

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
Committee on Operations of the MTA New York City Transit Authority, Manhattan and
Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority, Staten Island Rapid Transit Operating
Authority, and MTA Bus Company**

**Monday, March 30, 2026
10:45 a.m.
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004**

The following Committee Members attended the meeting:

Hon. Haeda Mihaltses
Hon. Andrew Albert
Hon. David Jones
Hon. Daniel Garodnick
Hon. John Ross Rizzo
Hon. Lisa Sorin
Hon. Randy Glucksman

The following staff members attended in person or by videoconference:

Demetrius Crichlow, President, NYCT
Bernard Jackson, Chief Operating Officer, NYCT
William Amarosa, Senior Vice President, Subways, NYCT
Frank Farrell, Executive Vice President, NYCT Department of Buses and MTA Bus
Rachel Cohen, Vice President, Paratransit, NYCT
Shanifah Rieara, Chief Customer Officer
Quemuel Arroyo, Chief Accessibility Officer
Steve Morel, Chief Transit Bureau, NYPD

1. OPENING MEETING

Hon. Haeda Mihaltses called the March Committee Meeting to order.

A recorded audio public safety announcement was played.

Refer to the video recording of the meeting produced by the MTA and maintained in MTA records for the details.

2. PUBLIC SPEAKERS SESSION

The MTA moderator reminded public speakers of the rules of conduct, the two-minute speaking limit, and that speakers would be alerted when 30 seconds remained to conclude their remarks.

The following public speakers commented:

Michael Ring
Christopher Grafe
Iris Kelly
Elizabeth Abraham
Jean Ryan
Ian Matthews
Michael Cohen
Braden Tom
Murray Bowden
Jesse Figueroa
Alita Dupree*
David Kupferberg
Benji Ross
Andy Pollock
John Padulla
Jason Anthony

*Provided live virtual comments.

Refer to the video recording of the meeting produced by the MTA and maintained in MTA records for the details.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved the Minutes of the Committee meeting held in February 2026.

Refer to the video recording of the meeting produced by the MTA and maintained in MTA records for the details.

4. APPROVAL OF WORK PLAN

President Crichlow stated that there were no changes to the work plan.

Refer to the video recording of the meeting produced by the MTA and maintained in MTA records for the details.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Demetrius Crichlow, President, NYCT, delivered the President's Report.

President Crichlow opened his remarks by recognizing National Transit Employee Appreciation Day, observed on March 18, and thanked employees throughout New York City Transit for their dedication and service, particularly during the recent severe winter season. He stated that the

Committee was well aware of the operational challenges faced this winter, including the first major snowstorm in several years, an extended deep freeze, and a subsequent blizzard. He noted that employees across all operating divisions responded professionally under difficult conditions to keep the transit system functioning for riders who depended on it.

President Crichlow reported that he and members of the leadership team visited frontline locations during Employee Appreciation Day, including Kingsbridge Depot and the 207th Street Yard, where they met employees and thanked them personally for their service. He stated that the agency was also joined by Manhattan Borough President Brad Holyman-Sigal, who recognized transit employees for their contributions to the city and honored the workforce at Kingsbridge Depot.

President Crichlow specifically recognized Sophie Henderson, a longtime member of the transit workforce who joined the agency in 1967. He stated that Ms. Henderson's nearly six decades of service reflected the ability to build not only a career, but an entire life in public transit service.

President Crichlow stated that customers care about whether trains, buses, and paratransit vehicles arrive on time and safely, but that achieving that goal requires thousands of employees working behind the scenes. He cited mechanics, car inspectors, depot personnel, maintainers, field supervisors, and other support staff whose daily work enables the safe and reliable movement of millions of riders. He emphasized that transit employees connect New Yorkers to their families, their friends, lifesaving care, and much more.

President Crichlow reiterated that nothing is as important at New York City Transit than safety and service. He said that he had recently visited a depot and yard where he saw employees on the shop floor carrying out their responsibilities with support from supervisors and coworkers. He added that there had recently been public discussion questioning that commitment to safety and service, and he wished to address several of those matters.

President Crichlow discussed one-person train operation ("OPTO"). He stated that legislating the details of daily operations would immediately increase costs and prevent the agency from taking advantage of technology that could save money. He said that OPTO was introduced through collective bargaining nearly thirty years ago and had since expanded. He reported that NYCT has safely operated OPTO since 1994 on seven routes or services, including the 42nd Street Shuttle, the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, the Rockaway Park Shuttle, and certain overnight or weekend operations. He stated that OPTO saves approximately \$9 million annually and that those funds are reinvested into employees and service.

President Crichlow then discussed the bus radio and Bus Command Center systems. He stated that the agency is working to centralize bus service management through the Bus Command Center, similar to how subway operations are managed through the Operations Control Center. He said that centralization allows access to more information that benefits riders and employees and places those managing day-to-day service next to those managing incidents. He added that it helps position supervisors more effectively during events such as storms.

He stated that in 2016 the agency approved a contract to upgrade communications at the Bus Command Center. As part of that upgrade, buses were equipped with devices that connect operators to the command center using a data network. He said that if those devices lose internet connectivity, operators still retain regular voice radio service and can always communicate with the command center through fallback mode. He added that the agency had held multiple meetings with the union regarding the system and had been working through any issues that arise.

President Crichlow next addressed claims concerning the safety and integrity of buses operating from Gun Hill Depot. He stated that buses with known safety defects are not allowed to enter service. He said that the agency has maintenance policies and procedures that comply with industry standards and requires work orders, tasks, and associated labor costs to be recorded. He explained that some work orders may close with no labor cost, such as when a vendor performs warranty repairs. He further stated that the system had been updated so any work order closed without labor hours must now include a typed comment.

President Crichlow also addressed claims regarding brake issues, stating that all buses referenced were inspected out of an abundance of caution and that not a single one was found to have been on the road when it should not have been. He added that much of the fleet is equipped with technology that continuously monitors brake wear, while buses without that technology receive visual inspections and additional inspections when needed.

President Crichlow then discussed investments in facilities through the 2025–2029 Capital Plan. He stated that the plan includes historic state-of-good-repair investments and that good facilities are necessary both for workforce safety and for providing service. He specifically cited planned upgrades at six NYCT bus depots, Bathgate Shop, and the Zerega Central Maintenance Facility.

Turning to Staten Island express bus service, President Crichlow stated that since 2018 NYCT has invested approximately \$15 million in bus service on Staten Island and increased scheduled service by 11 percent. He said that a network redesign had improved bus speeds by 16 percent. He stated that the agency had proactively taken steps during the summer to improve service and that recent customer surveys showed Staten Island riders recognized those improvements. He also acknowledged more recent challenges caused by blizzard conditions and traffic congestion and said the agency was working with law enforcement, Bridges and Tunnels, and Construction & Development to improve traffic flow. He further stated that by mid-2026, 40 percent of the Staten Island bus fleet would have been replaced.

President Crichlow concluded with remarks regarding key performance indicators. He stated that service is measured against published schedules and that when regular service is suspended during emergency conditions, those days are not counted because there is no schedule. He added that this did not excuse performance challenges, but emphasized that the agency still ran service during blizzard conditions. He stated that in many cases the only vehicles visible on city streets during the storm were buses and paratransit vehicles, and that NYCT continued to provide transportation to those who needed it most under extremely difficult conditions.

William Amarosa, Senior Vice President, Subways, NYCT, discussed Subways March performance metrics.

Frank Farrell, Senior Vice President, Department of Buses, NYCT and MTA Bus, delivered the Buses Report and discussed March performance metrics.

Rachel Cohen, Vice President, Paratransit, NYCT, delivered the Paratransit Report and discussed March performance metrics.

Bernard Jackson, Chief Operating Officer, NYCT, delivered the Ridership Report and discussed March performance metrics.

Refer to the video recording of the meeting produced by the MTA and maintained in MTA records for the details.

6. PRESENTATION ON DEPARTMENT OF BUSES

Frank Farrell, Executive Vice President, NYCT Department of Buses and MTA Bus delivered a presentation regarding recent accomplishments and strategic priorities for the Department of Buses.

Mr. Farrell highlighted the successful implementation of congestion pricing, Queens Bus Network Redesign service improvements, expansion of Automated Camera Enforcement routes, new bus deliveries, transit signal priority installations, and additional bus lanes.

He stated that the 2026 focus would be on optimizing service management, safety, maintenance practices, customer service, and delivery of a faster, safer, and more reliable bus network.

Refer to the video recording of the meeting produced by the MTA and maintained in MTA records for the details.

7. SAFETY AND SECURITY REPORT

Chief Steve Morel, Transit Bureau, NYPD, delivered the Safety and Security Report.

Chief Morel reported that in February there were 191 recorded crimes in the subway system, reflecting a 17.9% increase compared to February of the prior year. He stated that the increase was driven primarily by robberies and, to a lesser extent, felony assaults. He further reported that, following adjustments in deployment, the trends have improved for the 28-day period ending March 15.

Chief Morel also reported that year-to-date unprovoked incidents decreased by more than 27% that 17 firearms were removed from the subway system, representing a 70% increase compared to the same period last year.

Refer to the video recording of the meeting, produced by the MTA and maintained in MTA records, for the details.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.