget drive to
20 build strategic plans because our
21 communities cannot wait.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Great. Thank
23 you.

24 Mr. Joel Arnold? Mr. Arnold --

1 I'm sorry.

2 Liam Dougherty.

3 NO RESPONSE

4 THE CHAIRMAN: He's not on?

5 Nick Zuwiala-Rogers?

6 MR. ZUWIALA-ROGERS: Yes. Can
7 you hear me?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: You're on.

9 MR. ZUWIALA-ROGERS: Good
10 afternoon, my name is Nick
11 Zuwiala-Rogers, I'm the transportation
12 director at Clean Air Council, a council
13 for members of the environmental
14 nonprofit and proud partner of CDRPC,
15 SEPTA, and transport management
16 association across the region in
17 coordination mobility alternatives
18 program, which helps to mitigate
19 congestion, and improve air quality
20 through transit, walking, biking, and
21 remote working options.

22 The COVID-19 pandemic has
23 further changed the transportation
24 pattern of our region. Rush hour is

1 nothing like it once was, and many
2 companies, including SEPTA shifted to
3 remote work late last year.

4 Transportation in Philadelphia
5 is the number one cause of poor air
6 quality, but... in the beginning of the
7 pandemic causes our city's air to be the
8 cleanest in our lifetime. Why would we
9 go back to the old ways of congestion and
10 poor air quality? Let's keep one of the
11 only unexpected benefits from COVID and
12 move to a future powered by transit,
13 flexible working, and living pattern, and
14 congestions for each street.

15 Clean Air Council and its
16 partners at Transit Forward Philadelphia
17 are calling upon SEPTA, one of the
18 largest employers and mobility providers
19 in the region, to demonstrate leadership
20 in transportation demand management by
21 adopting a permanent flexible work
22 policy.

23 The council is reaching out to
24 employers across the city to now plan a

1 return to work that takes into account
2 the environmental impact of different
3 commuting options, encouraging employers
4 to plan work versus relying on transit,
5 walking, and importantly, telecommuting
6 and flexible work schedules.

7 The council provides cost
8 readjustments to employers in assessing
9 whether telecommuting is right for your
10 workforce, designing company specific
11 policies... training and education on
12 managing staff and evaluating
13 telecommuting programs. By implementing
14 policies that help employers avoid worst
15 traffic times, employers can help reduce
16 congestion and improve air quality and
17 reduce their employees' stress on the way
18 to work. Their best user benefits not
19 only boost productivity, but also keep
20 workers happy, engaged, and I'm sure many
21 of your employees are experiencing
22 benefits right now.

23 While it may seem
24 counterintuitive for staff agency to

1 discuss necessary travel, taking
2 leadership in flex work policies allows
3 SEPTA to embrace its identity as a
4 mission-driven mobility provider and
5 focus opportunity -- operating budget
6 resources on those who use transit the
7 most: Our essential workers who keep our
8 grocery store shelves stocked, keep
9 hospitals clean, and care for the sick,
10 and scheduling services to best serve
11 off-peak essential workers, supports work
12 and leisure trips for people who have the
13 opportunity for flex work. So council
14 and Transit Forward Philadelphia look
15 forward to SEPTA, you know, moving toward
16 more flexible working arrangement, and
17 really being a leader in the region on
18 TDM and the new transportation pattern.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Good. Thank you.
20 Yasha Z. Yasha, you're on
21 there?

22 NO RESPONSE

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Shame.

24 Will Tung, Mr. Tung, you're on

1 there?

2 MR. TUNG: Hi, can you hear me?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: We can.

4 MR. TUNG: Hello, this is Will
5 Tung, I'm calling from Southwest Philly,
6 speaking as an organizer for 5th Square.

7 SEPTA's trolley network is a
8 vital transit lifeline and is critically
9 important to our region's economic
10 well-being. Unfortunately, the trolley
11 system we have is slow, it's mired by
12 delays, it's outdated, and it lacks ADA
13 accessibility.

14 I know because, as a resident of
15 Kingsessing, I rely on the 13 to get to
16 work and to Center City.

17 In its recently released
18 Philadelphia Transit Plan, the City of
19 Philadelphia labeled Trolley
20 Modernization as its top priority for
21 large transit infrastructure spending."
22 The transit plan estimates this project
23 to cost \$1.85 billion, but SEPTA has only
24 budgeted less than \$50 million for the

1 next 12 years.

2 We at 5th Square has published a
3 petition (5thsq.org/trolley), and it's
4 been signed by over 500 riders and area
5 residents asking our members congress to
6 earmark federal funding for SEPTA's
7 trolley modernization project.

8 We hope SEPTA can use our
9 petition and the city's transit plan to
10 show local congress members overwhelming
11 community support and for this project,
12 and to amplify their ask for appropriate
13 funding for it.

14 We also want SEPTA to do its
15 part and prioritize trolley modernization
16 project by increasing its capital budget
17 allocation.

18 Philadelphia and Delaware County
19 also deserve a signature capital transit
20 project, and we deserve reliable
21 accessible and frequent trolley service
22 within our lifetime. Please do what you
23 can to make sure this happens.

24 Thank you.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Great. Thank
2 you.

3 Did we get Mr. Stecher on the
4 phone again?

5 INAUDIBLE

6 THE CHAIRMAN: No? We're good
7 then.

8 Okay. No further comments or
9 question I will entertain a motion for
10 the meeting to be adjourned.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN LAWRENCE: So
12 moved.

13 MR. ELLIS: Second.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Tom? We're
15 adjourned.

16 Thank you, guys.

17 - - -

18 (Meeting concluded at 3:22 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA:
COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA:

I do hereby certify that I am a Notary Public in good standing, that the aforesaid meeting was taken before me, pursuant to notice, at the time and place indicated; that said meeting was correctly recorded in machine shorthand by me and thereafter transcribed under my supervision with computer-aided transcription.

WITNESS my hand and official seal this 5th day of April, 2021.



Paulette Cox, Court Reporter
Notary Public

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