

Captioning Transcript of Government Oversight and Audit Committee Meeting -
September 13, 2022

"Chair Ackerson"

All right folks, this is the regular scheduled meeting of the government oversight. Accountability committee present with us. Here today is councilman read is virtual counsel McReynolds, virtual.

Councilman BLACKWELL, virtual councilman Fowler, virtual president chamber's, councilman Fox counsel president James.

Councilman Arthur is leaving.

Councilman Dorsey.

Is leaving and cancel and purpose and I'm joined by my Co chair.

Counts when pgd. Alright, folks, let's get on to things here. We're going to start off with.

We're going to bundle items 23 and 4 essentially, this is just correcting items that we pass. Last time. The dates were wrong in the system.

Yes, ma'am. Can you ask councilman Fowler and councilman BLACKWELL the clerk's office is asked you to turn on your cameras. Please.

All right.

Uh, so item number 2, I'm going to read these quickly as AP. 0, 8 0 to 2. A, it's the amended appointment of Arvin to the waterfront development corporation board. Determine expires July 31st 2026 versus 2025 is what we said last time.

Item number 3 is AP 080222. the amended appointment of Josh walk into the waterfront development corporation. Board. Determined expires July 31st. 2026 not 2025.

And item number 3 is 00222.

Oh, I'm 3 item. 4 are.

Yep 08022 K. F. the amended reappointment of Kevin fields to the waterfront development corporation board. Determine expires July 31st. 2026. 92025istherea motion for those 3.

Items are properly before us there's no need for discussion on this, all those in favor. Say aye. Aye. Aye. Aye. Any opposition.

You're in opposition that was passed unanimously. Shall we sent the consent calendar? The next side of March there'll be item number 5 AP. 0 903 2 2.

P. O. the appointment of Mindy is it.

To the Philadelphia fire protection district board a term that expires June 30th. 2026 is our motion motion.

Item is probably before us, Michelle Smith you have the floor Madam.

"Wanda Mitchell Smith"

Thank you Mr. chair a good evening to everyone. Yeah, we have today. Uh, this is fundamental Smith representing mayor Greg fisher's office and so with us today is Mindy stove. Mindy is.

Wanting to be appointed to the fair there, fire protection district board, and she is from out of district 13.

she is here with us in chambers this evening, and we will let her have an opportunity to speak to this body to be able to explain why she would like to become a member of this board.

"Chair Ackerson"

So, you'll just identify yourself with the record. You have the format that I'm yes, you see that.
Dang, it, it's determined.

"Mindy Stoess"

Um, federal, Kentucky

"Chair Ackerson"

I apologize.

"Mindy Stoess"

Oh, that's.

"Chair Ackerson"

Uh, you're being appointed, you want to tell us if anything about your desire to serve the board or anything else I was, um.

"Mindy Stoess"

Born and raised in parallel Kentucky. Oh.
Lifted Holly Bella went to go over the elementary and high school.
My mother was very active in the community.
I went with her to knock on doors to try to get sidewalks.
He wrote for the federal newspaper. She was the editor for many years.
Our kitchen table was always full of.
Newspapers stuff, and she was always on the phone.
The long court, so she taught me that community involvement was very important.
And about 20 years ago, I was asked to be on the Dell friends of the library. So as a secretary.
So, I've been doing that and I am now the secretary and treasurer of the federal friends of the library I still am after 20 years.
And when the spot opened up by.
Ron Western called me and asked me if I'd like to fill the position.
And I said I would be honored to because anytime I can.
Serve my community, I want to do that.

"Chair Ackerson"

Are there any questions or concerns regarding this appointment?
Council Fox,

"Committee Member Fox"

thank you. Mr. chair. I would like to speak on behalf of miss Mandy, and say that her mother taught her very well.
She's very active in the fairytale community. She comes from a family.
A dedicated to public service her husband.

A dedicated paramedic and EMT in the area and also her son who just recently graduated from obtaining his degree in fire science and has gone on to a career of memory serves in Nebraska.

It's in Nebraska assistant, fire Marshall, assistant fire Marshall in Nebraska. So is.

The elected representative of district 13. I very proudly.

I support this nomination would ask for the vote of my colleagues.

"Chair Ackerson"

Okay.

Any other questions or concerns regarding this appointment here. Now, this is important. The request of voice photos in favor say, aye aye aye any opposition.

In a position that passage unanimously, shall we sent the consent counter Madam Thank you for your and your family's commitment to the parallel area.

The next item on our agenda is going to be item number.

6090322theredeployment of Rick party to the Kentucky and it works great and we'll work force development board. Determine expire. September 21st 2025 is their motion motion.

I had to start before Smith Smith the other floor.

"Wanda Mitchell Smith"

Thank you. Mr. chair. Once again we have Mr. Rick party.

Who is seeking reappointment to the board for Kentucky and works the greater loyal workforce development board.

Mister party is from district 19, and he has the servants heart and would like to be able to continue to serve in this manner.

"Chair Ackerson"

And he was on a on, or is he unable to be here today?

"Wanda Mitchell Smith"

I don't see him on.

The screen no, I don't see him have him in the chambers so we would just ask this body to support.

"Chair Ackerson"

Thank you, Madam. Does anyone have any questions or concerns that requires to hold this appointment?

Hearing none, we do have Council on TV in the queue. You have 4.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Thank you very much Mr. chair.

I would like to speak on behalf. I realize you said anything was to hold it up and this is not comments like that but I would like to say that I've known Rick party and his family for years. He is a brilliant.

Human resources executive has been chief human resources, officer of several large organizations, done consulting work, published on the topics and is just an outstanding human being. So appreciate everybody's support of this, this great citizen and his nomination of the sport re, nomination to the sport. Thank you.

"Chair Ackerson"

Any other questions or concerns every now, this is an appointment that requires a voice vote all in favor say, aye aye.

In opposition, you're in opposition to passage unanimously. She'll be sent to the present calendar I have number 7 will remain tabled item number 8 at the sponsors request is going to remain tabled. So we will move to.

Number 1 I d22 dash 1190 transitory reverse city.

Talk discussion.

We don't need a 1st or 2nd on this. Do we for discussion? Okay. Great. It's my understanding that we have.

Both the board chair and vice chair present virtually and MS Butler, the executive director present folks. We've called this here today to talk about. We had some concerns regarding the dark board appointments.

So, we wanted to get to the bottom of, of some things 1 of the things that we were going to talk about in.

I don't have a queue here, so Mr.

John Carrie, you guys, uh, chime in anytime you want. Okay so we're not going to have a whole lot of formalities here. But, uh.

I'm going to open the floor.

To questions here from my colleagues, some of the concerns that I, as the chair have, let's just put our cards on the table.

Is after the talk investigation report came out.

Last year from this committee.

There were certain members of what we'll call executive staff.

That were implicated in many.

Concerns try to be polite about this, but, and many concerns. So, 1 in particular was was Mr friends and, uh.

Those individuals remained on staff, even in light of, uh.

The question will conduct that was brought out in those reports and we're here to get to the bottom of that. Uh.

You know, where does the buck stop? What did the board do to say? Look, you know, we've got these, these actors here that the evidence shows that they.

To part either directly or indirectly, because let's let's let's let's be.

Clear here, in my opinion, silence in a way is complicit also. And so after a review that, uh, there was concern, this, this body expressed concern about Mr. France in particular and yet.

You all kept him employed for another over a year.

Your +, and then he shifted over to what I'm presuming is a.

A better paying job with your subcontractor. So I think it's it's a p*** poor message to the community.

Quite frankly, and that's why we're here today to discuss that to discuss with the board discussed with MS Butler discussed and who was involved in the decision making to move forward with status quo with that being said,

versus the queue is council and purpose counsel and purpose. You have the floor Madam.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Thank you Mr. chairman Thank you. Miss Butler and if I miss pronounce your name, sir please forgive me miscellaneous. I have some questions here and they're pretty direct and 1st of. 1st of all I'd like to start by asking MS Butler. Did you receive the questions that I attempt to send? At least 3 times 3 different ways.

"Carrie Butler"

I did not receive any questions. We've gotten a number of open records request from your office, but I don't know that. I have direct questions from you, but we have been a receipt of open records request from your office.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay. Well, I apologize. And it's pretty unfortunate because I have a lot of questions, but I'm going to piggyback off of chairman ackrason in regards to Mr. France. Um, so I'm going to start by asking you. Were there ever any disciplinary actions taken against Mister friends?

"Carrie Butler"

So, I was made aware prior to this meeting that 2 employees. The discussions about 2 employees were going to be subject to this and. And as Tom's member, ackrason mentioned kind of the whereabouts of a former employee now. So I'm happy to discuss generally about targets employment practices and our workforce. But I'm concerned if the discussions are going to be very specific and about specific employees. The reason being is employees or former employees have a right to privacy. This is an open public meeting. Employees do have the right to privacy about questions or statements made about them, and, especially if those questions could lead to potential litigation. So, again, I'm happy to answer questions generally, and I'll do the best I can to answer that, but I did want to let this committee know that there are exceptions to open meetings and they are specific to do with employees and their right to privacy. So, it's been my practice at public board meetings for over 20 years. That if there are specific questions or a specific discussions about a particular employee that could lead. To potential discipline, I think those are done in executive session so I'll try my best to answer the questions about this. But based on the advice of our external legal counsel, I may defer to some of my practice and my experience with closed sessions. So, I would also remind or just refresh that the. Talk report that was undertaken for the hiring and conduct for niinisto, which is sort of what this sort of all started from.

Did not make any recommendations for any actions specific to any now, current or former employees and the central Council report that was conducted by a former FBI David buyer.

Also did not make any recommendations about employment, the recommendation surrounding current then current employees, the report that the buyer reported,

the metro Council report was completed in May of 21 recommended a 360 review. A 360 review is a, a type of evaluation whereby colleagues supervisor subordinates provide a review on.

colleagues supervisor subordinates provide a review on

A set employee, and that was the recommendation from that report at that time, which we undertook along with the other training and policy. Some of the other recommendations in that report.

"Chair Ackerson"

I'm going to interrupt here for just a 2nd, before I tend to fall back to my colleague counsel and purpose, and I want to be straight with here.

1st, and foremost, anything you talked about in executive session, you are correct that's attorney client privilege. We don't have a right to know that. However.

Anything that's not an executive session. I don't care if it's an employee or an elected official or whoever.

You work for the government employees we're talking about work for the government. It's public knowledge. If you had discussions, whether it be emails.

Discussions during your board meetings, which are open to the public or discussions.

Just amongst yourselves over a cup of coffee before afternoon, or whenever we are going to talk about specific employees, we're not going to dance around the issues here.

And when it comes to, you're right, the the 2 reports being the, the talk report, and the metro Council's report, while they may not have made recommendations they pointed out major flaws if those flaws went.

On addressed, you know, we shouldn't have to tell you how to do your job.

We're here today to decide whether or not you doing your job properly.

And so, with that being said, I tend to refer back to counsel and purpose Madam, you have the floor.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Thank you. Mr. chair. Uh, MS Butler. So I'm going to ask you again.

Will there ever any disciplinary actions taken against former.

Assistant Director Randy, France.

"Carrie Butler"

There there were no disciplinary actions, and as I stated, we conducted, I just needed we conducted the 360 review as was recommended by the metro Council report.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, so, you know, you stayed it when you came before the council before that you need it Randy.

And I like to know how did Randy assist you in your current position as executive director and what value did he add to talk.

"Carrie Butler"

So, as I mentioned, my advice has been, but from our external legal counsel, is that.

Specific discussions about specific employees should be done in close session and I understand this body and are are interested in very clearly. Very specific.

You know, actions or discussions about a particular employee, but I have been advised otherwise by my counsel.

And, uh, you know, as, as I mentioned, I did think about this before coming on coming to this meeting for that very reason.

Okay, it is the employee or former employees, right?

To privacy as well as the protection against potential litigation for the employer to have specific discussions about specific employees and their personnel actions, you know, about personal what they've done their performance evaluation.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Who is your council are outside?

"Carrie Butler"

Legal counsel is we have a legal services contract with bolster for grave.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Can you repeat that bolster for grade?

Can you spell it for us? Please.

"Carrie Butler"

B. O. E. H. L. stowford. S. T. O. P. H. E. R. grave.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Thank you now, I have some other questions for you. You may consider those questions general. However, I would like to get answers to them and.

I just won't direct answers and I'm just trying to be as patient as I can be, but I would appreciate if you stay on subject. When I ask you a question, please don't get off because it confuses not only me, but everyone else is waiting for an answer.

So, I like to start with your employee handbook. Does your employee handbook and discipline code apply to all employees?

"Carrie Butler"

Yeah.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Does your discipline code allow for suspensions with, or without pay. Suspensions can be given with, or without pay.

"Carrie Butler"

Suspensions can be given with, or without pay. Can you do paid administrative leave you? My call.

"Committee Member Purvis"

If if if it's administratively is pay.

"Carrie Butler"

You might call a paid suspension, paid administrative leave. And that would be based on. Can you give an example. A general example would be an employee who we felt had done something, but we were still in the investigation phase and so we took them off. But we're investigating the matter at hand. Do you invest? I don't know that that happens that often, but it it is something that could happen in basic. Employment issues,

"Committee Member Purvis"

so you said that it all depends on the classification of the of the person's job, right?

"Carrie Butler"

No, it would depend on the investigation taking place the matter at hand what the potential discipline was. I'm talking about very general. Examples or or general terms.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, so would insubordination be something that you would have to investigate.

"Carrie Butler"

In coordination would be a sort of standard employer employee issue.

"Committee Member Purvis"

So saying. Mary Jane was insubordinate and Mary Jane supervisor. Wrote her up, or are suspended her would she receive a. A, no pay.

"Carrie Butler"

That is a, that is a very, very specific question. Um.

I guess I don't I'm not exactly following your line of questioning or if there is something that you're specifically trying to get at. Are you asking? If we have a.

Clear cut.

I don't know, like a paragraph process specifically for if somebody was accused of it or had alleged insubordination. If they would be put on paid administrative leave automatically.

If that's the answer it would be no insubordination is something that would be handled.

You know, based on what it was.

"Committee Member Purvis"

So, you have a process for insubordination, correct? If.

Insubordination out of uniform you have a disciplinary process is not automatically a suspension, but maybe it's a verbal warning written warning and.

It goes in order of steps, correct?

"Carrie Butler"

There is an application of progressive discipline. Okay.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay all right so now.

As, you know that I have been a request in some open records.

And some of the documents that I have reviewed, I see that there's a disparity in what you're saying and also what your discipline code is saying.

And so I'm here today to present you with some of these facts and I just. Clearly want answers, so.

And I'm gonna tell you this, I will have to call names of employees that have been involved in.

Some of the behavior, so I'm just letting it be known now that these employees will be called. Not I need to know before I waste my time and everybody else's time.

Will you be able to answer these questions.

"Carrie Butler"

Since I've not been privy to what you're about to ask, I don't I can't I have no idea if I'm going to be able to answer the questions I am, I was not aware that I was going to be questioned about a specific discipline or suspension or specific employees that I so I will, as I mentioned,

I will do my best to answer these questions as they're presented, but I'll do so in keeping with the advice of external counsel and what.

I have practiced as far as, you know, fair employment practices for public meetings and employees and individual discipline. So I will do my absolute best.

And I'll make sure to take some notes as you're as you're listing off names. I'll tell you what. I'll put those questions on the back end. So, let me go ahead with these general questions. Okay, sure.

"Committee Member Purvis"

I'll tell you what. I'll put those questions on the back end. So, let me go ahead with these general questions. Okay, sure.
Are your salaried employees allowed or authorized to earn hourly wages in addition to their salary?

"Carrie Butler"

Employees that are exempt from over time or non exempt may earn additional pay if they were over. Yes.

"Committee Member Purvis"

So, if I'm a salary employee, and I'll work 4 hours over, I'm able to get paid early and my salary.

"Carrie Butler"

In some circumstances for some front line managers and supervisors. That is allowable under Department of labor law.

"Committee Member Purvis"

1st, I've ever heard of that 1. okay.

"Carrie Butler"

It was actually a change made a few years ago for department of labor, where, as managers that we're exempt from over time, were being asked to work.
More than was sort of reasonable so it, it's sort of narrowed the focus of what an exempt and nonexempt job is.
Okay, but I would say somebody I am not a labor attorney or, you know, an employment attorney. So some of these questions may be better answered by an employment terms but please continue with your general question. I'll do my best.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, it has been stated that torque has a limited budget when it comes to operations, which is the reason why it has been told that the agency cannot afford to bring pair of transit services in house.
Is it true? This is the reason that these services will remain outsourced.

"Carrie Butler"

Right now we're under contract as this body knows with Andy transportation for a 5 year with 22 year options, as part of the contract.
As we look to the next step, and as we think about what we want to do when that contract ends, or if we choose not to exercise and options, we are intending to look at, you know,

all the options that could be used to provide this service.

"Committee Member Purvis"

So you're saying that there is a possibility that these services can come back in house.

"Carrie Butler"

We're, we're going to look at all the options that we have available to us.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, this bottler are you wherever, any issues within the organization that the board of directors should have been made aware of.

"Carrie Butler"

Not at this time now.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Um, can you.

Till the counts about the recent turnaround at talk.

For example, the safety director, the diversity and inclusion director, the transportation director and the assistant human resource director, leaving the company.

"Carrie Butler"

Did you mean turnover.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Turn over, turn around.

People live in sure.

"Carrie Butler"

Uh, those individuals left for a variety of reasons.

Retirement taking on new opportunities.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, so since you are functioning without Randy France.

Has his replacement been found.

"Carrie Butler"

We are we, we have a chief operating officer position that is open right now being conducted under a national search.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, and do you know how many employees and maintenance and transportation have left the company within the last 6 months?

"Carrie Butler"

I don't know off the top of my head that number.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, um.

Unfortunately, you did not get this list of questioning, but I had requested that Mr. William Harris, the maintenance director be present today.

So, it looks like if this is okay by the committee, it looks like you guys will have to come back and the, the appropriate people would need to be here here since you cannot answer all the questions. Um.

You may want to bring your legal counsel with you as well.

Um.

I have a question that is really concern to me about.

Some all that has been stored on the grounds of your maintenance shop located at 29th and Broadway.

Um, have you, um.

Can you give me some information about how long it's been stored there and are you taking any attempt?

So, is the company taking any attempts to comply with any environmental protection agencies recommendations to abate the problem?

And are you aware of any ground contamination if this is true and has the ground been tested?

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, there was, there was a specific issue that the Department of environmental protection was called the property we took that we got that taken care of and that has been resolved.

We are monitored by our environmental regulations to do certain groundwater testing for a variety of environmental regulations.

On a very consistent basis so we don't have any issues that we know of.

Um.

The most recent 1 that I think you've been made aware of was already addressed and taken care of was a.

Oil that was that had leaked out of the thing, and that's been since removed and cleaned up.

Okay, well, I have some evidence here.

"Committee Member Purvis"

That I really need to share with my colleagues about if your employees.

There 1 employee, and I will not call her by name.

1 employee is a salaried employee and the information that I requested shows that she is not only salary salary, but she's also receiving hourly pay.

Then I have another employee that was suspended for being out of uniform and the, it appears that the, um.

Disciplinary action taken against him was not the proper protocol. He never received a verbal warning, a written warning.

He went straight to suspension for 10 days and then there's another employee who was suspended for insubordination who was suspended for 3 weeks with pay.

Versus the 1, I just mentioned was suspended for 10 days without pay, and then I have plenty of pictures here that shows a lot of your employees that are in areas where they should have own personal protection equipment to protect them from harm.

Here's 1, with cowboy boots on here's 1 with sneakers on with these are heavy shoes that are not slip resistant. And I see a lot of.

Guys in, uh, T, shirts that don't have talk written on them that have jackets that don't have talk written on them. And so can you, um.

Can you talk about that?

"Carrie Butler"

I don't have I'm not privy to the papers or pictures that you're looking at. So, I wouldn't want to speak to any specifics of those.

But what I would offer is and especially given the sort of breadth of questions that you've asked me about our employment practices are handbook or code of conduct or discipline applications of discipline.

And some. It sounds like some very specific employee issues.

You know what I would hope that we could have in this conversation between spark and our board and myself,

the staff and the metro Council on this particular committee are subsequent discussions on policies regulations that we think will make improvements for issues.

So, I'm happy to sounds like there's maybe some more information that you would like to share with me and we would take that into account and look at ways that we can improve.

Are, as you mentioned, whether a template handbooks, whether it's a policy, whether it's a regulation or some other procedure process. But I think that is the purpose of this conversation between our, our board and this body.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, um, I think I'm done with my questioning, but I'm just gonna make 1 comment that it is not the council's job to make recommendations to you on how to operate chart.

But I would expect the torque would hold the end of the bargain up by treating their employees for. And, um.

I would think that you should know what's going on within the organization that you run. So I'm done asking you questions. I'm going to turn it back over to the chair.

"Chair Ackerson"

Excellent counseling patient counseling, have the floor.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Thank you. Mr. chair. Um, so I, I do have 1 quick question for the executive director but for Mr. uh, and Mr. I'm going to refocus this line of questioning to both of you. Because in reality, what what spurred this as we tabled mysterious appointment. And what we're debating here is whether or not, we should stop this reappointment vote down the reappointment of miss. And I would argue if we did that, we are ostensibly saying we should probably vote down the entire board and reimport them. Because we feel that you all haven't.

Taken the necessary steps.

To fix things and to hold the executive director in this case MS. Butler accountable for fixing things and frankly replace her if she's not the right person to lead the organization. So, just a very quick question. Um, for MS Butler.

Did Randy friends get a 20,000 dollar payout when he left the organization?

"Carrie Butler"

No

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

so there was no. I'm sorry

"Carrie Butler"

he resigned.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

So there was no compensation provided to him. Above and beyond his standard compensation. In his last several paychecks when he was leaving the organization. Yeah. Okay, um, this is a question for Mr. Lewis and, uh, and. So we have 2 employees here 1 in Randy Franz. The other 1 I'll bring up is Tanya. Carter. Uh, this is the director of finance had this role under Mr.

when he was the executive director, when he was the director of park. And, um, was in that role, although a lot of the media headlines focused on the incredibly egregious.

Sexual assault and sexual harassment, um, because that that is so shocking to our morals into our standards as as Americans as humans. That, uh, but a lot of the investigation focused on his fiscal mismanagement.

So, I guess my question for for the board members is what actions let's start with this general 1, what actions if any did you take.

To discipline, and or remove those that were either complicit, or had other problems that were uncovered, or that were there during Mr. tenure and whose judgment?

Around fiscal management, uh, and around the sexual harassment and assault allegations, uh, as far as I'm concerned or fairly suspect. So,

what actions do you all take to correct that? And have you taken particularly related to these employees?

"John T. Launius"

Thank you, man, a counselor and forgetting my, my name correct uh, much appreciate it. Um, and to be frank thanks thanks for the council for inviting us in.

Um, I think as Carrie said, the board, uh, is very much interested in, having some, some productive conversations.

Uh, and and, uh, can own kind of criticism as an opportunity, um, to really, uh, assess where we are. So, I want to 1st, just maybe say to your question that, uh, you know, the.

Or did take immediate action there are a number of procurement and expense related policies that, uh, the board worked with leadership to, to adopt.

When when we start talking about the specifics of employees, I'm gonna have to again, kind of defer to Carrie's statements.

Uh, related to, to, to specifics related to employees. Well, what I do, I guess maybe want to take an opportunity to, to underline is that, um, with the metro council buyer report, um.

It really called for action of the board and leadership.

To investigate, and to perform conduct a 306 evaluation, which we did for the entire leadership team. Uh, and.

Uh, carried forward with the recommendations of those 360 evaluations um, not getting into specifics. I would just know none of those recommendations included termination.

Of an employee, as as a board, um, you know, our responsibility is is definitely at the governance level. Um, so, uh, we followed the recommendations of of the professionals and and have the report as an outline.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

So Mr. let me let me follow up in a in a broader sense.

Did without citing specific employees.

Did the board give direction or other commentary to MS Butler?

On, um, concerns and DIS, and or discipline of any type about employees don't mention names, but any employees did you guys say to her?

Hey, based on this, the, the both the investigation that your team did, and the investigation that we did, where several employees were, you know, tangentially involved in this did,

did you make any commentary to her and request any action related to any employees at all uh, up to, and including termination.

Yes, and what type of without mentioning specific employees what.

Type of discipline was recommended.

"John T. Launius"

Well, the, uh, let me, let me clarify cause I definitely do not want to mislead. There was no direct.

Um, punitive or anything directly coordinated, but I will tell you that, uh, for month after month, uh, enclosed session, uh, the full board was engaged on specific employees,

specific conduct. Uh, and we're resolute and ensuring that we adhere to the recommendations of the report, but also best practice associated with employee management. And that included the 360 of evaluation. sixty of evaluation Which the board was, um. Adam and consistent in, in supporting the leadership conduction.

"Carla Dearing"

I think to jump in on that, just to tie that to what I said, when I was in front of this group. Several weeks ago is that I said that we. Did have a process and we did keep take the. Recommendations very seriously and the words I used is that we kept it on the front burner and I feel like that's what John is also confirming. This was something that we continually. Discussed and in an executive. Session and looked at the weighed against the overall of course, we were also. Addressing many, many other things it was covid, it was, uh, financial challenges. You know, there were many, there were all kinds of new innovation that we were trying to do in terms of technologies and complete support of the complete overhaul and thinking about the operation improvement in every area. It was really a juggling act. But I, as I said before, and I'll say, again. Did. We, we were concerned and we, we kept the issues on the front burner.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Um, I have a clarifying, I want a pivot to safety. Uh, 1 of the things that struck me in some of the employees. Recent testimony a council was how much safety seemed to be a concern. Um, clarifying question for MS Butler. Um. Have have operators been directed to call dispatch before calling 901 in case of emergency.

"Carrie Butler"

An operator would be instructed to use the on board radio system for an incident. That would want calling dispatch for that could be any number of issues. If there was some immediate concern. They would have the judgment as we all would in any circumstance to call 911 but the training is to call our what we call a radio room to report any incidents.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Can you share the standard operating procedures that indicate that and including the date in which they were, uh, including the date in which they republished going back maybe of the last 6 months.

That would just the section you don't need the whole standard operators of the sections that address this. Could you send the date that the standard operating procedure was updated? And particularly when that section was updated, and including the section that addresses this, can you, can you send that to us? Please.

"Carrie Butler"

Sure, you want our standard operating procedure for for a CO operator to call the radio room when, when there is in case of emergency what is the what is the procedures?

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

And how are your employees trained on what to do when there is a safety concern when they're operating.

Okay, thank you. Um, so again for Mr. and, um.

We've had several comments made here in front of council about.

Number 1, safety concerns, which is the direction to call dispatch instead of 911 again, we'll get more information, um, from, uh, MS Butler on that.

But, uh, there have been instances where safety concerns reported and long wait times. Right? 30 minute.

Plus, wait times, uh, has this been addressed by the board and what actions were recommended from the board to address these safety concerns. safety concerns

"John T. Launius"

I'm might need some more information related to the specificity relating to the wait times. Um.

Uh, obviously if it's, uh, an incident.

Um, depending on the location, um, you know, obviously, you know, we, we have a pretty large multi County, multi state.

Geo service territory, so it's really difficult to to speak to the.

Prevalence of how often, but it is um, I would have to get some more information and happy to kind of.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

So, thank you, let me put it this way. Is the board conducting any oversight I mean.

Sorry, I'm somebody speaking. Oh.

Mr. do you still have us? Okay. Let me, uh, maybe I'll direct a question or 2 to miss. I miss hearing.

I think you're on mute by the way the, um, let me.

Ask it this way, uh, miss during while Mr. is out is the board.

What kind of oversight is the board conducting related to safety because. Whereas I think I did hear Mr. wanna say he wasn't aware of some of these circumstances.

Meanwhile, this was at a public meeting at Metro Council, where multiple members of your employees came and testified related to these safety concerns. So, it wasn't like this was done in close session. They didn't call me on my cell phone and tell me this.

They did this at a council meeting. So, it was fairly public. I'm sure that that wasn't the 1st time. This has come up. So, what is the board doing to monitor safety?

Particularly employee safety as well as passenger safety and follow up on recommendations to improve safety.

"Carla Dearing"

What the board is doing is what they have, what we have done with every issue that's come to our attention. We have taken out an opportunity when we find out about it, which is going to be in.

In a board meeting for the most part, uh.

And we probe and ask questions, we ask for follow up, we utilize our newish committee structure that I talked about.

Last time I testified where we have really become very active in pushing issues to each of the subgroups.

Which then are taking on any, any of a range of fact, finding to even 3rd party review. So, as these issues come to our attention, we, we actually, we do dig into them.

We've been rolling through.

All kinds of issues over the past few years, just trying to work through all the different things that have been raised as a concern these safety issues.

If they're the ones that are being discussed in the last few weeks, have come to our attention. And we, we would do the same thing. We've already had some conversations about it. The same kind of probing.

Um, and question asking and and even auditing, if appropriate the same set of questions we would ask about this issue.

John, I, you are, you are breaking up so I jumped in.

"John T. Launius"

Yep, my apologies, thank you, Carl, I call it. The Internet counsel on your question was related to kind of the board's oversight kind of regularity of review.

I heard Carlos talent comments there, and we just affirm that the board takes a pretty deep operational and financial dive each month.

My common practices obviously, throughout throughout that overview as well as through public comments I'll be candid.

Just, as you guys, we get a lot of insights in in those public comments settings. So my regular practice is to identify those areas of concerns many areas where I have a knowledge gap.

To follow up with with Carrie, on a 1 on 1. uh, oftentimes Carla will also join for those debriefs but we'll really kind of dig into, um, the statements made by the general public.

We'll get, uh, contacts and then the board, uh, typically within that month, if.

Time affords us that opportunity. Um, we'll assess and and propose action.

Uh, the, the example I might give is, uh, you know, in in, uh, the past year, um, you know, top 3 and our, our disability services, uh, has obviously been of great interest.

Um, to the community to our riders to our staff, uh, it's a critical service that that we are committed to getting. Right? Um, there seemed to be, um, some distrust.

Uh, to to put it lightly within, within the public's view, looking at our data and so I really want to ensure right that our data, uh, that we're following best practices I want to make sure that we, uh, try to install public confidence in that and so, um,

in coordination, uh, with with our board, uh, we identified, um, several areas that we thought we could probably, um, both support. The community's need to, um, have confidence.

Uh, in in, in our processes in our data, while at the same time, uh, supporting staff, to make sure that, uh, that they're supported, uh, in in into their data is received in the way it is. So, so we've, uh, we're gonna work with 3rd party.

Uh, agency we're gonna work with, uh, riders from, uh, top 3 services, uh, to to, um, help, uh, identify, uh, that that contractor, um, uh, the board will be having a report out at our next meeting.

As well, as Carrie noted, the MV contract is on a 5 year term.

The board felt, uh, it would be a great opportunity to begin the planning process. Now, I believe that the procurement process will begin, uh, thinking about 16 to 18 months.

So, in advance of that, we really want to work with our writers and with the community to make sure that, as we develop that new RFP, that proposal that will provide services to our community that we do that in collaboration.

With our with our riders and with the community. So those are just some, some examples of the, um, the issues that we're hearing on the ground both from.

Uh, target staff, but also from the community, and then how we're processing that that information at a governance level through the board, and, and, uh, uh, doing the best, uh, as a board as we know possible, uh, to really support the community and and support.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Okay. Thank you 1, quick question then and then the last question for for, uh, so W W. W, quick question is when was the last review that the board did of MS. Butler and can you provide that review to us? Please.

"John T. Launius"

Yeah, thank you. So, um, I will acknowledge that, um, talk lacked historically a, a formal.

Uh, review process, uh, the board identified that that gap, and have actually worked, um, uh, in collaboration as we develop a, um.

Um, organizational, strategic plan and dashboard that I think you guys are going to be really excited about, uh, cause it's something that we can really regularly.

Um, share with, with key metrics that we in the community fill are success.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Mr, I'm sorry. Say again. Yeah, I I don't mean to interrupt you, but.

That's all interesting. I just want to know when was the last time. The board reviewed MS. Butler is there a date? You can give me the last time you did a review of her performance.

"John T. Launius"

This month okay. Can you share that review with counsel?

We are actually in the process of compiling, it was a multi stakeholder review.

Um, so all of the input from those both carries self evaluation, um, her staff evaluation and our board as well as the mayor's office evaluation is being compiled into a single report that I will facilitate with Carrie in the coming weeks.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Okay, please send that to us as soon as it's complete. And when was the last time she was reviewed prior to that.

"John T. Launius"

Again, I was trying to get a little bit of context as to state that upon carrie's hiring. They're actually the organization lacked.

Um, a professional review, so we had to build it, uh, literally from scratch and the, um, it was important for the board to make sure that carries review really matched and near the organizational success.

So, we have worked really diligently to align the organizational success metrics with kerry's own personal professional metrics.

"Vice Chair Piagentini"

Okay, thank you. Um, yeah, it sounds like this is the 1st time and and that's fine. Thank you. The MS.

I am uninterested in having a scapegoat related to the problems that we're having a talk.

So, I'm not interested in voting against your nomination.

Um, just because we're, we're angry at talk, not doing their job and taking it out on, you know, a board member. Right? I'm not, we're not I'm not doing that with that said, I'm still not convinced and maybe you can help convince me here.

That, and what I've said, and I'll say it here publicly, is that.

If I think that unless I have evidence that you specifically are doing your job as a board member, then I must indict the entire board and say the whole board isn't doing their job.

So, can you help me understand and help convince me that.

The board is doing everything you can to address this.

And that more specifically, because, and the reason I'm saying, I'm not interested a scapegoat. You might for all I know. Be the best person on the board. Right? And everybody else could be terrible. And so I don't want to kick off the person that ostensibly could be the best person there.

So, can you help me understand and convince me that the board is doing everything you can, um, and that either voting you down specifically or

any other member of the board at this point would be an error. Can you help me help? Convince me.
That.

"Carla Dearing"

See, what I can say potentially that would help is that when I stepped on to the board, it was very clear that part of the reason that things happen.

In the way that they did with Ferdinand, was that there had been a huge effort to silence the board, um, in all the, um.

Important ways that are extremely important for governance and so the irony of me being the potential escape is that I was definitely the strongest voice on across the board strategic planning, finance, et cetera operations.

To say, that, you know, the board must have a voice, I may definitely be the most noise at the beginning, and I'd continue to make a lot of noise. So it is a little bit ironic to have it be me.

However, we have as a board at varying levels, we've reconstituted ourselves. We are new.

And the, uh, we have literally been going issue by issue by issue by issue. And it, it.

I could see, maybe if it's not fast enough, or if it's if we're still missing things, but I can tell you that we spend every single meeting.

And in between strategy, uh, excuse me committee meetings I'm on strategy. I'm chair finance.

And then the reason for that is to.

Get a finger on the pulse of exactly. What's happening. I personally am someone who finds that.

A lot of what happens is driven by the money. So that's a that's a good perch from which to try to address issues.

But we, we are extraordinarily active as a board and we are very strong on governance and Bonita black who's fairly new on the board. But who is really.

Has written down, 100% on governance is reviewing everything. We've done. And to create even more recommendations for the board, so.

That's all I can say is that we have been and are very, very active and, um, trying to take things apart and build them back up as much as a board can do and we, as talk have improved a lot.

In these past few years, on a lot of levels, and in the areas where we're still not.

There we're not going, we don't want to stop.

We want to keep pushing the experience that I bring on governance, technology, finance, and the hunger and strategy and the hunger that I have for chart to take this opportunity.

For the improvements that have already been made, but for the possibility of becoming a world class service to the people who need it most, which is our core riders.

That that is, that's well in process and I'd like to see it continuing.

So that would be my answer to your question.

"John T. Launius"

Can you tell me if I might add? I want to also just know and I'll exclude myself from this. Um.

If you want to talk to your board that is not going to go along with.

Uh, what is, uh, told to them, whether it be internally by the executive director and again, this might not be the best most popular thing to say, or by Metro Council.

And you want somebody that's really going to evaluate and understand the complexities and I know that this body understands.

The complexities of a federally Malta jurisdiction refunded transit organization that is responsible.

For the awesome job of transporting our development disabled throughout our community and broadening circles of access and opportunity for work and for school. Uh, again, myself included.

You will not find a better board than what is put together right now. Um, and and granted, some of them are in their 1st year and and really having to lean in and understand some of these complexities.

Um, Carla is not 1 of those individuals. Carla, uh, if you know, Carla, and if you know her background in the community, um, I think you would understand what a passion and what a expertise that she brings to the table.

So, again, I'm probably not the most popular guy and zoom right now, but I, I.

Just note, um.

This is the exact type of board, uh, that we hope that people like Carla.Volunteer to sort of on.

"Chair Ackerson"

For the record also, we were joining it a little while back by councilman Winkler. So the record reflect that he's present for the meeting. The next queue is councilman read councilman read. You have the floor, sir?

"Committee Member Reed"

Uh, thank you. Mr. chair. Um, this question. Well, 1st of all I'd like to thank console and purpose for putting together.

A really extensive list of questions that unfortunately, director, uh, did not see, I saw them so thank you for that. Um.

Questions from Mr. did I understand you to say that the director Butler is going to be.

Involved in, and establishing the criteria for her own review.

I'm sorry, you skipped out just for a minute.

I said, uh, did I understand correctly? And maybe I didn't, but the director butler's going to be involved in establishing the criteria for her own performance review.

"John T. Launius"

No, no, we did incorporate a self evaluation component.

Within her annual evaluation, so she gets to kind of, uh, critique and highlight her success and barriers in addition to those of the board staff.

Okay, um, and is there a, uh, safety subcommittee, uh, as part of the organization or, or part of the board organization there?

"John T. Launius"

Yeah, so so, safety concerns kind of fall under the board committees of HR and customer service yes, there is a safety committee internally. Uh, that is comprised of.

Uh, staff and and union members that that meets regularly.

Uh, as well and helped a DB.

"Committee Member Reed"

How how often do they meet Carrie?

"Carrie Butler"

You'd have to be on a cadence is a monthly yeah semi monthly and I would also just add the this board approved the agency safety plan and that is falls under the purview of the board and the.

Established safety committee.

"Committee Member Reed"

Okay, so the safety committee meets and then, do they give you a report in person or they just to give you a document to read? How does that work?

"Carrie Butler"

Both meeting minutes here, and any other issues could be brought forth through other informal changes of communication.

"John T. Launius"

Okay, yeah, the board, the monthly board meetings also take a dive into the, the data and the board typically drives in if there's any, um, large contrast from year to day or month to month.

Um, so we just try to kind of uncover what's driving any of those.

Those inconsistencies that the only other thing, I would just note.

Um, and and this is for the, um, uh, HR subcommittee, um, as chair of the board, um, uh, also the, uh, uh, primary contact.

Uh, but but 1 of the, the steps, that was immediately taken by by the board and organization was to install a, a, uh, anonymous, 1800 line. And so I just kind of want to note that in addition to some of those other issues.

Uh, myself as well as the chair of that HR subcommittee, um, uh, directly received those. directly received those

Uh, we can review who has reviewed how often they have reviewed these issues. Um, I will tell you, I have a personal commitment to review every 1 of those hotline items.

Uh, typically, within an hour of 2 of them coming in, uh, as well as we track and follow up and we always get closure on each 1 of those items.

Uh, it's hard to talk about an average.

But, um, you know, it's it's it's a regular occurrence.

Because those can come from the general public, those can come from internal, uh, with staff members and then they are routed, kind of based on severity of, of the incident, all the way to and including a direct referral.

To law enforcement, so just want to make a note that also.

"Committee Member Reed"

Okay, um, and I'm going to pivot your just a little bit and go back to. Um, Mr, France, I'm not going to refer to him. I just did, but I didn't mean to do that. Um.

So, does director Butler have an employment contract?

And it did, um, the exec or the assistant director did he have an employment contract?

"Carrie Butler"

I can speak to that. The public employees in Kentucky are not able to have an employment contract.

Okay, so there's, there's nothing.

"Committee Member Reed"

From a statute standpoint that would prevent you or an assistant director from.

Taking a position immediately with a key subcontractor um, which, to me, would, uh, present potentially a huge conflict of interest where the public is concerned about.

"Carrie Butler"

There is no employment contract and no, I think what you might be. Thinking of as like a like a disclosure or non compete.

"Committee Member Reed"

That's what I meant. Yes, yes.

"Carrie Butler"

Yeah, to my understanding is those would not apply.

"Committee Member Reed"

So, uh, ostensibly like MD, they're in there. I know. How far are they into their contract? I know it's a 5 year deal, right?

"Carrie Butler"

The contract was awarded in December of 2019 with 5 years to expire. Same date in December of 2024.

And the contract includes 22 year options.

"Committee Member Reed"

Okay, so an X employee could be in an executive position. With this key contractor, and then be in a position to where they would negotiate with. You are with dark for the contract is that what I'm understanding.

"Carrie Butler"

To my knowledge, there would not be any laws or regulations that would preclude that. Okay, and, I mean, I might just add that when just as an example when the contract the contract was held by envy, and then the contract was held by 1st transit and then it was held by MV again. So that's going back some 15 years. There are employees driver, supervisors, dispatcher, call centers that have have extensively worked for all 3 companies, because they are committed to the. And they are committed to doing the work, you know, we were, we were. Glad to have an open house at I know. Not. Very many folks attended that open house. But it was really encouraging to hear from, you know, employees about their commitment to the service and what they do. So, you know, we'd be glad to have another open house. Where members of his body could come and hear from the employees and understand more about what they do but we were, you know, it was too bad that not as many people attended that.

"Committee Member Reed"

Okay, and, you know, I completely understand that employees, employee sharing and, you know, people leave and they go to work for whomever they want to go to work for. What I'm talking about is at an executive level. And to me, there's a. Potential for a huge conflict of interest, at least from a perception standpoint when an executive leaves. An organization, a government organization like Target, and then goes to work immediately for a subcontractor with. With whom we're paying millions and millions of dollars for their service. And there and the road for a contract renewal, uh. In a relatively short span of time. So that's very troubling to me. Um. But you're saying that there's nothing from a statute standpoint that prevents that it may be something for us to think about moving forward. That's all I had. Thanks.

"Chair Ackerson"

So, president, James, you were next in the queue, and you had the floor, sir

"Council President James"

Thank you. Mr. chair. Um, I'll probably have to break mine into several times.

At the trough, I have a couple questions for both MS. during. And Mr. are you both aware that torque is in contract negotiations with the labor union currently.

"John T. Launius"

Yes, we are both aware.

"Council President James"

Okay. And have you all had any conversations with MS Butler about how you wish that.

That contract negotiation take place any guidance provided to her.

"John T. Launius"

Yes, such as that, um,
we would like for it to be collaborative successful that we hope to reach a good resolution to make sure that we take into mind right the interest of the union and employees,
while also taking into account the solvency and sustainability of the organization, but.
But we have left the specifics to her really more kind of overarching support guidance.
During what you'd like to add anything to that.

"Carla Dearing"

I would just confirm that that is the case and just note that.
As a board when we talk about that and the issue, it is an executive session.

"Council President James"

Okay, and then the next question I have is relates back to what's been brought up a few times about safety incidents. Do you all receive a report of weekly or monthly about the number of safety incidents that occur on.

"Carla Dearing"

Yes, yes, and I'll just maybe say 1 thing, which is the.
At a high level metrics are brought to the board and we review them each and every month. Um.
The, the question can always be, what else should we be looking at? And that's what I was trying to say we.
Always ask those questions, especially if new concerns, maybe our dashboard doesn't highlight.
Some things that we're starting to hear about, but we do look at the data every month, but we also.
Obviously have feel no hesitation and asking what other data should we be looking at? Thank you 1. addition to that. Uh, something else that the, the board is really, um.

"John T. Launius"

Prioritized and this has been occurring for over a year now, which kind of goes back to some of the previous issues of.

Maybe some board isolation dynamics, um.

We we have the, uh, directors and sometimes even the managers of these departments, uh, that actually report out so for that data for the safety, uh, for HR, those are our direct reports from the staff to give them an opportunity to to 1 voice, uh, their experience and their, uh, issues, but also to continue to, to build relationships and communication flow with, with all board members.

"Council President James"

Thank you and I would like to encourage you to review the metro council meeting of August 25th at 60 PM.

Where many employees came to the council meeting and expressed a lot of concern about safety 1 in particular spoke about. particular spoke about A gentleman being on the bus that had a weapon, and eventually please talk showed up to assist and 1 of the torque security personnel told the driver to not speak of this particular incident to anybody else and don't

tell what happened. I found that to be very troubling and I don't know MS. Butler if you heard that or observed.

Conversation with Metro council and if that is the policy that you have told security personnel to talk to talk drivers about not to share information about safety incidents.

That occur on buses, can you advise?

"Carrie Butler"

No, that's absolutely not the policy.

"Council President James"

Okay, so does that mean that you're going to follow up from this and talk to that driver and find out who it was that told them not to talk about those things?

"Carrie Butler"

Yes,

"Council President James"

thank you. And would you report back to us? You're findings? Yes.

Thank you my next questions relate to actually, while we're here. So I guess my, my 1st question is to MS during and Mr.

at any time.

Over the past year or so, were there any conversations with you?

About the possibility of the deputy director or assistant director of park.

Uh, going to work for MV?

"John T. Launius"

No.

"Council President James"

Ok, and then, I guess my next question is, how did you find out that he was going to go work at.

"Carla Dearing"

For myself, I had heard the news that he had resigned. And probably 6 to 8 weeks later. In the course of a casual conversation I learned that he went to.

"John T. Launius"

Thank you and Mr Lonnie I had as good a memory. I remember Carrie sharing that, uh, that Randy had left the organization. Uh, and I believe it was a few weeks later, maybe from Carrie in conversation.

Um.

Asking, you know, what, where Randy ended up or what his and and I think at that point, she.

She mentioned that that he had moved her to envy, but, uh, it was definitely.

"Council President James"

Post is employment, thank you. And did you have any concern at that time? Either of you that because Mr.

The deputy director of the assistant director had supervisory.

Authority over that contract with envy from park.

That now they were working for dark, I mean, working for MV or going to work for or working for. Did you feel like that might be some sort of conflict of interest?

"John T. Launius"

I recall.

I recall also being informed that, um, his service area envy is a law. I think it's 1 of the largest contract, uh, private, uh, contracted, uh, transportation companies. So.

Um, I was informed that it was not, you know, in our region in our area and so.

Um, did not necessarily have any, any concerns.

"Carla Dearing"

I didn't neither, and I thought he was in business development or sales, which would have immediately kind of.

Made me think that he wouldn't have any day to day involvement with our group. I do want to say that. I agree that there could potentially be a conflict of interest and I will tell you that.

If it got to a point where somehow there were.

"Carla Dearing"

Any chance of a conflict, or the ability to influence a contract. I, I would be the 1st person, maybe not the 1st, but I'd be among the 1st to say that I was uncomfortable with that.

So I believe that conflicts of interests are extremely important. You sometimes, you know, there's a potential conflict, and then you discuss it and you determine that it's acceptable or something like that.

And there are times when there is a potential conflict and it turns out. It's a conflict and it needs to be addressed immediately. So I, I did not make that connection at that time. Uh.

As I mentioned last time I was with you all, but I do see the possibility and I would be on high alert if, if that were to become an issue, just speaking for myself.

"Council President James"

Thank you and then I guess my question to MS Butler would be.

Uh, when did you learn that the deputy director assistant director would be going to envy or was even in negotiations with him? B.

To obtain a position there.

"Carrie Butler"

When he told me he was leaving, he did indicate that he was going to envy.

I don't recall the date of when he told me off the top of my head.

"Council President James"

Was that this year?

"Carrie Butler"

It was this year yes. Like, 2022. okay, thank you. And did you have any conversations with anybody?

"Council President James"

And the executive branch of metro government administration about that, when you learned about it.

"Carrie Butler"

Did I inform the executive? I did inform that the mayor's office I believe is who you're referring to that Randy had left.

Did you inform them before he left, or after he left after he left, which would be the practice for employees leaving and I just,

I will reiterate that discussions about employees or former employees for the employer.

You know, are somewhat confidential, just on best employment practice.

"Council President James"

And did you have any.
Knowledge that he was planning to leave before.
He actually left.

"Carrie Butler"

I have conversations with the people that report to me about their.
You know, 5, year plan what they're looking to achieve and accomplish in
their career as a matter of practice and as a matter of appropriate
coaching and development of of the people who report to me.

"Council President James"

Was that yes or no?

"Carrie Butler"

Yes I have conversation with employees about their future plans. Yes.

"Council President James"

you. And did you have any conversations with.
About your former employee coming to work there?

"Carrie Butler"

I did not have any conversations with them be about it.

"Council President James"

Thank you and, um, I'm going to.
Go back a little bit to the time that Ferdinand was the director.
At dark and ask.
Uh, about, um.
Miss during when you were here, there were conversations about Mr. and
things that had gone on at dark when your original appointment, and come
up. And so.
When you went to work with the board.
And I want to think both of you for being board members, because I know
that it's not easy.
Did that conversation come up at any point about any other collateral
damage, any other persons that may, or may not have had knowledge about
Mr.
riscos activities at dark and what would be done about it? And because
I'm asking this question, because MS Butler, you said to us, when you
were here.
That you were going to look into it and so my question is, what did you
do to look into it? Was there an investigation if so by.
Was that question directed towards me? Yes, ma'am.

"Carrie Butler"

Oh, I'm sorry, I thought you said miss, um.
Yeah, so as I mentioned the report conducted by or I guess paid for, by the metro council that was conducted by the buyer recommended that a 360 review be taken for the stack in place we conducted 360 reviews and we continued on with the other sets of recommendations from the DRC report as well as the metro Council report, which included a series of trainings, strengthening of our diversity inclusion office, adding the. our diversity inclusion office adding the Fine revising your travel policies, you know, relatively long list of recommendations that we have put into place have even some we've revised and made improvements as part of the general continuous improvement process.
So, that was a very active and ongoing work based on the recommendations of the metro Council report as well as the talk report.
That that we undertook and continued undertake to to refine processes and procedures.

"Council President James"

Yes, ma'am, but I'm speaking specifically to when I asked you specifically about the deputy director assistant director, and you said you were going to look into that, because.
The report done by the metro council through the former FBI agent. Um, and.
The 2 incidents of people stating that Mr. was present when things were said.
And did nothing about it. And so did you, in fact, look into that particular issue that you said that you would look into.

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, and what was the determination of that?
The determination was that we investigated it and we continued on with the recommendations based on the report based on employment practices and based on the evaluations that we.
That we talked it to make at the time misspelling. You're not answering that question. Um.

"Council President James"

I'm asking, what did you do about that? What was done about that?

"Carrie Butler"

What I'm hearing well, I mean, I guess I'm trying to answer the question, but we had a series of a series of recommendations from.
The track report from the metro Council report, we had our fiscal year 2020 audit.
I believe there was a best practices organs that was passed by this body and all of those recommendations in their entirety responded to the issues and actions that were

under that happened under. So, we, we, and, you know, I'd be happy to sort of re. sort of re
Go through each 1 of those recommendations if that if that is the pleasure of this committee, I might have to give my reading glasses out to do that but I would be happy to do that. If you would like.

"Chair Ackerson"

This bill, I'm going to interrupt just for a clarification on that question of sort of a follow up. I mean, earlier we heard Mr. Talk about when Mr. Franz left to go to and I think. John, I think you said something along the lines that you talked to Carrie about Randy leaving. You know, you had a conversation with her about that I was on the telephone or something like along those lines. And so that's what we're sort of getting at here. Is we put out a talk report that our investigation. Our investigator Mr. Barret buyer came out with in my opinion. Maybe members of this body different in my opinion. That report gave a very bad picture. About Mr Francis involvement in the situation, uh, laughing it at certain jokes that were inappropriate. Uh, and then also the, the potential of complicity through silence. Um, I think it also gave a a very poor picture of your director of finance. Ms. Carter did failed to sort of oversee. And again, Mr brands, we're talking about a guy that's I think it's about 180,000 dollars a year salary. We're not talking about some low level person here. So, the question is twofold 1, is you came before this body, and you said you were going to look into the totality. We're not interested in what the recommendations were. We're. Very interested in today. Why. What what what discussions you have? Not during close session. Not during close session, but any discussions that weren't in close session, be over the telephone email cup of coffee, kind of like you and Mr. has had regarding. Mr. Randy France leaving dark. What discussion did you all have as a board or between board members and you the executive director. About should we do a thorough cleaning of house.

"Carrie Butler"

We did have those discussions, and I really want to reiterate the position that I took earlier on the advice of external legal counsel, that specific employment discussions. 10, and should be done with respect to the employees, right? To privacy and the employer's protection. For any perceived negative connotation that could lead to litigation. So. I believe, and I am happy to continue to explain and report on the actions that park staff board took. Based on the specific recommendations. From the chart report that was conducted, the metro Council report are audit our comprehensive review from federal transit administration and give specifics on those.

And, I mean, I would, I would be glad to do that if that is a pleasure, but discussions about specific employees and things that can lead to discipline in my practice and at the advice of counsel are to be done in closed session again for the right of privacy for the employees and for protection of the employer.

"Chair Ackerson"

Okay, we're going to get back to President. James is a lot of question, but I want to make you very clear in my legal opinion and I had a lot of employment litigation. I had a lot of cases against counties. Here in Kentucky, and at the end of the day, what's a close session is protected but at the end of the day, your conversations outside of close session are not protected and.

No matter who the employee, if it's a 10 dollars an hour employee, or in this case 180,000 dollars a year employee discussions outside of those sessions should be open to this body to discuss and we will have legal wrangling about that.

We will get the bottom this 1 way or the other and if it takes a little while that's okay. Preston. James, you did the floor again. Sir.

"Council President James"

Thank you.

"Carla Dearing"

And make sure I answer your question if you'd like me still to do. So. still to do so

Yes, ma'am president James, you were asking me a question and I, I just wanted to say that I'd love to respond if if you still want. Yes if you, if you would please.

I understood your question to be a little bit about timing and I wanted to say that 1st of all my appointment to the board.

Occur just a day, I think, or days before was.

Resigned fired step down.

And I so.

I was a brand new board member, and during the interim period, when the talk report was being created and beyond, and I, as I understand your question,

I tried to make my voice heard about what I thought a board member should be asking about what the issue should be what the discussion should be I, I definitely tried to make my voice heard.

And when the DRC report came out at the end of 2020.

20, you know, I thought to make my voice heard about what I thought the follow up questions would be, et cetera when, uh, when when metric Council's report came out and you,

all a sub group had pulled our tour dark board together. And I I feel like it was closed session or.

Felt like a very closed meeting um.

That was when I first heard about those findings and those concerns and and read about them and everything else.

And my recollection, and we were, I was less new at that point. We had many new board members at that point, but we, we did commit. To taking a serious look at things. Um.

And then I just want to tie that. So, that was when I first understood that that there were further issues and so that was summer of last year. And then I want to tie back to my statement before, which is that we kept it on the front burner. And and we did mainly talk in executive session the reason for that as a board member.

I will just say that I can have my opinion whatever it is, but. but It's what is the board, you know.

What is the issue from the board's perspective relative to the entire group, get all the voices heard and and also weigh it against the operating and management issues at the time.

So, that that is I believe your question about the timing. That I thought I understood. And if that didn't answer your question, please, please.

"Council President James"

Tell me yes, ma'am. That that was what I was talking about. I guess I would ask you.

Maybe the board did not take an official position on that. But did you have it a personal opinion about the deputy director maintaining their position based upon the findings of Mr buyers investigation.

"Carla Dearing"

I, I took the concern really serious.

As a personally, I took it very seriously and I had concerns, but I also participated in a process.

And I was a voice in that process, and I, I made my concerns heard I feel like that's as far as I can go without being specific as well on a, on a former employee Thank you. And Mr.

"John T. Launius"

Tell me your version of that. Yeah. I'll just some quick context as well. I believe my first, meeting board meeting at target was maybe 15 or 20 days before the information about.

Uh, Mr broke as well. Um, I read both reports thoroughly in their entirety have reference back to them over over time and.

We'll kind of affirm that at that time, there was.

Much discussion and interest in.

Uh, some of the periphery, uh, leadership to make sure. And, um, uh, that that.

That the organization and the to be frank, the trauma that digital experience was met with a level of kind of expertise and consideration. Um.

I do, I'll kind of echo Carla statement that I do think that there are personal.

Vantage points, um, felt throughout the board.

Um, but as a steward, uh, of a.

And being placed in this position, I know that I personally take.

That, uh, care with a lot of reverence and, um.

And and I, I believe that my fellow board members, um, take the same approach.
And and cautiously reviewed and assessed, um.
What was appropriate and and feel comfortable with the steps that were taken to investigate, but also the, um, more indirect tactics that were taken to ensure um,
that's something like this never happens again. Uh, and those were done through policy changes, um, anonymous tip lines resources that that really, uh, hopefully.
Took away any intimidation or any barriers that they have existed, or perceived to exist in.
Uh, with within the agency, thank you, sir and Mr Sheryl relinquish my time.

"Chair Ackerson"

Customer craney, you were next to the queue in the format them.

"Committee Member McCraney"

Thank you. Mr. chairman Thank you. Ms. and Mr for being here today I have, um.
Been very patient through all the questioning and the answers.
And I just have a few statements, uh, I don't, I don't know any of you personally.
But you may have witnessed some of the actions of the board members, particularly this particular committee and perhaps I've already shown you that I am a no nonsense.
Get to the chase kind of person so that's what I want to do right now. I've heard you kind of go in circles.
And I've heard you justify being on the board just a day or so or maybe 14 days before or what have you.
Um, miscellaneous, I got to tell you that when you were last here, I was very impressed with you.
And for some reason, after that conversation with you, there was some Ray of hope that I had that things would change at park.
But it just seems to me that we have gone round and round about.
Truck and it's personnel issues and skirting issues and going around issues and stating whether or not you can talk about issues.
And I'm, I'm really wanting to get away from the fact that we're not going to get anything from you all as far as what happened in the past.
And I don't even want to go there anymore.
What I want to do is understand why anybody would want to be a part of a board or in your case miss Butler,
be a director of an organization that continuously have complaints.
About your service, we're not talking about personnel issues. Now we're talking about your job. You're there to serve the public and you do a very poor job of it.
Now, miscellaneous, I heard you say that you can't get any better people on that board than what you have. Now.
But I just want to beg to differ in that if that's the best. And I'm not saying they are not good people because I know some of the work that MS during has done in this community.

But if they're the best then, whereas the hope that Turk is going to do a better job for the citizens in this community.

Because it doesn't seem to me that you're focusing in on the task at hand, and that's taking care of the citizens of this community.

We continue to hear about the flaws at park. We continue to hear about the of the poor working environment, the poor type of practices.

We, we continue to hear about the fact that you're not listening to employees voices.

We continue to hear these things yet you sit here and you state that you got the best board.

I don't want to know from, you.

What are you doing about the service in this community? Just yesterday. I went to the post office.

And I looked over to the side as I was going into the post office, and I saw 1 of my church members. She was sitting there and I, and of course, acknowledge her and asked her what she was doing. And she said she was waiting on 3.

And so I told her, I said, I would love to take you home and so I didn't care what she lived. I just I was willing to take her home. So she immediately got on the phone to call to counsel her trip.

I went into the post office, got my mail came out we got into the car during this time, she was on hold and said down here, then it didn't give her an option to push a button to get to the next level.

It gave her a telephone number to call so she had to hang up from that call call this number.

And it went around and around, and she finally got to someone told them that she needed to counsel her trill.

The person obviously on the other line says fine, and we hung up as we were going down the street.

She gets a call and the call says.

You have a notion.

She explained to me what that meant that meant that they obviously showed up and she was not there.

But she had counsel that I'm a witness, I was sitting right there in the car when she did that, perhaps that it kind of kind of crossed during the, the whole process.

But I've found it very disturbing that someone and she is a recent victim of, um.

A stroke, so she has to depend on your services and for her to have to go from where she lived to way out to, where I saw her.

And then deal with this type of treatment that I witnessed.

If deplorable.

It's, it's, it's beyond what the citizens of this community deserve.

So, I don't want to talk not 1 more time about 'Frisco who was horrible for art. I don't want to talk about this friends who should not be.

In this MV position dealing having any dealings with what we have to do, and I want I want to know that you're going to deal with that contract cause I would not want us to continue with that contract as, as long as he's an employee there.

That's a whole nother subject.

I don't want to know that. You think that you're the best board members in this city, or in this country.

I don't know what you doing about the service for this community. How are you taking care of these.

Citizens who depend on your service, you're bored.

Meetings your, your strategic plans all of that stuff is probably where your focus, but that's way up here high level.

You need to come down into the weeds and figure out what type of service you're giving to the citizens of this community. I would like to wrap this up by asking each of you to please tell me what you're personally doing.

To make service it better.

Tomorrow than it is today the service, I don't want to know about how wonderful you are, how you got this job, how you became a board member.

Why do you want to be a board member? I want to know what you're doing.

To help the citizens of this community, get better service from.

Thank you. Mr. chairman yeah. Thanks for the the passionate question. W, what I would note is that, um.

"John T. Launius"

W, I have gained a deep appreciation for the complexity right of public transportation. The worst part about this job to be Frank. I have a high emotional intelligence, so to setting those board meetings.

And to hear these personal stories, right? Of of MS trips delayed trips.

You're absolutely right. Right these are these are somebody's

grandmother. There's somebody's sister there I equate talk and the reason I'm on the board is because time is probably the most valuable thing that any of us have.

Right. You're here today committing your time and energy to the community.

Carla, and I are here committing our time and energy to this time is critical. And that's what talk is every minute that you're waiting on a bus every minute that, uh, delayed trip.

I'm here because I know the value of time.

What I also have gained in much deeper appreciation in many times. A frustration for, is that with such a large complex organization you are inevitably.

Going to mess up you are not going to get everybody on time what I, as a board member and committed to doing and where I have seen, um, um.

Great progress is in how are we from a governance level?

And and again, there is a time and a place to kind of come down a little lower, but as a board, I do feel like it is important, um,

to to primarily operate at at the governance level and to support the organization in the community in in inappropriate ways.

I feel confident that by our strategic planning by our dashboard, these are the metrics and the accountability that will really position tarp to hold,

not only the leadership of target account but the community these are the services that we want and we expect then, how are we collectively,

working towards that, um, I do believe that that accountability, um, has already been, uh,

felt, I think.

About, uh, the envy, um, punitive damages related to, uh, their, um.

Lack of production, or miss trips and some of these issues, um.

Have drastically, uh, altered, uh, the, the, the, the track and the data, um, back into a much more consistent and normalized in some many months.

Um, even above, uh, national averages. Um, again, that doesn't mean that we're not still unfortunately.

Missing trips from time to time I think it's a board it's incumbent on us to make sure that staffers supported and that they have a mechanism to learn from those mistakes to assess counseling. I, I hate the story that you just shared.

I my guess is, and I would hope, and I know that the instruction and the leadership that we're offering to Karen team is to empower them. To take that data and to figure out what happened. Right and where possible we try to iterate and evolve the, the quality of the, the service, uh, as an agency.

I might also just note, uh, in the silence there that, um, torque has had a number of wins and the board is proud of the success that we're having that doesn't mitigate the areas of improvement.

Uh, and and I expect, uh, fully expect the council and the general public to continue to hold target accountable. I, I think what as a board member as a community member, I just hope that.

That accountability is also met with support and celebration when it's due. Um, and an acknowledgement of some of the complexities of the agency, um.

We talked a lot about safety. Um, it is very hard for us to hear as a public agency.

The hall sometimes fear, right? That our drivers or a writer's experience unfortunately, Kentucky, being an open curious state, right?

There can be limiting dynamics that position and I think it's incumbent to take the criticism to assess the policy, assess the dynamics of the issue and to do everything that we can, uh, to provide a high quality service to the community while also.

Protecting, uh, the sustainability and the long term ability for to operate in this, this community.

The chairman may I interrupted a little bit.

"Committee Member McCraney"

Yes, ma'am. You may misalign what do you do for a living? What is your day job?

I work for our community college. Well, let me just compliment you on the fact that you are able to communicate uh, perhaps your communications professor. I don't know but.

Again, I was impressed with you the last time you were here I want to say, I'm impressed with you now, but but I'm just a little bit annoyed.

By the fact that you say all the right things, but you're not saying anything I asked you to tell me what you were doing to help with the service. What I heard you say was you are.

A board member that it's doing the strategic planning and all of the high level things and sometimes maybe you have to come down in the weeds.

We don't have time for sometimes we got to get it right now.

And I think you ought to be able to walk and chew gum at the same time.

So, if you're doing all of these dashboards and these strategic plan, that's extremely important. It's sad that.

That's not already in place and it's taking a while to get there.

But where are you doing that you need to home? Is Butler accountable?

To the staff, and the people who are rendering the service to our people, I want to hear being about the high level work that you're doing on the board.

I'm just sorry, I, I represent the citizens of this community, and if nobody is speaking out to fight for them.

Who's going to do it because evidently you all are focused on high level importance, but I need to know miss during perhaps you can share with me what the board is doing about service.

How are you holding MS Butler accountable to hold her people accountable for better service.

"Carla Dearing"

Thank you I service is absolutely the core issue.

And the way you're asking, the question is making me realize.

That we have been peeling the onion.

And I, in particular, I've been.

Focusing on updating.

The organization, it's technology and everything else all to get to service.

But what you're, what you're making me understand is that it's.

You know, we, we've been trying I personally have been trying to get.

To the core issue with your service and and and here we are and now that has to happen. So your original question is what are we doing? And I will say that with the improvements that we have already made.

We service is on the list, and we can take it to the top of the list of now, making that specific service issues.

You know, Central, and I will say that personally, 1 thing that I have done is, I don't think we need to study it again or.

Review our, I think we literally need.

Deep deep, uh, uh.

Definition of service beyond on time, and some of the stuff that we look at in our dashboard much more specific elements and and be able to improve our we are,

we've increased our frequency and that means fewer people are sitting waiting for a bus on our core.

Lines that is great, but.

But how can we make that even better and really, really focusing on the core line so we have been kind of working around.

Service in my opinion, and it it is the core issue and we can now train.

The improvements that we have made on that issue.

That that would be my answer to your question and also just really folk making me understand too that we can't work around this issue anymore. We have to go right at it.

"John T. Launius"

Counseling attorney I want to just add a note. I was definitely not trying to circumvent your question. I do think sometimes as a board member, it's more natural to start with some of the governance level stuff.

Um, what I guess I would note on on the ground would be and I'll speak for me personally.

I don't I don't want to speak for the other board members of which I have seen again just a level of engagement that is that is new to me in terms of my experience and history with, with tar. Um, I've.

Regularly, obviously stay connected with Carrie, but I also make a diligent effort to stay connected with the other department heads and the leaders in addition to that I have conducted several calls in recent months with other transit agencies.

Uh, some of which are kind of close proximity, similar size, pure peer cities to better understand some of those struggles, whether it be top 3 or disability services, or some of the workforce issues. Some of the opportunities related to potentially, um.

In.

Leveraging more resources in our community by potentially creating a private foundation that could really help bring more service to more people in addition to that I, from time to time. I'm not I'll admit, I'm not a daily writer.

I'm a choice rider, but I do think it's important to experience our service line. So, when possible uh, even as recently as this past week, I tried to get out and take tart. I don't let anybody know who, or what I'm doing.

I just I just want to experience it.

So, I, I do feel like, uh, and again, I won't speak for the other board members, but I do feel like, in addition to the governance piece.

Um, and obviously supporting leadership, I think we're also, uh, I am also trying to be very tactful and deliver it, um, about how I'd better understand target from different front porches.

So, again, what I'm trying to answer your question, just wanted to follow up with that clarification.

"Chair Ackerson"

That's 1 holding Stewart you are next to the queue and you have the format of.

"Committee Member Holton Stewart"

I have a question, and I think this will probably wrap everything up. It looks like the last 2 people in the queue have withdrawn, but these kind of piggy back on some previous questions.

The 1st thing when an employee or or 1 who's.

Um, who works at heart? Um.

Resigned not retires as in Mr. Franz. So he, he, he resigned his position.

There's 1, who resigns do they receive? Um.

A crude vacation time.

Do they that they may have accumulated in the past is that your policy does 1 receive if they resign as opposed to retiring.

Do they receive a approved vacation time? Mr miss.

"Carrie Butler"

There are, there are sort of different rules about payouts a vacation time for employees under the collective bargaining agreement, and employees who are in the.

Don, you are not in the bargaining unit, some employees choose to take their vacation ahead of time, get advanced pay sort of different different rules for those to.

Was best for friends in the Union.

"Committee Member Holton Stewart"

He was not in the Union. Okay so did receive that. He received compensation, uh, some, some back pay, um, for vacation time accrued.

"Carrie Butler"

I I do not know is that again, I've said specific issues about specific employees. This, this particular topic does seem to be something that's in. The very specific detail seems to be very important this body. And I will look into that.

"Committee Member Holton Stewart"

I would appreciate that because the world that I worked in for 30 years, um, if I were to resign as a, as opposed to retiring, I would not have received any type of vacation or a sick time that I had accrued over the years. So, I'm very curious if you could get us that information. I would certainly appreciate that.

So, um, my next question, um, just a few questions, um, is basically going.

Back to the safety worker safety, employee safety.

Um, 1st of all do you have a standard operating procedure in the radio room?

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, there is a standard operating procedure in the radio. There there's training for processes for the, the employees that work in the radio room. Yes.

"Committee Member Holton Stewart"

Okay, so if there is no safety director right now, who does the safety committee report to.

"Carrie Butler"

We have an interim or acting safety director of safety in place right now.

The safety committee is comprised of.

Union members and non union members, and there's a chair and a CO chair of that committee. Ultimately the, the recommendations from that safety committee would go to me or to the board.

If there were policy changes or other board level discussions to be had.

Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't hear that. I said, who is the interim safety director that you just mentioned.

sean's order, he's our operations manager and acting in this in an interim role.

"Committee Member Holton Stewart"

And I'm speaking on behalf of your workers right now, um, who are, um, asking, um, if they can receive some training, um, from from park um. For gun safety, especially when their radios are not working on their on their buses, especially safety for the drivers, and the passengers they want some additional training, so that they know what to do. In certain circumstances if that if if situations arise. So, I'm asking you misspelled right now. Can you commit to your to your drivers and to your workers? Some training that will help them be safe on the bus and ensure the safety of their passengers?

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, and we've had plans for that type of training in place since April of this year. So it is now mid September.

"Committee Member Holton Stewart"

So, that training, it appears should have maybe already a. Okay, thank you. Mr. chair. That's all that I have. I'll look forward to hearing about the training that you have set up. Ms. Butler and when that happens.

"Chair Ackerson"

As a follow up before we get to council Fox. The pay out, uh, I've seen Mr friends last paid stuff and has 20,000 dollars and change. I can give you the exact number here. If you like. It was 20,555 dollars and 57 cents. It was on the pay stub that was dated. May 2006 2022 and it states. Vacation by back field 3 now is vacation by backfill 3 for a non union employee a non contract employee. Would that be something that would be decided by the board? Whether or not that would take place? Or was that decided by you? Miss Butler? Who made the decision that that would be the case.

"Carrie Butler"

Again, the specifics about employees and former employees. I've been recommended to speak in executive session, and I think we've gone back and forth on that. Are you saying executive session mean you want us to go into executive session? If this was a topic that was being discussed at at our board, meeting about an individual employee. And a discussion about their retention or discipline, I would recommend to the board that we go into executive session. I think what I would ask of of this committee. And that would be helpful for me, because I do feel like.

You all feel like we're not answering your question, or we're not sort of getting to the heart of it is I may need to understand more about a list, what recommendations or policies or direction.

You would recommend to the board about employment practices, based on your experience.

And also, what is a particular concern that we can address to move her forward in a better direction as we've talked a lot in that.

In these past couple of hours about moving forward providing better service to the community, making sure we get those trips out being, on time being reliable being a preferred choice. So, I think that's what would be most helpful for me.

And I think for this board to understand what are the things that the metro Council, and the committee expects us to.

"Chair Ackerson"

You know, to to endeavor to improve. Okay, just real quickly. We're not going to be my opinion as chair this committee. We will not go into executive session on these matters because transparency in the public has a right to know.

Now, if you want to avoid talking about a specific employee, let's talk about in general, in general, upper level management, non-union, non-contracted employee, essentially an employment at will situation here in the state of Kentucky.

Whose decision would it be to pay out?

Persons.

Back back vacation time, essentially, vacation time that was not used, not giving me a specific amount, not naming specific person. So that way you, you don't have to worry about the legal advice. You'd be given.

Would that be you as an executive directors decision?

Or would that be the board making a decision whether, or not to go ahead and compensate an employee of an executive level for a back owed or unused vacation time decisions about staffing, especially for people.

"Carrie Butler"

Would report to the executive director would be made by the executive director.

"Chair Ackerson"

Thank you customer Fox you're next to the queue you have the force, sir.

"Committee Member Fox"

Oh, thank you very much. Mr. chair. I'm not going to dig into any specifics on personnel issues, so this might be a good time for the legal team to.

Go get a cup of coffee or hit the restroom. You mentioned MS. Butler that.

You feel like maybe some of us don't think you're answering our questions.

And I'll, I'll, we'll confirm that 1, um, 1 of them. Um.

The reading the dark reports, and this is what I want to get to reading the dark reports.

I almost felt like I was reading a copy of the animal house.

That I was reading about sexual harassment, I was reading about questionable spending practices. I was reading about basic employees safety.

Being neglected and it was an environment, and it was an environment. That led your employees.

riscos employees to feel they had to go outside the agency to seek relief.

And I will give a shout out to the Amalgamated transit Union. The 1st, problem at target that came to my attention came through that organized labor body.

Was my self and president James, we were actually at a meeting, and we were approached by.

The target union leader, and that was the 1st smoke signal. I got that there was a fire burn in the dark.

I'll speak for president James, but he's sitting right beside me.

We, we've acted on that the very next day.

When you talk about topics like sexual harassment matters, dealing with money.

Matters dealing with safety anybody on boarding.

And a new job is going to be briefed on those things, whether they're. 16 years old working in a fast food restaurant, or whether there are 62 year old councilman.

Who got elected by the people of district 13 and had to take.

Mandatory sexual harassment basic things.

Not talking about high level things and Mr. long as did a great job going into. Great.

A detail about the nuances of running a large 21st century public transportation agency.

I'm just talking about common decency and doing the right thing.

And I'm going to ask all 3 of you what have you done?

To change the culture.

Which, in my view was toxic because what was most surprising to me was.

You didn't change the people that were involved. So that leads me to believe. Maybe you had a bigger plan.

For changing a toxic culture, because you were a transitional leader.

You were put there to make change.

So, if you would start with MS Butler, and if you would go next to them is daring. And if we could get a very short answer from Mr. launches.

What have you done to change the culture?

Thank you.

"Carrie Butler"

As I mentioned, we have 2 reports financial audit, a federal transit administration overview, all of which have recommendations to address the.

Issues that were brought forth based on the actions of certain risk.

"Committee Member Fox"

Yeah, yeah stop you right there. I'm talking about the workplace.

The culture of the workplace, do your employees now feel comfortable? To bring an allegation of sexual harassment, questionable spending basic safety up through their chain of command the organizational chart. Do they feel comfortable to do that simple? Yes. Or no. And what have you done to facilitate that and create that change?

"Carrie Butler"

We we put in an anonymous tip line.

We put in a committee structure we allow directors or encourage and have directors make reports to the board of directors.

We have undertaken numerous trainings of lots of different types of subject matter. We have done management review, management, trainings and reviews.

To expand the skillset of our directors and management team. We worked a lot as a team to think about how to talk and work with employees.

Think about what we do, we talked about earlier this evening about our annual strategic plan, and a performance scorecard, which very clearly list out what we hope to achieve in the next year.

We are updating our long range plan. I would encourage folks who are interested.

And care about tarp, which it seems like this body very much. Does we have a mobility summit this Thursday at 50 PM where we're encouraging people to give feedback on our next 10 years?

And so lots, lots of different actions that we're looking to improve the overall culture and workplace.

And as you mentioned, you know, give people multiple avenues to report anything that may be contrary to that. that

"Committee Member Fox"

Thank you MS Butler. That was actually a good answer.

Is doing same question what have I done to change culture?

"Carla Dearing

I have within the context of the board role that I play, which is a. I'm not the executive director or any other role. It was a board role that I've been playing. I have spoken out.

To, uh, to call everything in question about.

Uh, culture, excellence, diversity, stewardship.

Finance personnel customer service.

And just every single possible question.

To set the tone that the board cares and expects the best and expects talk to, um.

You know, to operate at a very high level, recognizing there were so many many things that needed to be addressed. So.

That that is what I specifically did, uh, with, with, uh, careful thoughtful board hat on um.

I was as personally as courageous as I could possibly be to try to raise questions and issues at all times.

"Committee Member Fox"

Thank you Mr. if you would 25 words or less, please.

"John T. Launius"

Um, yeah, so I won't rehash some of the more kind of technical, substantive stuff. I, I want to hit this culture piece because, um. I strongly believe in culture, it's, uh, really empowers you to do amazing things right? When, uh, when folks are really aligned with with goals and values, um.

This might seem very, um, feudal or minimal.

Try to be a better listener and I try to be.

Thoughtful unintentional, particularly in public settings, such as our board meetings, recognizing that those are obviously the time for the board to come together, but they're also a time for the staff and the community to come together. Um, and I think that how we present and how we communicate.

Both to each other as fellow board members, but also to the community matters.

Um, 1 of the, uh, pretty regularly, uh, we get requests.

From members of the public, or for union members.

Sometimes just on technicalities of how we manage the meeting. We're a pretty formal body by nature of how we're.

Uh, Institute and structured, but there are times when we're able to listen, um, when we're not able to listen, I try to.

Um, very directly provide explanations.

To the general public, maybe why we're not able to meet their accommodation.

But an example that I'll give when we are able to meet it and again, it might seem minimal, but I hope that it's a representation of the value that the board puts in the general public and the employees. And that is that generally our public comment period.

Is at the very end of our board meeting, particularly in recent months, we've had kind of an elevated interest and participation because of the myriad of, uh, important things that are happening at tar a couple with. Union negotiations, and so, uh, the board has now regularly moved those public comments to the very beginning of the meeting to ensure that those staff or those individuals that are there on their lunch break.

Or have to get back to where, um, or afforded a common kind of courtesy and respect, uh, to make sure that that they're able to to be heard in that environment. Um.

Again, also with the followup, it's a regular practice now where as chair I respond to each 1 of those individuals at that next meeting and once I'm able to garner additional information.

So, again, I know that's a little bit in the weeds, but as a governing body, I think it's important that we do lead with.

Uh, our minds and our hearts in that, we put those on display, um, to continue to try to build bridges.

Uh, to the community and, and even the metro Council.

Um, we, we understand this is a tough business to be in and I'm now, well, over my 25 words, so.

"Committee Member Fox"

Well, thank you. Mr. loneliness. And I'll just remind you that these are good and decent people working at park. We've got about a dozen of them sitting with us tonight and I know a lot of them personally, and I know some peripherally and they deserve. Good strong leadership they deserve a safe work environment. They deserve to be free of sexual harassment. They deserve to know that the money. Which the dollars are tied to talk. I read the published beast and business 1st, that came out last week with the interview with you. Ms. Butler and the, and the, the, uh. A struggle to balance that budget that that you guys go through, we need to know that the precious dollars that are there are being safeguarded and not spent frivolously. Like they were by the former director. I don't even care to mention his name again. So, I won't, thank you, thank you.

"Chair Ackerson"

Thank you sir execute counsel and purpose counsel purpose. You have the floor, Madam. Thank you Mr. chair throughout the course of our discussion. I've come up with several more questions. So I hope you all do not mind me asking the questions that I have and I don't know who would answer this. I would think it would be miss Butler, but I'd like to know. What did you all do with the liquidated damages? Money? Where's that money been spent?

"Carrie Butler"

I believe you're referring to the liquidated damages that were assessed for, in the. Is that correct? Yes. Yeah. So essentially the liquidated damages would be would show as a, a credit to our budgeted amount prepare transit service for the year.

"Committee Member Purvis"

And what was the total of that amount.

"Carrie Butler"

The, the total budgeted prepared transit service for 2023 was around 20Million dollars.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, MS. Butler can you confirm for me? Your email address?

"Carrie Buler"

T. L. E. R. at dot org.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Do you recall when you guys were here during the budget over the summer? I talked to you about a unisex bathroom that would. Be available for our genders. And you told me that you would submit a plan of action.

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, we're working on that plan as it relates to our capital improvement program on our transit asset management plan, looking at unisex restrooms throughout all of our properties.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, okay so I followed up with an email. Did you not receive that email asking for that plan of action?

"Carrie Butler"

I do not recall getting that email, but I would reiterate that when the issue of unisex or multi gender restrooms came up, we're looking at how we can program that and based on our existing capital improvement program, limited funds, our transit asset management plan and how we would incorporate that type of facility at all of our different properties. So, there will be a unisex from for our genders.

"Committee Member Purvis"

In the general can use these. Okay how many board members use? Torque services.

"Carrie Butler"

I believe all the board members. Could you start services? 8 board members.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Do they use torque services to use to catch the bus use? M. B.

"Carrie Butler"

I don't know that any person would qualify for based on the Americans with Disabilities Act. They all could ride fixed.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, uh, let's see. Are you looking to replace those directors that have left to safety director? Um, diversity and inclusion. Are you looking to replace. Those personnels

"Carrie Butler

yes.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Do you think Mr Francis.

Um, employment with torque, gave him an advantage to.
Going to envy.

"Carrie Butler"

I'm not going to speak on former employees as I mentioned.

Repeatedly throughout this, thank you you do realize talk is a public
entity. It is not a private sector.

Yes, we're we're a state authorized agency under 96 a.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Okay, did any board members express concerns with keep in France and
Tanya quarter on after the resco fiasco?

Okay.

"Carrie Butler"

I'll just say it again, and I think the board has made this point and I
think we've tried to make this point that.

Based on the recommendations of the report, based on good employment
practices, and based on how to rebuild an agency after the events that
occurred that Mr.

Ferdinand undertook we've taken.

A set of actions that were that sought to rebuild.

And the, you know, from the ramifications of his actions.

"Committee Member Purvis"

I didn't ask about rebuilding talk. I asked you did any board members.

Express their concerns about.

Mister friends and MS Carter still been at talk yes. Or no.

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, and no, the board members don't speak about individual board members
wouldn't weigh in on specific employment action about specific employees.

"Committee Member Purvis"

This general.

I didn't ask you for a general. I didn't ask a general question. Yes. Or

no.

"Carrie Butler"

I feel like we've answered that a number of times about specific employees. Thank you. I'm only talking about those 2. Yes or no.

"Carrie Butler"

I understand the question, and I think we've made that point very clear that discussions about specific employees are not what, what has been advised by counseling. What I said are not to be discussed in a public forum.

So I think that's probably what I'll say about that. Ms. Butler, I asked you about the position of the board members. I didn't ask you about the employees.

And I don't know that I feel comfortable to speak for the position of individual board members. Okay. Hold on 3rd, individually staff members. Please stop. Let me ask members. Please please.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Did you all and Mr I'm sorry I pronounce your name wrong. Loudness. Did any of your colleagues express concerns about Mr France? And MS. Carter still being employed with torque.

"Carla Dearing"

How we've been advised.

I'll go back to what I said before we, we had concerns which we discussed as a group.

In executive session and don't feel like we're able to share those.

But I mentioned to you that we, we did have concerns and we did keep the issue on the front.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Sarah, can you answer that question for me? A little differently?

You might have cut out do you say, sir or Carla?

Miscellaneous, um.

"John T. Launius"

You asked where are there any concerns expressed by board members related to.

They 2 employees in question to France.

Yes, yes, yes, it was definitely a discussion topic recurring at at.

Closed session board meetings.

Thank you so with.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Everything that's going on with you, you've been investigated. What have you? I would think that you all were looking at having some policy changes, knowing that you're under the microscope.

If you're going to have some policy changes, you want to show him to the community that you're trying to. You're trying to do good. You're trying to make this better so, my question is with everything that should have taken place new policy changes implemented.

Why is it that you all have not voluntarily reached out to the council and say, hey, listen, we want to make the wrong right? This is what we're doing. These are the steps that we're taking. Why hasn't that been done?

"Carrie Butler"

Well, I believe we are, we are here voluntarily I guess I don't understand the the question.

"Carla Dearing"

It's a general question about.

You know, communication to metro Council.

We've discussed this many times ourselves in board meetings, you know, let's make sure we get the word out on this. Let's make sure that we get the word out on that.

It it is been an issue that we've kept on the front burner. Also the idea that that we need to communicate, uh.

The improvements the issues and and communicate directly with metric Council.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Thank you miss staring, um.

And I'm just going to say this. I know I can't help if it if it's not nice, but I have to tell the truth.

You think at some point in time.

That the truth can be told, instead of telling us what you think we want to hear.

Anybody can answer that question.

"Carla Dearing"

I would, you know, based on advice from counsel, I would like to do that in closed session.

Well, that's not going to happen.

"Chair Ackerson"

Yeah. For the record as chair this committee, we will stay transparent to the community.

"Committee Member Purvis"

Mr. chair I have no more questions. Thank you. Thank you. Madam. Last person in the queue is council person. David James, you have the floor Thank you this chair.

"Council President James"

I'll try to be as quick as possible to follow up on council and purposes questions and I will ask this question to.
Steering in the debate conversation about cultural changes.
That you all had as a board.
With each other, not necessarily within a.
Um, executive session.
Was there ever any discussion about based upon.
What was read in the reports from the investigators.
That there should be some conversation about cleaning house.
And removing people that may have turned the other way, assisted facilitated.
The former director and carrying out some of the.
Horrible things that he was doing.

"Carla Dearing"

Had a very serious conversation about the findings.
You know, which incorporate what you just said.
And the need and and ask the questions, what kind of process do we need to go through to understand?
Truly, what kind of process do we need to go to?
True to deal with the findings as well as to deal with the overall issues in the organization. We, we absolutely have those conversations as a board in closed session. Thank you.

"Council President James"

And I appreciate that I I know these are hard conversations.
Um, in those conversations at any point.
Did you ever feel like the director.
Current director, his Butler was defending the actions or lack thereof.
Of any of the people that we have just formally spoke about.

"Carla Dearing"

I felt that we were always talking factually.
Um, what were the facts? What were what were the specifics? Um.
What what review had already occurred what did counsel already find? Et cetera? We, we, we really spent the time on the facts and so we had to apply judgment to those facts.
We asked for further again, we, we definitely were part of the discussion to go ahead and do the deep reviews and, you know.
What were the results of those and everything else? So we probed we.
Question, but and it was always on the facts.
And when I say that, I mean, from our perspective, as well, as from the executive directors' perspective, it was always factual and just trying to.
Apply judgement across the board on.
Weighing the facts against also so many other things that were being done in the organization.

"Council President James"

Thank you and there was I have a follow up question to 1. that was asked earlier. Is there a specific policy and procedure?
For the dispatch radio room of dark to follow.

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, the the radio room clerks or part time clerks or coach operators who work as part time radio operators have procedures and policies practices, training recommendations that they, that they should follow.

"Council President James"

Could you send us a copy of those? Please?

"Carrie Butler"

Yeah.

"Council President James"

And my next question is, could you talk me through the actual process if a driver.
Calls on the radio and says I have a disorderly subject with a gun on the bus.
And I feel threatened what happens step by step.

"Carrie Butler"

If I were a driver in that particular case,

"Council President James"

I would no, man, I'm asking you to follow the policy. Tell me what the policy says. What would they do.

"Carrie Butler"

Well, I'm not gonna read the policy. What I was saying is a coach operator in that particular instance, should put on the covert alarm, open up the radio channels so that everything can be heard.
In the what we call the radio room, and then between the actions of the driver and the radio room, based on the actions of the passenger and what the escalation techniques that driver was taking.
The specifics of how to handle, that would be would be undertaken.
Sometimes it would be calling on 911 or and putting on the covert alarm.
But also flag the call 901 head, sign or destination side and it could pull the bus over the passenger to get off. The passenger could comply lots of different scenarios.
But essentially, 1st thing, if somebody came on board, brandishing a weapon, it would not be. it would not be
Against state law, but if they were acting aggressively put on the covert alarm, that flashes call 901 on the head side, and it opens up the radio channel.

So that a supervisor listening on the radio as well, as the radio room could hear what was happening on the bus at the time, and provide support specific to that situation as needed. situation as needed

"Council President James"

Thank you could you tell me your definition of brandishing.

"Carrie Butler"

I don't know the legal definition of brandishing maybe that wasn't the correct word for me to use.

"Council President James"

Thank you I guess my question is, if a driver feels threatened by a person.

With a weapon would and they call in on the radio.

Would automatically call the police to assist that driver.

"Carrie Butler"

That would be up to the individual radio room operator, taking the call to make that decision.

And what the, what the coach operator was sharing.

Verbally, if they did not open up the radio to hear everything that was going on.

"Council President James"

If a citizen called the police 901 and said there's an individual with a gun, and they're threatening me and I feel threatened I need help with that dispatcher. Decide not to call, send the police officer.

I don't understand the answer quite frankly.

"Carrie Butler"

I'm just saying that a person taking the call on the radio room would make the decision to take action to call 901 to call a safety investigator to call root. So root supervisor to take the action on that. Based on what was being reported to them.

I would just suggest that if a.

"Council President James"

Driver of a target bus responsible for citizens in this community calls on the radio and says that they feel threatened by a person with a weapon that the next call should be to 901, not a supervisor not a radio run person,

but the police to provide help for the citizens and the driver. and the driver

Okay.

"Carrie Butler"

Andrew,

"Council President James"

do you think that should happen.

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, I agree. It should happen.

And would you be surprised if I told you, that's not.

What regularly happens I would be surprised if our radio room operators were not following that procedure and not good judgment and I would.

We'll look into that. Yes,

"Council President James"

thank you. And I would ask that Mr Louis and miss during if you could look into that as board members to find out how often that has happened. And what is the policy and what is the procedure and what is actually the practice? Because I've talked to several of the employees of. Who do a fantastic job for our community and they feel as if they are in danger.

And perception may as well be reality and I would suggest that park and the board work together to find ways to make sure that they feel safe. And make sure that the citizens feel safe on the bus and I'm asking you humbling.

To please look into that and find out what we can do to do that better. Because right now what I'm hearing, it doesn't sound like we're doing it well, at all.

Thank you, um, and then to the board members, I also ask I'm going to ask Mr. the dark tomorrow mobility summit.

I know that there's a meeting on Thursday where the community comes and speaks.

Um, can you tell me if you feel like Turk has done a good job?

Reaching out to the community in many different ways.

To get input from the community about park and its future plans.

From people that ride park

"John T. Launius"

yes. And I would just also note that it's, it's ongoing as well. Uh, it's it's a pretty comprehensive process of both.

I would say solicited and unsolicited input. Obviously we get a lot of natural input from customer service.

From our board meetings and public comment. Um, but then we're also obviously actively.

Soliciting input, um, convening, um, uh, small working groups, both formal and informal.

The mobility summit is, uh, kind of a benchmark in the process where we will, um, communicate to the community, what we've heard and what we've seen and experienced to date.

But there's, that's still a stopping point, uh, to, uh, to make sure that public input is continually.

Garnered so, for those listening and I'll, I'll do a quick plug to, um, definitely consider joining us on, uh, on Thursday evening. Um, for that. And then I, I would just note I, um.

I'm aware of other meetings, right? That will be taking place.

Uh, kind of in the weeks and months ahead with different, um, employment sectors.

Um, in in different parts of our community so, um, yes, I do think that torque is taking a very kind of thoughtful and deliberate, uh, uh, approach to ensuring that we have kind of broad based community, um, input, but that it's not over, we're continuing that and definitely open to any.

Thoughts or guidance or kind of gaps that maybe you've heard of, or that that you've seen.

"Council President James"

Thank you. And when will that report be submitted

"John T. Launius"

sherry you want to give an update on the the actual. Timeline for completion of the comprehensive plan.

"Carrie Butler"

Yes, the, as John mentioned, the conversation with the community is ongoing.

We do have kind of a, a moment with the mobility summit this Thursday, and then would be incorporating the feedback and information that we gather from the public looking at sometime in October and November, depending on what level of conversation is still would like to have with the community, and for the board to have time to adequately review this kind of 10 510 to. to

20 year outlook for our projects and plans moving forward.

So, I would say, generally, sometime this fall,

"Council President James"

thank you and miss during I know that you are a very active community member and are you satisfied with the efforts that torque has made in gathering input and information throughout the community in this effort?

"Carla Dearing"

I think we can do more.

"Council President James"

Okay, thank you. And can I request that you push for talk to do more to do better.

Because I think it's wholly inadequate, quite frankly, this body, when we 1 input from the community, we create web pages. We actually take our

stuff out to the community travel throughout the community, and get community input.

I have not seen doing that.

And advertising that widely, and I don't think that it's going to be possible to have a complete report unless that takes place and I would ask both Mr.

and yourself, if I could get a commitment from you to push for that firmness Butler to do that in depth.

Community engagement piece. Please. Mr. I agree. I think it's, it's hard. It's harder. And when.

"Carla Dearing"

We're doing more than ever before, but that doesn't mean we're doing enough. And what you're talking about is harder. It's harder to get. To the true engagement level, we're doing it in some other areas in the community that you know about. And so I hear you loud and clear and I think it's very important.

"Council President James"

Thank you very much. And then, I guess my last piece for today is, um. Ms. Butler counsel on purpose asked you a question earlier and she said, are you aware of any information that the board of directors should have been made aware of and you said not at this time? No, I consider that a qualified answer. And so I would ask you to please explain your answer.

"Carrie Butler"

Yeah. To be honest, I didn't understand the question, because I guess what I've heard the question meaning am I aware of information that the board has that? I don't.

So I'm happy to try and answer that again. If you if you repeat it quite frankly, I didn't understand the question, which is I said, I'm not aware of anything.

"Council President James"

Okay, so you're not aware of any information that the board is not aware of that they maybe should be aware of made aware of, or should have been made aware of it.

"Carrie Butler"

Well, I mean, information is a very broad term. I'm probably more aware of federal transit administration, circular regulations, lots of specifics and intricacies of our operations.

And how we do transit operations then the board is if that's what if that's what you mean. But, I mean, is there something specific that I'm just.

Purely missing

"Council President James"

no, ma'am. I'm just asking the question very open. Ended question.

Um, and and then, I guess.

The question would be when you stated that you knew Mr. France was leaving how long did it take you to notify the board that he was leaving?

"Carrie Butler"

A month or so I don't have the specific date at the top of my head.

"Council President James"

Thank you, thank you very much into both of the board members here. I want to say to you. I know this is not easy.

I know that work on this board, especially on this particular agency has a lot of challenges, and it's not easy. And so I, thank you for your time. I think you both for your service Mr.

chair I still have questions.

And I'm planning on doing some open records request of target to get some more information I would ask if you.

I'm not on this committee, so I can't make the motion, but I would ask that you would table this appointment until I have the opportunity to get that information and provide it to the other members of this committee.

Please

"Chair Ackerson"

the appointment is going to remain table until we get more information.

And so, and there may be a callback session, potentially miss purpose. I like to make the motion to table this. We don't have to table it. There's no motion needed. We never called it up.

So, the appointment that you're discussing.

The steering appointment was never brought to the floor this has been a special discussion, and therefore it is tabled. It shall remain tabled for the time being.

Caucus chair Marcus Winkler, you're next in the queue you have the floor, sir.

"Committee Markus Winkler"

Thank you chair and I will make it very quick. I know it's, um.

Been a long meeting. I appreciate everybody hanging on. Um.

I guess I just have a comment and a question. So, 1st of all I want to echo president, James's comments that I know.

You know, being on this board is probably a fairly thankless job and I appreciate your service to our community. I appreciate you taking over in a very.

Challenging time for the agency I recognize, you know, like most.

Public sector agencies, it's resource constrained. You're not necessarily an employer of choice. I get that there are a ton of challenges and so I appreciate all of the efforts that you all are making to address those.

I guess I, I'd say there's 1 comment that I would make is, I, I think.

There was an opportunity to night to come and sort of provide confidence that.

Um, you know, we got this, we've put controls in place and, you know, we've got a steady hand, steering the ship and, and I think.

So, we probably missed the mark a little bit tonight and and so that's not a criticism.

Um, you know, on on anybody, but more sort of a general statement that, you know, the capacity in which some of the questions were answered, left something to be desired.

I understand, you know, the potential that you may not be able to answer direct employee questions, but I do think, sort of at a general level, um, you know.

Policy procedures audit do we feel like we've got controls in place? I don't know that I walk away from this meeting. Super confident in that. And so I just think that there's an opportunity to maybe highlight that a little bit more. Um.

The question that I would ask to close out is just, you know, if you think about both Mr. and Mr. long as your time from sort of taking over in the depths of probably the worst to where we are today right?

Like.

Where would you say to to where you ultimately want to be.

You know, given the reality of the situation, right? I mean, you know, there are constraints right so saying, hey, we're gonna have perfect service everywhere. It's probably not realistic right?

But sort of from where we are today, or where we were when, when the incident with a direct risk, what happened to where we really want to be, where we feel like, you know, we're, we're doing a good solid job. Uh, we're meeting the expectations of of our writers.

We're meeting the expectations of our team members. We've got good controls and and and audit.

Capability in place, like, where would you put us on that continuum today? And if we're not there, how much longer would you say 2? We're there.

Jump in 1st.

"Carla Dearing"

I've often said that, you know, when I.

When I got involved, I felt like torque was 30 years behind and now we're a only a decade behind.

And that is, uh.

2 and a half years and I, I.

Actually, I mean it and so to answer your question, I think that we've made.

Huge strides in this time and that we have.

A bit to go, and as I mentioned, I think the core of we have to get to the core issue now.

Of service, and we've been talking a lot about.

Understanding our core riders extremely well and serving them impeccably.

Well, I mean, that is.

That is our strategic discussion of these past few months and because, you know, the people who are riding us now are the ones who really need us and that is the key. If we, if we have excellence in that.

So, I was, I'm actually encouraged by the fact that we we have done so much, but we did have a long way to go.

Um, but we have a bit more to do another 18 months.

Maybe, and I'm cognizant that.

There's 2 different issues here and to your point about the opportunity to really hit it on the head.

The, there's been just the overall question of operations and.

Function and finance and technology and.

Um, you know, electric buses and innovation and.

Infrastructure bills and federal, there's been all of that. And so when I answer, I will tell you, that's that's very much been my focus. There are issues of culture.

And service and other kinds of things, and I acknowledged that I think those are the things that we're now facing they we have to address.

Continue to address and finish addressing to get to the final step forward.

Where where there's really that talk is excellent. Um.

Is what I, what I think is possible. So I hope that I hope that's clear. I mean, if.

If we came 20 years in in 2 years, then we should be able to do 10 and 1 more.

18 months council president James 1 last question. I'm sorry.

"Council President James"

Um, MS just 11 last question.

Did you get used as a reference for Mr Franz in his employment?

With

"Carrie Butler"

no.

"Council President James"

Did you communicate in any way with him to help him?

Or anyone in the administration to help him get that position.

"Carrie Butler"

No,

"Council President James"

okay. Thank you.

"Chair Ackerson"

All right. Uh.

Mr. has we've lost his feed, but I would like to say we appreciate his time. Mr.

Mr, we appreciate your time miss during we appreciate your time as well or we appreciate your time. Tough, tough questions.

At the end of the day, we're all working for the same thing and that's the betterment of the 1 final question that, you know, because again, a number of my colleagues here are doing open records request some have already done some. So, we're going to be doing some more.

There's a darn good chance to be back here with further questions. But numerous times that you referenced your outside legal counsel, and the advice not to discuss employee matters.

If you could identify who your counsel is, so we could potentially have our counsel contact your counsel to clear up any confusion on this issue on either our part or your part.

"Carrie Butler"

I will do that. Thank you.

"Chair Ackerson"

Who should we contact.

"Carrie Butler"

Dave creatinine.

"Chair Ackerson"

Okay. All right, Madam. Thank you. All.

Appreciate your time have a good evening without objection we will stand adjourned.

Thank you thank you.