
STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

January 25, 2023
10:03 a.m.

PRESENT

HONORABLE WES MOORE

Governor

HONORABLE DERECK E. DAVIS

Treasurer

HONORABLE BROOKE E. LIERMAN

Comptroller

JOHN GONTRUM

Secretary, Board of Public Works

ATIF CHAUDHRY

Acting Secretary, Department of General Services

SEAN POWELL

Deputy Secretary, Department of Transportation

JOSH KURTZ

Acting Secretary, Department of Natural Resources

TOM HICKEY

Director of Procurement and Real Property Initiatives,
University System of Maryland

LISA GRIGSBY

Recording Secretary, Board of Public Works

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PROCEEDINGS

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good morning, everybody.

ALL: Good morning.

GOVERNOR MOORE: It is a pleasure to be here at our, for this grouping, our first Board of Public Works meeting. And we are incredibly excited to get to work and to get the people's work done together. I am excited to be here with my new colleagues, Treasurer Davis and also Comptroller Lierman. It's really nice when we now have colleagues who are also friends beside us working, people who are just devoted and dedicated public servants. For while I know the Treasurer -- he has been here, what? Thirteen months?

TREASURER DAVIS: Thirteen months.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thirteen months.

TREASURER DAVIS: But if you need any advice --

(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: I say it's like, in the words of Drake, he's a rookie and a vet in all this. But we really are thrilled and I'm thrilled to be here in partnership with two leaders who I respect.

And for over 159 years, this body has served a critical function to the State of Maryland, where the livelihoods and the lives of generations of Marylanders have been shaped by the decisions of previous boards. And as we move forward, we are moving forward in partnership, with the Governor, and the

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Treasurer, and the Comptroller. We will ensure that this body not only continues its historic and statutory roles, but we're also going to focus our work on being intentional. Being very intentional in how, and what, and where our State's resources and our investments are being expended.

Our communities are depending on us to make thoughtful and deliberate and forward thinking decisions to move our State forward to make sure that we are more competitive, while also being more equitable, and to advance the priorities that impact every single Marylander. The decision of this Board and the decisions of this Board will be led by data and not by election cycles. They will be led by performance and not patronage.

During the campaign, I made it clear that if elected Governor, Maryland will be a State that leaves no one behind. And that wasn't just a campaign talking point, it was a promise, a promise that will guide the work of our administration every single day. And the promise also means that that will be applied to the work of this Board as well. And to fulfill that promise, we will ensure that our contracts are awarded through a rigorous and a competitive process. As often and whenever possible, we will be entrusted as stewards of that public trust and it is our absolute duty to be able to uphold that public trust as well. We will ensure that we are being strategic in how we direct procurements to support government operations and our collective effort to achieve both policy goals and objectives that impacts all of our neighbors.

Importantly, importantly, we will ensure that we are treating minority business enterprise goals not just as suggestions for prime contractors, but as promises and commitments made to both the State and our MBE

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communities who simply want a fair shot at competing for and receiving work. The era of agencies generously issuing MBE waivers and not holding prime contractors accountable for meeting these MBE goals, those days and that era has come to an end. We are not only holding prime contractors accountable, but we are going to hold ourselves accountable, our agencies, our departments, our administration, to ensure that we are expanding opportunity to assess and also see other disadvantaged communities. And that means making it easier and not harder to get certifications to participate in these business procurement programs. And that promise will also be reflected in the investments that we will make in Program Open Space and our forward thinking approach with construction projects, making our infrastructure assets greener and through and through our careful review of the tidal wetlands licenses and their impacts on our Chesapeake Bay and our environment.

It is not lost to me that these are ambitious goals. It is not lost on me that we know that these are things that we are going to be held to account for, and we welcome that. Each and every one of us know that we were put here by our respective constituents who asked us to follow this, and as leaders we plan on doing that, challenge the status quo to chart a different course for Maryland's future and we are excited to move forward in that future.

We will do this work and work closely to be able to accomplish these goals in collaborative partnership, and with my colleagues here, with their offices, with our talented and dedicated cabinet secretaries, and the incredible agency employees that we are honored to now call colleagues in all of this work, many of whom are here right now.

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And before I turn it over to my colleagues for remarks, I'd just like to say a, I'd just like to close with a very sincere word of thanks to the procurement staff in every agency, to the Board of Public Works office staff, to so many others who support the work of this Board and who work behind the scenes to ensure the sound operations of government, the people who helped to put this room together that we are now in. We are, it is not lost on any of us the fact that the only way this thing moves is because you all are so devoted and dedicated to making sure that the work happens. And so from the bottom all of our hearts, thank you. It is your fingerprints that are on all of this. And so I'd like to pause and turn it over to our Comptroller to deliver, to offer remarks as well.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you so much, Governor Moore, Treasurer Davis, it's such an honor. We're here, finally. And thank you so much. I want to start by thanking John Gontrum and his team at the Board of Public Works, who are just down the hall from us so we have the opportunity to work with them closely. I'm so grateful to them and to our team for preparing us as well. I know it's a small staff, small but hardy, so I appreciate all the work that you all do.

It's such a great honor to be here with the Governor, with the Treasurer, who I admire so deeply for their work and commitment to Marylanders. And I want to thank Marylanders for trusting me with this incredible responsibility. I spent five years on the Appropriations Committee and certainly our system, where we pass a budget through the General Assembly, working with the Governor, and then using this forum to approve contracts and other public work is so unique and special in this country. In a local government

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class I once taught as an adjunct one year, we had a debate over the merits, you know, pros and cons of the Board of Public Works. And we ended up deciding that it was really the best system, because of the ability and its potential for transparency and accountability. The ability for Marylanders to clearly understand and see where their dollars are going.

And as the BPW, Mr. Governor and Mr. Treasurer, we have the awesome responsibility of overseeing billions of dollars in annual spending. And these dollars affect every Marylander and have a tremendous impact, and sometimes an impact that is not discussed enough, on our State's economy, right? And the unprecedented federal spending that is in Maryland now and that is coming to Maryland really presents us with a new opportunity to focus on ensuring that government is not just spending, but that we are actually investing, investing in our communities, investing in growing our small businesses, investing in growing our minority business enterprises, thinking about building a more environmentally sustainable State, and ensuring that we are working with companies who respect our labor laws and are contributing to apprenticeship programs in the State.

I know that all three of us, as the Governor just said, and I associate myself with everything he said, I know that all three of us are committed to building a fair and more equitable Maryland. Because that will mean that we have a more thriving and a more prosperous Maryland. And much of that work will happen here, in this room, every couple of weeks. But these meetings are just the tip of the iceberg. Really, just the tip. The real work happens between the meetings, making sure that we're working with the General Assembly to ensure

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that our procurement program is the best that it can be. Working as a Board of Public Works and with the staff to make sure our regulations and our regulatory structure are promoting the goals that we have set, and diving in and working with the procurement officers in every agency.

And as Comptroller, I am excited to do that. I come to this role as a Board of Public Works member with three guiding principles. First is a commitment to transparency, access, and building the public trust. It's crucial that Marylanders have easy access to see what comes before the Board and that we clearly articulate the intended and actual impacts of the contracts that we approve. Legislation, I believe that legislation has even been introduced to create more access to provide input and comments, and I look forward to seeing that. Along with that, we need to reexamine how we follow the life of contracts and how the public can follow those contracts as well. We're not today able to tell the public how many businesses who were awarded contracts last year actually met their MBE goals, how many were on budget and on time, and how many made contract modifications. We perhaps as a Board were not even notified of all of those contract modifications. We can do better, and with technology we should, to make sure that the public can follow along and so can we.

Second, I look forward to working with my counterparts to push this Board and our State agencies to greatly improve our minority business enterprise program. You all know, Maryland was a national leader in MBE procurement when we first created our participation goals 45 years ago. But we have fallen far behind. Since 2016, MBE participation on State contracts has been 20 percent or below, and in 2020 it was just 14 percent. This is

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unacceptable. We up here all know that it is unacceptable. You know it is unacceptable. And I know that the General Assembly finds it unacceptable, too. So in addition to not ensuring MBE goals are reached from the get go, there is also the follow up problem of bait and switch. Our current MBE program operates on the honor system when it should be operating on an accountability system. As a Board of Public Works, I believe that we should be asking for and receiving information on the results of MBE participation at the end of contracts, not just targets, notification of all budget modifications that drop MBE contractors and why, and we will do annual audits of contract modifications. We have the opportunity to grow wealth in this State, to make our MBE program a national model once again by creating a procurement economy in Maryland that combines compliance with small business development and access to capital and other resources, and I look forward to working with the Governor, the Treasurer, and the General Assembly in making sure that happens.

And then finally, we must be mindful that the contracts we approve here have a significant impact on the well-being of workers, communities, and the climate across the State of Maryland. I look forward to working with the BPW staff and agencies and my fellow members here to alter slightly the information that we actually receive in these great big binders. There is a lot of information, but there is other information that we must look at. We know, for instance, or we need to know, for instance, if any of the contractors being awarded contracts have committed wage theft in the past or have misclassified workers in an attempt to underpay them. We must work with procurement officers to ensure labor peace and PLAs. And finally, as we are doing this work we have to have a better sense

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of the ramifications for our environment and the climate of the contracts that we approve.

So this is just the beginning of the work and just the beginning of the conversations, and I look forward to undertaking it with the Treasurer and the Governor as partners. It is truly, truly an honor and incredibly humbling to be sitting at this table right now, and I look forward to being an independent voice and advocate for the people of Maryland. Thank you so much, Mr. Governor.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. Thank you. Mr. Treasurer?

TREASURER DAVIS: Now, how do you follow that?

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: There's my 13 months out the window.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: You know what? But because of that, I don't have to say what they just did. I'm going to take a little different route with this. There are actually two things I want to sort of highlight to say.

Number one, as it relates to the Governor, to the Comptroller -- first of all, Governor, all right, this is now actually going to be a while, folks.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: A few weeks ago, or a couple of months ago, the Governor was on Reverend Sharpton's show and my name got mentioned on that show and my in-laws happened to be watching it. So they called my wife, and my wife told me, and then I guess like a week or two ago, the Governor was on *The View* and my picture was on *The View*. So my wife was all impressed. She was like, the Governor is making you a celebrity.

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(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: I was like, well, I'm not actually on the show. He's on by himself. But in any event, I wanted to share that. But no, but this is what I really wanted to say as it relates, you've now heard the Governor, you've heard the Comptroller, you know the Attorney General, and you know the Lieutenant Governor. You are all going to get to see what I've had the opportunity to see over my 30 years in working with all of these folks, relationships are a little newer with the Governor, but with the others I have served a minimum of seven years with them in the House of Delegates and in various capacities. And so I bring that up to say this, a lot is being made about the historical nature of the Governor's election, and the Comptroller, and the Lieutenant Governor, and the Attorney General. But as the Governor himself would say, that wasn't the assignment.

GOVERNOR MOORE: That's right.

TREASURER DAVIS: That wasn't the assignment. The thing that I'm excited about and that everybody is going to get to see is the talent that's there. See, it doesn't matter if all of these elections occurred and nothing came as a result of that. I'm excited because I know the talent that they bring, the work ethic that they bring, the hustle that they bring. And the citizens of Maryland are going to benefit from that. I know that because they are not going to leave me behind. I'm going to raise my game to the level that I know that theirs is, and you are going to see. So when people are excited about the, you know, that opportunity and that diversity, it's not just because it is making history but because when we come to that table and, you know, everyone may not look like

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us or come from the same places that we all come from, but that old saying about our diversity is our strength, that's not just some trite saying. That is true. We're going to see people who have strengths that we may not have been aware of or who come from places, and so they bring certain histories and certain experiences to that table that I believe we're all going to benefit from. So that's why I'm excited and that's what I believe the assignment should be.

And then finally this, what I wanted to reference, and you all have heard me say this before, or mention it, is regarding the State's durable medical equipment program. I had an opportunity to visit the actual facility last week over in Cheltenham. Senator Kramer, Secretary Kramer, was gracious enough to host me. And what I wanted to say, and I'm going to read this because I don't want anything missed. But I want each and every one of you to know it. I want our legislators to know it. I wanted to highlight it for the administration so that we can get this out.

They accept donations of medical equipment like wheelchairs and walkers that are sanitized, fixed, and retrofitted for citizens free of charge. The program operates on a free in, free out model so our citizens can request items and have them delivered to their region free of charge. It has proven to be a lifeline for Marylanders who are waiting on decisions from their insurance companies who would benefit from better equipment than their coverage allows or who do not have insurance at all. The program is apparently the only one of its kind in the nation. I would like to continue to encourage all Marylanders to take advantage of this program by calling 240-230-8000 or going to the Department of Aging's website. To take it one step further, I would also like to encourage my

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colleagues to tour the DME warehouse whenever their schedule permits. I can think of no better way to honor the Governor's mission of leaving no one behind than by supporting this program.

So when I was talking with them and I was asking about advertising, there wasn't much of a budget for it. And I said, all right, well I'm going to be your budget --

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: -- right here and do a free ad right here. So that program is very, very important. I can't emphasize it enough. It's just great and please spread the word about it because a lot of people could benefit. And I know in my home county of Prince George's County, and I see my good friend the County Executive is with us today, I hear that, or the information I'm given is that our citizens make especially good use of that program. So --

GOVERNOR MOORE: -- can you say that number again --

TREASURER DAVIS: The number again is 240-230-8000. That's the Department of Aging, or go to the Department of Aging's website. I have no idea what the website address is, but you can Google it. Google is your friend.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: So thank you all very much for that moment.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you, Mr. Treasurer. Thank you. So we are excited to get to work. Mr. Secretary, we'll begin with the Secretary's Agenda. Secretary Gontrum, it's great to have you here and thank you so much.

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SECRETARY GONTRUM: Thank you, Governor. Good morning, Governor, Mr. Treasurer, Madam Comptroller. There are eight items on the Secretary's Agenda this morning, and four reports of emergency procurements. We do have a request for comment on Item 6, that's from County Executive Alsobrooks and her administration, members of her administration; and also on Item A4, from Mr. Ronald Dillon, Jr. It's certainly at the discretion of the Board. You can accept comment on either or both items, or neither. We also have agency representatives available to discuss both items.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great. Thank you so much. And so we have the item of A4, and we'll get to that. But first, I would like to take a moment and go to Item 6, which is a request for the Maryland Stadium Authority to enter into an MOU with the Prince George's County government to formally begin the process of releasing up to \$400 million in bond funding for the anticipated economic development in the Prince George's County Blue Line Corridor.

I'm going to take this personal moment to tell you how excited I am about this item agenda. And because this is going to be an economic game-changer for Prince George's County and for the State, the community surrounding the Blue Line Corridor, and a great win for our State and for our region. So County Executive Alsobrooks, and the members of her leadership team are here to join us today, so I will yield the floor to our County Executive as they expand on why this initiative and why this partnership is so important to our State. Madam County Executive, it is great to see you.

MS. ALSOBROOKS: Good morning, Governor Moore --

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good morning.

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MS. ALSOBROOKS: -- Treasurer Davis and Comptroller Lierman. I'm so thrilled to be here this morning and I want to thank you so much for allowing me to be before the Board of Public Works to speak today. I'm joined by Denise Robinson. I want to thank her for being here as well.

I am Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. And I'm here, and you've spoken about the historic nature of this day. But I can tell you that I'm so thrilled to be here. This is the very first time that a Prince George's County Executive has come before this body to request authority to use the Maryland Stadium Authority. So today is a very exciting day for Prince Georgians.

I am here to seek approval of our memorandum of understanding with the Maryland Stadium Authority, which documents our mutual agreement to spend up to \$400 million in bonds on site acquisition, planning, design, and construction of sports and entertainment projects along the Blue Line Corridor in Prince George's County. This partnership, originally authorized by the General Assembly in H.B. 897 during the 2022 legislative session, will help our county and State take advantage of an underutilized transit corridor creating opportunities for Marylanders to live, work, and play all while growing our local economy.

In 2021, I set a new economic growth vision for Prince George's County, a vision focused on growing jobs and our commercial tax base while also securing affordable housing. Along with these goals, we want to provide greater access to amenities that Prince Georgians have awaited for decades.

The Blue Line Corridor is the anchor initiative of our vision for economic growth, and for good reason. By adding an amphitheater, a youth

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sports field house, library and cultural center, and other infrastructure improvements, Blue Line Corridor will be the region's next big destination and Prince Georgians will have a wonderful new set of amenities to enjoy in their own backyard.

Right now, our county is in a unique position. Our intention is to be the economic engine of the State as well as the region. We are fully invested in establishing a world class sports, entertainment, and cultural destination that draws people from all over.

In addition to this bonding authority, we are investing in projects up and down the Blue Line, including infrastructure improvements at Metro stations, a state of the art cancer center, and many more projects that are focused on transit oriented growth. Our vision for the Blue Line is a dense, walkable and bikeable destination with access to amenities that our residents deserve and our region will enjoy. The Blue Line Corridor MOU is a major component of this transformative opportunity and will multiply our impact on this underutilized corridor in ways that will benefit our county and our State for decades to come.

So I'm grateful to be before the Board of Public Works today to offer my support for the Blue Line Corridor MOU and look forward to your decision. Thank you so much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much, Madam County Executive. First, are there any questions from my colleagues?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Fantastic. Thank you so much.

MS. ALSOBROOKS: Thank you so much. Thank you.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. And before we turn over to the MTA emergency procurement item, is there any other discussion on any other of the items on the Secretary's Agenda? If not, let's call up Item A4, which is a report of an emergency procurement from the MTA, the Maryland Transit Administration. Before we hear from Mr. Dillon, I would like to ask Administrator Holly Arnold to formally introduce the item and provide some background and some context. Administrator Arnold? Sorry, they had you --

(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good morning. Administrator, it is great to have you here and good morning. Thank you.

MS. ARNOLD: Good morning. Thanks for having me. So good morning, Governor Moore, Comptroller Lierman, and Treasurer Davis. For the record, my name is Holly Arnold and I'm the Administrator of the Maryland Transit Administration, and I'm joined today by our Director of Procurement Memory Hewlett. I'm here today to discuss Item A4 on the Secretary's Agenda, the emergency commuter bus contract for Route 515 that is before the Board.

For context, this route serves approximately 200 passengers per day and travels between Frederick County and Montgomery County. Atlantic Coast Charters, or ACC, was operating this service under a five-year contract, which began November 1, 2019 and was to continue through October 31, 2024. I would note that the original contract that ACC entered into with MTA was a firm fixed price contract, which COMAR defines as one that provides a price that is not subject to adjustment because of variations in the contractor's costs.

In December of last year, ACC sent a notice of their intent to

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terminate the Route 515 contract with MAA effective December 31, 2022.

Following that notice, MTA informed ACC that the contract did not permit them to terminate prior to the end of the term, notified them of the potential ramifications of defaulting on a State contract, and requested confirmation of the decision. After some discussions, our team did confirm that ACC would, as they indicated in their letter, cease all operations on 515 by the end of the year.

To ensure continuity of service for our riders, I approved moving forward with an emergency procurement to obtain a new provider. That procurement did result in a replacement contract and ensured that we could continue to provide the 515 riders with uninterrupted service.

At MTA, we do strive to be good partners with our contractors and we recognize the strain that COVID-19 has put on some of those providers. To that end, we have provided relief to our commuter bus operators through the addition of COVID-19 cleaning cost supplemental payments, the suspension of liquidated damages for the past two years, and a decrease in bonding requirements. Additionally, in 2021, the State provided \$8 million in relief funding for the commuter and shuttle bus companies impacted by the pandemic, including ACC.

Additionally recognizing the challenges of these fixed price contracts, in 2021 we updated the terms for any new commuter bus contract to include a separate line item for fuel and more flexible options for vehicles. So any new contract will have those written in. Ultimately, we have a responsibility to provide our riders with the critical service that they need and the emergency contract before the Board today ensured that we could continue to do that. We're

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working quickly to advertise a replacement which will feature the updated terms. Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much, Administrator Arnold. Let's hear from Mr. Ron Dillon, thank you, the President of Atlantic Coastal Charters who signed up to speak in opposition to this item. Mr. Dillon, good morning. Good to have you here and you have two minutes.

MR. DILLON: Thank you. I'm going to be very quick. I'm not going to talk about fuel. It's easy to understand. Something a little bit more complex, which is really COVID related, is when we were awarded this in June 2019 B.C., before COVID --

(Laughter.)

MR. DILLON: -- we spent \$3.8 million on vehicles for this contract, it was seven Prevost buses. We took delivery of them in February. Twenty-two days later, service started being cut. Basically, we couldn't make our payments, because there was no revenue coming in, both on the commuter side and charter side. So the finance companies pushed all of the payments later, all debt was pushed later down the road.

The negative is, when I bid this contract I assumed debt service was going to decline. So years one, two increased. I think years, three, four, five (indiscernible). So I basically missed out on the prime earnings of this contract because we were parked or limited service. So I tried numerous times to work this out. I provided extensive -- look, I know you guys are very busy. But basically, there's a lot of effort on my part to make contact with no response. They were just, it was the weirdest thing. I mean, literally emails not going

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answered. Ideas not being answered. It took me five months to get a response back from the Governor's office about this situation. It has been very difficult. As my kids would say, it has been an S show. It has been tough. And my family, we personally guaranteed these loans. So this is a, obviously a critical situation for us.

So as a result of this hard-line stance, this is costing the taxpayers an extra \$835,000. We weren't allowed to bid on the emergency procurement. But I submitted one anyway, and my bid was \$835,000 cheaper than what this contract is. This contract also reduces service. I offered 28 trips per day. This contract is 22 trips per day. And there was a reduction in service with no public hearing.

Unfortunately, as a result of this contract going away, I had to lay off 16 Maryland employees and they were basically replaced on the new contract by out-of-state employees. That may be a temporary situation until they hire new people, but we have lost those payroll taxes and my people had to find new jobs, which during the holidays that was pretty difficult to have to do for those families.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Mr. Dillon, that's two minutes, sir.

MR. DILLON: Thank you. My closing remark is, just have empathy going forward. If I have any message to this new body, there is no one in Maryland more excited about the change than I am. Empathy goes a long way for your contractors. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much, Mr. Dillon. Quick question for you. When you say you were speaking with the Governor's Office to no response, who in the Governor's Office were you speaking with?

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MR. DILLON: It was Allison Mayer. She was the Deputy Chief of Staff and Infrastructure Director. So I actually got hold of her on May 19th, didn't hear back. So on June 2nd, I followed up. She said yes, I did get the email. I emailed again on June 27th, no response. I emailed again on July 13th, no response. And then I got a response out of the blue on October 26th from the Secretary of Transportation, which there were some real misstatements in that response in that he presented the COVID cleaning fee as an additional revenue, when actually it was set up as reimbursement for additional expenses. We had additional labor, additional chemicals, electrostatic sprayers. So it wasn't to offset the revenues that we had missed. So yes, so it's a lot of back and forth -- where there's not much back and forth. It was all me contacting with no response.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much, Mr. Dillon.

TREASURER DAVIS: If I can, Governor?

GOVERNOR MOORE: Yes, please.

TREASURER DAVIS: When you say you were reaching out, I guess to Ms. Mayer, to work it out, can you be more specific? What was it that we were trying to work out?

MR. DILLON: Well, initially I was trying to get help with fuel.

TREASURER DAVIS: What do you mean --

MR. DILLON: Like a fuel surcharge. So for example, fuel surcharge is, it looks at when you bid on a contract, what the price of fuel is compared to now. And that difference would be a part of an increased revenue, and the opposite is true as well. When fuel drops, the State benefits. So I was trying to get something like that in place. And there was precedent for that. Back in 2008-2009, there was a spike in fuel and the MTA changed, modified existing contracts for that fuel surcharge, that and I think I think at the time the Administrator was Paul Wiedefeld. So there is history and precedent of being able to do that. In addition, this very contract was amended for the MTA COVID cleaning fee. But we were told you are not allowed to amend existing contracts. And additionally, once I was told no, I did have other non-financial suggestions. For example, changing the age requirement on buses. Up until two cycles ago, we could use buses until they were 12 years old. That has been declined, like I think on this contract it has to be 2016 or newer. What I could have done is used older paid off buses, and you know, these are high quality buses. These buses are built for 25 years. I could have sold the newer buses, you know, and that would have had no impact to the taxpayer but we all could have continued on. But there was literally no dialogue. None.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Any further comments from my colleagues? Any further discussion on any other item on the Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Could I ask Holly a question?

GOVERNOR MOORE: Please. Please.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Director Arnold, sorry, or Administrator Arnold, sorry. Could you talk about the reduction in service that he mentioned and share what's going on with the reduction in service from 28 trips to 22 trips, why that is happening?

MS. ARNOLD: So for the emergency procurement, we were

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aligning the service with the current ridership, which is a bit lower than it has been due to the pandemic. And so we are evaluating service on all of our routes and we are looking at the replacement contract what the full level of service should be.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Okay. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: May I have a motion to approve the Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: So moved.

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: All right. I didn't even have to call for a second.

(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you very much. Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Mr. Governor, could I, could I just also like to thank the County Executive for coming. I was very pleased as a delegate to support dedicating \$400 million to develop the facilities along the Blue Line. So it's pretty amazing to be able to now get to be in this seat and actually allocate that money and see it go out. So I'm very excited for those efforts.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Amen.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Amen. Amen. Next up is the DNR Real Property Agenda. And before I turn it over to the Secretary -- no, you can come on up. I'm about to talk about you. Let me just say how excited that I am for his leadership and the many contributions that the gentleman at the podium is going to make as the Secretary of Natural Resources. He truly is a bold and a creative and a proven leader. He will continue to be a champion for the environment and

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for our natural resources. Now, Mr. Secretary, good to see you, and I'll turn it over to you.

MR. KURTZ: Thank you for the very kind words there. Good morning, Mr. Governor, Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. For the record, I'm Josh Kurtz. I'm the Secretary Nominee for the Department of Natural Resources. The Department of Natural Resources has six Agenda items that we are presenting today for your consideration. Agency representatives are available to answer any questions that you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. Any discussion on this Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

TREASURER DAVIS: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: May I have a motion to approve the Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Move to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: I was going to wait this time.

(Laughter.)

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you very much. Move forward. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Third item, we are going to the University System of Maryland Agenda. Mr. Hickey, who is the Director of Procurement, Mr. Hickey, thank you so much. It is great to see you again and great to have you here, so thank you.

MR. HICKEY: Good morning, Governor, Mr. Treasurer, Madam Comptroller. Tom Hickey, representing the University System of Maryland. We have two items on the Agenda this morning for your consideration. I will be

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happy to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. We have the Agenda. Do I have a motion to approve the Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much, Mr. Hickey. It's great seeing you. Thank you. Next up we will have the Maryland Department of Transportation, Deputy Secretary Powell. It is great to see you, Deputy Secretary.

MR. POWELL: You as well.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And thank you so much for being here. Please proceed.

MR. POWELL: Thank you. And obviously, Secretary Wiedefeld just started today so he has a few housekeeping items --

(Laughter.)

MR. POWELL: -- department so --

GOVERNOR MOORE: That's right. That's right.

MR. POWELL: It will be fine. Again, good morning, Mr. Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. For the record, I'm Sean Powell, Deputy Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation. First I'd like to welcome the two new members of the Board. And Governor, we do look forward to working with you on your many transportation initiatives and goals for the future, as well as maintaining the services we provide to our customers to connect them to life's opportunities. And not only maintaining, but we're also looking to improve upon and, you know, do, we had a nice little conversation with the Secretary this morning and he's looking to be transformative. So that is an

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exciting thing for the department. So with that, I am presenting ten items for your consideration. We are pleased to present an award to a certified minority business and two awards to certified small business enterprises valued at over \$1 million. If you have any questions, we do have representatives here to take them.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. Before I'd actually like to call up Item 7 --

MR. POWELL: Okay --

GOVERNOR MOORE: -- request from the MDOT Secretary and the Maryland Transit Authority and the Anne Arundel County government to enter into a lease agreement for the State to lease approximately three acres adjacent to the Odenton MARC train station, which actually we were just there a few months ago and got a chance to both see the site and know what kind of impact having this development is going to have on the area. Once approved by the Board, it is a three-acre parcel that will be leased to Anne Arundel County where they intend to build and operate a 1,000-car public parking garage for MARC commuters.

The reason that I just wanted to highlight this is this really is a great example of the State and local governments being able to work in partnership to achieve these mutually desired goals. And in this case, it is providing the infrastructure that will allow for increased access and increased use for mass transit, which is going to be a core priority for the department and the administration.

And I want to also just take this moment to thank County Executive Pittman and also the MTA for partnering on this initiative. We expect these types of collaborative partnerships between the State and local governments to be able to continue but also increase during my administration. So I just wanted to take a personal note to highlight that.

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With that, is there any further items on this Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Mr. Governor, if you will, I'd just like to make special note of Item 5-M, the State Highway Administration, and commend SHA. The incumbent contractor was from New York. The new contractor is a local business and 100 percent MBE. So thank you for bringing that to us.

MR. POWELL: Great. Thank you for your comments, Governor and Madam Comptroller. The TODs, transit oriented developments, are something you are going to be seeing a lot more of. And obviously, the opportunity to connect where you live, work, play and connect people to their opportunities is exciting for us at the Department of Transportation. So thanks for the highlight and thanks for the shout out to SHA. I'll pass it along to Administrator Smith.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. May I have a motion to approve the Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Move to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much, Mr. Deputy Secretary. Thank you. Next we will have, next, and this is last but certainly not least, the Department for (of) General Services, Secretary Chaudhry. And I'm going to take another personal moment, just to say not only thank you for saying yes, thank you for the leadership that you have shown, thank you for the leadership you will continue to show. I could not be more excited about the future of DGS in your hands and to be able to have you as an important leadership member of our team and administration. So welcome and thank you so much.

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Please proceed.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Thank you, Mr. Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Treasurer. For the record, I am Atif Chaudhry, Secretary of the Maryland Department of General Services. I'm very pleased to be here today. We are presenting 59 items on the Agenda for your consideration. We are withdrawing Items 36-S and 52-M. The Agenda features over \$16 million in capital grants and loans, including \$1.6 million to support affordable housing in Montgomery County. Additionally, the Department of General Services is seeking approval for contract actions to support 40 percent MBE goal on our construction project for the new Baltimore City District Multiservice Center. And agency representatives are here and available to answer any questions the Board may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. Thank you so much. Any discussion items on this Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I'd just like to give, voice my support for, you know, all the items, but also for the Maryland Horse Breeders Association in support of the Maryland Horse Library and Education Center, and a shout out to Executive Director Cricket Goodall. I had the opportunity to actually be at the ribbon cutting for this fun new facility in Baltimore County so I'm excited to see that. And also I wanted to thank Delegate Brian Crosby, representative of St. Mary's, for his letter of support of Item 31 on this. So thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. May I have a motion to approve the Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Move to approve.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

TREASURER DAVIS: Second.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: All right. That's what I love. Thank you so much. Thank you so much, Mr. Secretary.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Thank you, Mr. Governor.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. And so that now brings this first BPW meeting to a close. We want to thank everybody for being here and just to say how excited that we all are to be able to officially get to work on behalf of the people of this State. The next meeting is going to take place on February 15th. We look forward to seeing everybody there. Thank you, Mr. Secretary for your leadership.

SECRETARY GONTRUM: Thank you, Governor.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And I hope everyone has a wonderful and a blessed day. So thank you all so much.

(Whereupon, at 10:45 a.m., the meeting was concluded.)