



Minnesota Regional Transit
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ORIGINAL

REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Monday, September 21, 1992
St. Paul Civic Center
St. Paul, Minnesota
12:03 p.m.

Tuesday, September 22, 1992
Hennepin County Government Center
Minneapolis, Minnesota
11:35 a.m.

Wednesday, September 23, 1992
M.S. Achievement Center
St. Paul, Minnesota
7:00 p.m.

Thursday, September 24, 1992
Sabathani Community Center
Minneapolis, Minnesota
7:05 p.m.

Tuesday, September 29, 1992
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota
12:09 p.m.

TERRI R. HANSON
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Minneapolis, MN 55412
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BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Monday, September 21, 1992

Michael Ehrlichmann, Chair
Ruby Hunt, Acting Chair
Doris Caranicas
Don Scheel
Maryann Campo
Tom Sather

Tuesday, September 22, 1992

Michael Ehrlichmann, Chair
Sandra Hilary, Acting Chair
Doris Caranicas, Acting Chair
Val Higgins
Sharon Feess
Ruth Franklyn
Maryann Campo
Tom Sather

Wednesday, September 23, 1992

Michael Ehrlichmann, Chair
Sharon Feess, Acting Chair
Ruth Franklyn
Tom Workman

Thursday, September 24, 1992

Michael Ehrlichmann, Chair
Maryann Campo, Acting Chair
Doris Caranicas
Tom Sather

Tuesday, September 29, 1992

Michael Ehrlichmann, Chair
Val Higgins
Doris Caranicas
Ruth Franklyn
Tom Sather

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1 Public Hearing of the Regional Transit Board,
2 Monday, September 21, 1992, commencing at approximately
3 12:03 p.m. at the St. Paul Civic Center, St. Paul,
4 Minnesota.

5 MS. RUBY HUNT: Good afternoon. My name
6 is Ruby Hunt. I happen to be a county commissioner
7 from Ramsey County. However, I'm also here as a
8 member of the Regional Transit Board since I
9 represent the St. Paul area on the Regional Transit
10 Board.

11 We have others members of the Regional Transit
12 Board. I would like to introduce them at this time,
13 and if they would probably nod their head or raise
14 their hand, I would appreciate that. It's Don
15 Scheel who represents southern Washington County and
16 most of Dakota County. Tom Sather, who represents
17 the northern Ramsey County suburbs. Mike -- I know
18 your last name Mike. My mind went blank. Mike
19 Ehrlichmann. I'm sorry, Mike. Mike is the
20 chairperson of the Regional Transit Board, and he
21 represents the metropolitan district at large. And
22 also representing the at-large district is Doris. I
23 sit next to Doris almost all the time, and my mind
24 is going blank. Doris Caranicas.

25 We welcome you here, and we're here because the

1 Regional Transit Board is responsible for planning
2 and financing transit services in the metropolitan
3 area. We appreciate your taking interest in this
4 meeting. And I must tell you that as a Board member
5 having fare increases hearings is one of the hardest
6 things we have to do. But to be fiscally
7 responsible we must consider higher fares to avoid
8 service cuts. And this hearing is one of seven
9 hearings we will be holding throughout the
10 metropolitan area.

11 The Board has not made any decisions yet on
12 changing fares, and that is the purpose for this
13 meeting. By getting your responses on a specific
14 proposal we can think about what this proposal means
15 to you. In the past we have made changes to staff
16 proposals based upon the public comments.

17 After these hearings, we will be consolidating
18 and tabulating your comments. Changes may be made
19 to parts of the proposal or to the whole concept.
20 The Board will consider changing the fares at the
21 Board's next administrative and finance committee
22 meeting which will be held on October 12th, and then
23 it will go before the whole Board at the next Board
24 meeting. If we vote on a fare change, it will most
25 likely take effect on January 1st, 1993.

1 The procedure for today's hearing is simple. A
2 staff member will go through the current and
3 proposed fare structure, and then we will listen to
4 your comments. Questions will be answered about the
5 fare structure, yet we would like to spend the
6 majority of our time listening to your ideas. We
7 will call on people to talk in the order they signed
8 up on our list. If you have not signed up to speak
9 and would like to, please sign up at the back of the
10 room with one of our public information staff. And
11 she's raising her hand back there.

12 I would like to now call on Howard Blin who
13 will present the proposed fare changes.

14 MR. HOWARD BLIN: If I speak without a
15 mike, can you all hear me in the back of the room?
16 Okay. Thank you.

17 I'll just very quickly go over the proposal
18 that's before the Board at this time emphasizing the
19 fares that will increase if this proposal is
20 enacted.

21 First of all, and this is for regular route
22 service. The base fare, what's known as the
23 off-peak local fare which is now 85 cents under this
24 proposal would increase 15 cents to a dollar. So
25 the base fare would go to a dollar.

1 The zone fare or the extra quarter that people
2 pay when they cross that zone boundary we're
3 proposing to be eliminated. The reason for that is
4 the current zone fare creates a lot of confusion and
5 is hard to administer. People aren't quite sure
6 when they're crossing that zone boundary. So for
7 that reason we would eliminate the zone fare under
8 this proposal.

9 The express fare which is what people pay on
10 express routes is now a quarter. There is an extra
11 quarter added for express routes. That would be
12 increased 25 cents so that the express fare would be
13 50 cents under this proposal.

14 The off-peak fares that seniors, youth and
15 people eligible for limited mobility pay currently a
16 quarter. That would be increased another quarter so
17 that fare would be 50 cents.

18 The downtown zone which is now a quarter all
19 day long would be eliminated during the peak period.
20 So during the peak period of 6 to 9 a.m. and 3:30 to
21 6:30 p.m. you would pay the full fare to ride
22 through downtown where now it's a quarter.

23 And finally the convenience fares, the discount
24 fare that we offer for people that buy monthly
25 passes, tokens or 10-ride cards would go up a

1 nickel. Whereas now we offer a 30-cent discount on
2 prepaid convenient fares. That discount would only
3 be 25 cents.

4 MR. RONALD WOELFEL: May I ask a question?
5 Are the Metro Mobility rates going up too?

6 MR. HOWARD BLIN: No, and I'll get to that
7 in just a moment.

8 If we could just look at the bottom of this.
9 At this time we are proposing no increase in Metro
10 Mobility fares. Now, if that increase -- if there
11 is a regular route increase, there may be at some
12 point in the future an increase in Metro Mobility
13 fares, but at this point we are not proposing any
14 increase.

15 Now, there would be some changes in what people
16 actually pay for Metro Mobility service because this
17 proposal would eliminate the zone crossing which
18 adds 50 cents. In the case of Metro Mobility some
19 people riding Metro Mobility would actually see
20 their fare go down. So simply put, no one on Metro
21 Mobility services would see a fare increase. Those
22 that are riding across that zone boundary would
23 actually see a 50-cent decrease if this proposal is
24 enacted.

25 But look at the rest of the fares for a regular

1 route. It gets a little complicated because we have
2 so many different kinds of cash fares and then
3 convenience fares. But I'll go through them very
4 quickly here.

5 The existing 85-cent fare would become a
6 dollar. The \$1.10 fare, which is what people pay
7 for local service during the peak period or what
8 they pay for express service during the off-peak
9 period, as you see it gets a little confusing. It
10 would go from \$1.10 to \$1.25. The \$1.35 fare, which
11 is what people pay for express service crossing the
12 zone boundary in the off peak would go from \$1.35 to
13 \$1.50. And the highest fares for what people pay
14 for express service, long-distance express trips in
15 the peak hours would go from \$1.60 to \$1.75. So
16 essentially all these fares go up 15 cents.

17 The current 25-cent fares that seniors, youth
18 and the disabled pay in the off-peak period would go
19 from 25 cents to 50 cents.

20 MR. RONALD WOELFEL: On that limited
21 mobility card do you have to pay express fare on
22 that? Currently you don't.

23 MR. HOWARD BLIN: No, you would continue
24 to not have to pay the express route.

25 But to quickly go through the convenience

1 fares, 10-ride cards, the punch cards that people
2 purchase for 10 rides, would all go up \$2. The
3 lowest 10-ride would go from \$5.50 to \$7.50. The
4 highest from \$13 to \$15.

5 Monthly passes would all go up \$8. Currently
6 we have monthly passes or all-you-can-ride cards
7 placed at \$22, \$32, \$42, and \$52. Depending on when
8 you're riding, the local routes, the express route,
9 during the peak or off peak, all of those monthly
10 passes would go up \$8 to \$30, \$40, \$50, \$60. Now,
11 for some people, particularly those that ride
12 express services in the off peak, they now buy a \$32
13 card. Because of that 25-cent increase in the
14 express fare some of those people may have to buy a
15 \$50 monthly pass now. So they would see an increase
16 of \$18.

17 Again, there are no increases proposed in Metro
18 Mobility fares. If this proposal is enacted, some
19 people on long-distance Metro Mobility trips would
20 actually see a 50-cent decrease.

21 And with that I'll turn it back to Boardmember
22 Hunt for any questions.

23 MS. RUBY HUNT: Are there any further
24 questions? (No response).

25 One thing I would like to comment and ask if

1 the staff can back me up on this, which I don't
2 think we've necessarily covered unless it's been
3 typed on that and I missed it, and that is, one of
4 the reasons why the Regional Transit Board must
5 conduct these hearings is because the legislature by
6 law has said that 35 percent of the fare box must be
7 paid by the rider. Is that correct? And unless we
8 meet that, and it's anticipated that next year there
9 will not be a 35-percent recovery at the fare box.
10 And in order to be able to meet what the legislature
11 has passed into law, we have to be sure that there
12 is a 35 percent of the fare will be paid by the
13 user. Is that correct?

14 MR. HOWARD BLIN: That is correct,

15 MS. RUBY HUNT: I mean, we're not doing
16 this because we like to increase fares and we want
17 to have more money for the MTC to operate. It's
18 that we have to meet this 35-percent floor on all
19 the fares.

20 MR. HOWARD BLIN: And, Commissioner Hunt,
21 I would add to that. Looking ahead to 1993 and
22 trying to balance the budget for the MTC in 1993, we
23 would need increased fare revenue if there are no
24 other sources of funding.

25 MS. RUBY HUNT: And up until this point in

1 time the legislature has seen fit to fund parts or
2 subsidize the fare for bus ridership. But as a
3 result with next year's costs going up, we are not
4 sure that the legislature is going to be willing to
5 subsidize the fares in order to not have to meet
6 that 35-percent floor. Although, I think you can be
7 assured that the MTC and the RTB will be seeking
8 additional funds from the legislature because we
9 feel that bus transportation is extremely important
10 to the metropolitan area. Now, if there are no
11 further -- do I see a hand there before we call on
12 people to testify?

13 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: I have a question.
14 My name is Lloyd Peterson. I live on the east said
15 of St. Paul, 1932 East Fifth. My question is where
16 does the rest of the funding come from beyond that
17 35 cents that isn't in the fare box? For instance,
18 the 25 cents now that seniors pay, how is that made
19 up through the additional funding? And where does
20 the rest of the money come from to make up that
21 difference between the 35 cents and the dollar that
22 it would cost to operate? I have some other
23 comments here, but this is my question.

24 MS. RUBY HUNT: Sure. Good question.
25 Howard, would you respond to that, please?

1 MR. HOWARD BLIN: The majority of funding
2 other than fare revenue comes out of the property
3 tax that the RTB levies throughout the metro area.
4 About 50 percent of the regular route funding comes
5 from that property tax. The remaining 15 percent
6 comes from state and federal sources. We get a
7 state appropriation and also very limited federal
8 funding on an annual basis.

9 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: What is the
10 percentage of that property tax? How much is that
11 property tax?

12 MR. HOWARD BLIN: The property tax is
13 equivalent of two mils. I can't explain it beyond
14 that. It's the two mil property tax.

15 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: Is it the entire
16 state or is it just the seven-county metropolitan
17 area that is assessed this?

18 MR. HOWARD BLIN: It's actually an area
19 within the seven-county area called the transit
20 taxing district, and that's the area that receives
21 bus service. So in other words, the rural areas of
22 the seven counties pay a very limited property tax.
23 The more urbanized areas pay a higher property tax.

24 MS. RUBY HUNT: Okay. Thank you for that
25 question, Lloyd. And, Lloyd, now you're the first

1 person on the list who asked to testify. You would
2 like to make some further comments.

3 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: Yes, I would.

4 MS. RUBY HUNT: Okay. Go ahead.

5 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: My further comments,
6 I would like to see this two mil tax increased
7 mainly because those -- as you grow older like
8 myself and as you get more disabled like others
9 here, there's a growing trend in the entire country
10 against elderly people who drive. There's a growing
11 trend that the highway departments of all of the
12 states are going to be cracking down more and more
13 on those elderly because a lot of them have never
14 taken a driver's test, and they're afraid of the
15 accidents that they cause.

16 So a lot of these people are going to be forced
17 out of their cars. For that matter, I believe that
18 the state then must have a higher income through
19 that three mil tax, whatever. It probably should be
20 expanded in order that everyone -- just an example
21 of how the city and the entire city supports the
22 improvements and stuff, the City of St. Paul and
23 Minneapolis, when they had to subsidize their sewers
24 and separate their sewers and everything, they came
25 up with a plan where the entire city was going to

1 pay for part of that not only the people who had to
2 have it separated. So the entire city is
3 benefiting. And this is why I feel that we should
4 increase that mil tax in order to benefit all of the
5 people.

6 Students, most of these students that go to the
7 university, a lot of them do not have cars. And I
8 think there should be something in order to
9 encourage these children to get better education and
10 be able to get their educational needs. Because if
11 you add another mil or two mils, whatever is
12 necessary to make up the difference so we don't need
13 to cut the service. The service is one thing I do
14 not want to see cut. And if there's any simple way
15 or one that isn't going to affect an awful lot of
16 people, isn't going to make that big of a
17 difference, I think that's what we should look at.
18 Thank you.

19 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you, Mr. Peterson.

20 I would like to introduce another one of our
21 RTB members, Maryann Campo, who represents the
22 Minneapolis area on the Board. Do you want to raise
23 your hand, Mary.

24 The next person that asked to testify is Allen
25 Lovejoy.

1 MR. ALLEN LOVEJOY: My name is Allen
2 Lovejoy. I work for the City of St. Paul planning
3 and economic development department. And I'm not
4 here today to give official testimony in behalf of
5 the city but to say a couple of things.

6 First of all, the city will make an official
7 response, and I believe you're scheduled to make a
8 presentation for our governmental relations
9 committee next Wednesday, and I will have a
10 statement following that.

11 I do want to say a couple of things, that the
12 city has continued to say in the last year or two,
13 first of all, this may be one of the worst times to
14 raise fares even though I think we all understand
15 what's going on and why it's happening in terms of
16 budget crunches. But it comes on the heels of an
17 increase in ridership as well as some investments in
18 ridership, particularly in St. Paul where we're
19 trying to attract more people to transit during
20 times of construction and reconstruction. And I
21 think that the RTB, MTC, Mn/DOT and the city
22 collectively have had some successes. So it seems
23 particularly bad to anticipate increases at this
24 time.

25 The second thing, the thing that the city, I

1 think, has been fairly consistent in saying is we're
2 very concerned about any cuts in the
3 transit-dependent groups, both in terms of services
4 cuts and in terms of rate increases. And clearly
5 when you're talking nonpeak rates, you are talking
6 about things that are likely to hit
7 transit-dependent populations very high. Also
8 talked about the seniors and youth fares going up.
9 So we're very concerned about that as well.

10 And one of the recommendations we are likely to
11 make, the city council is going to ask the RTB to
12 consider finding stop-gap resources through the end
13 of this year till sometime in next year hopefully
14 getting some regress from the legislature in the
15 next session. I think we need to look for different
16 alternatives to cutting services. And I'm not sure
17 how far the council will go in terms of recommending
18 types of stop-gap funding, but I think --

19 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Resources from
20 the city?

21 MR. ALLEN LOVEJOY: Pardon me?

22 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Resources from
23 the city? We don't need that much. Five million
24 will tide us over.

25 MR. ALLEN LOVEJOY: I will make that

1 comment back to the council. I don't think that we
2 want to make any recommendations that are
3 irresponsible as part of the region. I'm not sure
4 if that's going to translate into cash, but we'll
5 see. Thank you.

6 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you, Allen. The
7 next individual is Sheila Kennedy.

8 MS. SHEILA KENNEDY: I'm here today
9 speaking only for myself and my disabled husband,
10 but our situation is by no means unique. I think we
11 have to keep the goal in mind, and it may be
12 slipping away. The goal for any transit system is
13 maximum bus service for the greatest number at the
14 least cost.

15 When I lived on the east side of St. Paul, it
16 was much easier for me to get over to Minneapolis to
17 work than it was to get to the suburbs of the east
18 side to work part time at 3M. This is something
19 that's been amply documented in the newspapers and
20 elsewhere, that it's easier for suburbanites to come
21 into the city to work than it is for inner-city
22 people to get out to the suburbs to work.

23 It has also been documented very, very well by
24 Don Ahern in the Pioneer Press last week, and I
25 would cite the article of September 16, "Partisan

1 politics has reared its ugly head in this
2 situation." And I have to question if partisan
3 politics should have this great a role in running
4 any transit corporation.

5 As other people have commented on today, the
6 disabled, seniors, poor, working people, and single
7 mothers, we all know this, are being hit hardest by
8 all economic changes and decisions at this time.
9 The bus budget books should not be balanced on their
10 backs.

11 And my husband is a multiply-disabled man who
12 works full time. I work part time. We ride the bus
13 as our only means of transportation, and we both
14 vote in every election. As I said before, we're not
15 unique.

16 There is currently a disability discount, but
17 to qualify for it the last time we checked you have
18 to surrender your driver's license and go through
19 other qualifications. If any of you were to see my
20 husband, you would clearly see that he is a disabled
21 man. There would not be any question in your mind.
22 But he pays the express bus fare when -- as it is
23 now when he goes to work every day, and he does not
24 qualify for any discount because he has a driver's
25 license and does not intend to surrender it if he

1 does not have to.

2 This has led to seeing these increases at a
3 time when we are looking at our own budget and
4 making decisions, has made us think that we will
5 have to seriously choose between whether we can
6 afford a car of any kind or whether we will continue
7 to buy the bus passes that we use to go to work
8 every day. We can't afford both. It's one or the
9 other.

10 I think the decision to raise fares ultimately
11 will impact hardest on all vulnerable populations
12 and will also pen poor and more vulnerable people up
13 in their neighborhoods.

14 I think the news, once again, has amply
15 demonstrated that this isn't such a great idea all
16 the way around. It will have all kinds of economic
17 ramifications and social ones. This also has a poor
18 environmental impact. More cars, more road
19 building, more emissions, impacting the poor and the
20 environment at the worst possible time. Thank you.

21 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you, Sheila. I'll
22 next call on Corbin Kidder.

23 MR. CORBIN KIDDER: Madam Chairman,
24 members of the Regional Transit Board, thank you for
25 this opportunity to testify. I say, Madam Chairman,

1 members of the Regional Transit Board, thank you for
2 this opportunity to testify at this first
3 fare-increase hearing.

4 I will have a more detailed statement available
5 at a later time. Very briefly, the three aspects of
6 the proposals which I'm very concerned with are its
7 overall regressivity and its impact upon
8 mobility-impaired and low-income people, its
9 deference to suburban riders and its conflict with
10 the RTB's proposed vision for transit.

11 Very briefly I would like to tell you, I'm
12 happy to say that I endorse with one qualification
13 about half of the proposals made. And I'll state
14 these. The base fare increase was to be expected
15 and is reasonable. The timing perhaps, as has been
16 previously said, should have been deferred until
17 after the legislature can take action. But it
18 restores the fare simplification which, as a member
19 of the MTC's advisory committee on transit for 18
20 years, I had a hand in and was very happy to
21 endorse. This was knocked into a caught cat by the
22 last fare increase including the unfortunate 10-cent
23 element thereof.

24 And I certainly endorse that increase. It's
25 overdue, at least as far as the type of inflationary

1 increase that we may expect. The retention of the
2 present 25 cents peak fare I also endorse.

3 The elimination of distance space element fares
4 we have to reject. This is essentially getting the
5 suburbs to pay the freight for the inner cities. I
6 think this is inappropriate direction for transit
7 planning.

8 The express fare increase similarly, which in a
9 sense is probably designed to cover the elimination
10 of the zone fares, is, again, an inappropriate
11 direction. We have essentially the same net effect
12 for peak period, peak directions suburban riders,
13 but people who use the suburban services are
14 adversely affected if they are nonpeak, nonexpress
15 riders.

16 The increase in the social fares at a time of
17 what is either a recession or depression, and you
18 pick your words for that, we have to reject. This
19 is certainly the wrong direction from the standpoint
20 of social policy and also the wrong direction from
21 the standpoint of trying to increase ridership and
22 make the service on which the ridership is based
23 better and more extensive.

24 The downtown peak increase I must endorse with
25 some qualifications. The qualification primarily

1 being that a downtown circulator is badly needed.
2 That circulator would then have a 25-cent fare.
3 Hopefully it might be, although it would not
4 necessarily be, operated by the MTC. But it would
5 relieve the pressure on peak period suburban buses
6 and at the same time avoid problems encountered by
7 drivers in trying to collect multiple fares even
8 with an electronic fare box at the point of peak
9 load.

10 Again, any fare package finally adopted by the
11 Board and the commission should have at least two or
12 three primary characteristics. No regressivity,
13 which means that it must be a fare which meets the
14 needs of youths, seniors and the mobility impaired.

15 Off-peak express service, as we have said at
16 similar forums for 15 years, is not a premium
17 service. And it's clear from the RTB's own vision
18 for transit that this is the kind of service which
19 we have to expect. Off peak point to point, peak
20 period peak direction services will continue. And
21 those properly command an express fare. But
22 off-peak express services such as those on routes
23 94B, C, D and currently route 47 in particular
24 should be continued and expanded as a necessary part
25 of the travel pattern for the Twin Cities transit

1 riders.

2 We would like to urge the commission to accept
3 rather than reject the MTC's budget assumptions
4 which underlie this fare proposal. They seem
5 reasonable and should be given further study.

6 And, again, I would like to express my support
7 for a downtown circulator bus to alleviate the
8 problems encountered by line haul buses trying to
9 contend with downtown zone fares. I would be glad
10 to answer any questions. Thank you.

11 MS. RUBY HUNT: Well, thank you, Corbin.
12 I would just like to point out that Corbin Kidder
13 stopped at our RTB booth at the state fair and
14 entered our little contest for bus tickets that were
15 being drawn for, and he has a return address that
16 gives his name and address, but also under his name
17 it says, "Transit advocate." And we appreciate your
18 advocacy, Corbin.

19 MR. CORBIN KIDDER: Thank you.

20 MS. RUBY HUNT: Our next testifier is
21 Ronald Woelfel.

22 MR. RONALD WOELFEL: I just want to say I
23 don't believe it's the right time to increase the
24 fares because, first off, we've had three months of
25 better service. Okay. But you got to figure, you

1 sent out all those free passes. Okay. If they were
2 counted in there, that would cut it down a little
3 too.

4 Also, I want to say that every time you raise
5 the fare, at least the last time and the probably
6 the time before, you lose ridership. This is going
7 to be the same way.

8 And another thing, I would like to know if a
9 few months back when you raised the rates or
10 whatever it was, you cut down the amount of
11 transfers. You could only use them for one less
12 time. Are you going to increase that? Or is that
13 going to be the same? Does anybody know?

14 MR. HOWARD BLIN: At this time there's no
15 proposal to change the transfer policy.

16 MR. RONALD WOELFEL: Because if you go
17 like a long distance, you have to use three
18 transfers or whatever, two. You know, an extra
19 transfer, and then you have to pay an extra fare.
20 That's complicated there too.

21 Another thing, I'm seeing better scheduling,
22 bigger print at the Megamall you have on the
23 schedules. That's bigger print. I believe that
24 will help people see it a lot better and the
25 schedules are posted real nice out there. And I

1 would like to know, why don't they sell tokens at
2 the megamall instead of just bus passes?

3 MR. HOWARD BLIN: Sir, within a few months
4 there will be a transit store located at the
5 megamall.

6 MR. RONALD WOELFEL: Yeah, then you will
7 have tokens. Okay. That would be what I wanted to
8 say. Thank you very much.

9 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you. Our next
10 testifier is Phoebe McNeill.

11 MS. PHOEBE McNEILL: I'm Phoebe McNeill,
12 I'm from the 10 West Exchange high-rise near
13 downtown St. Paul. I heard a comment when I came in
14 that there weren't very many people here and that
15 there were more of us than them. And the first
16 notice that I saw of this was in the paper last
17 Wednesday, and this was the only one in downtown St.
18 Paul. So this is a really -- it's a hard place for
19 us to get at on the bus even. It still involves
20 quite a bit of walking, and so I that's one reason
21 why there aren't very many of us here today.

22 MS. SHEILA KENNEDY: Well said.

23 MS. PHOEBE McNEILL: I'm speaking in favor
24 of the proposed increase for the base price. That's
25 what I pay. I have no special interest there in

1 keeping that extra 15 cents for myself. I agree
2 that that fare is fair, f-a-i-r.

3 However, for the seniors who I represent at the
4 resident council from 10 West Exchange and many
5 disabled people, the increase from 25 to 50 cents is
6 too big a jump. It was just increased from 10 cents
7 to 25 cents a short time ago, and I think that the
8 25 cents is fair. These people have earned the
9 right to a few perks, and riding the bus is a perk,
10 but it's also a necessity. People in my building do
11 not have cars. It is not an option. A car is not
12 an option, and the bus is our only transportation.

13 I'm also against elimination of the downtown
14 zone during the peak hours. I can understand the
15 reasoning for it, but I do many of my rides in the
16 downtown zone, and it would severely limit the
17 things that I could do because I would not be able
18 to do those things at the increased price.

19 And I'm also in favor of a downtown circulator
20 if that can be worked out.

21 I am grateful for the increase in the service
22 of the No. 22 bus route as part of our request
23 before to increase service down Saint Peter Street,
24 And I appreciate that. Thank you.

25 MS. RUBY HUNT: All right. Thank you.

1 Next I would like to call on Julie McEnroe.

2 MS. JULIE McENROE: I'm the community
3 organizer for downtown. And with the timing of this
4 also, I haven't had a chance as far as Board
5 approval and the like. I just want to make it clear
6 that it's my view in working with our transportation
7 committee in issues that have come up from residents
8 who live downtown. As Allen Lovejoy stated, the
9 timing of it, I'm concerned. We've really done a
10 lot of effort in marketing downtown to get out of
11 the single-occupancy vehicle. And people this
12 summer with the transportation, with the
13 construction, are starting to use the buses. And
14 hopefully we're going to be able to convert those
15 into riders that will do it once the roads are back
16 after October 31st also. So I'm not sure on the
17 timing, what we can do as far as getting them used
18 to being bus riders before increasing the fare and
19 taking that into consideration.

20 I would also like to just address a moment, the
21 downtown circulators have come up a couple times.
22 And there is going to be a downtown shuttle bus, but
23 that is something that's strictly being a private
24 endeavor right now. The downtown council and the
25 chamber of commerce is working on that, but it is

1 primarily visitor oriented and the service people
2 that are coming into town going from the history
3 center coming downtown. It's going to be linking
4 different parts, but it's not taking into
5 consideration the downtown circulation needs that
6 are met by the quarter zone.

7 And I also feel that the quarter zone, we've
8 been trying to get people to use perimeter parking
9 so that we can open up our core parking downtown for
10 visitors and shoppers that come in, and using
11 perimeter parking we can supply the quarter zone for
12 getting them from the perimeter parking into the
13 offices that they use.

14 And the other thing I wanted to just express is
15 I'm very glad Mike Christenson is still on staff.
16 Having had the opportunity to work with him for the
17 last year and a half he has been a breath of fresh
18 air. I can call and have phone calls returned, and
19 all of the issues that we've had on the bus
20 rerouting, he's been very supportive, and we just
21 wanted to let you know that we feel he's doing his
22 job. Thank you.

23 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you, Julie.

24 And as I understand the process, Howard, if an
25 organization has not met yet but will meet in the

1 near future and take an official position, that can
2 be sent to the RTB.

3 MR. HOWARD BLIN: That's correct. In
4 addition, you noted the administration finance
5 committee will be meeting on the 12th of October to
6 consider this also.

7 MS. RUBY HUNT: All right. Fine. Our
8 next person to speak is Ron Weinberger.

9 MR. RON WEINBERGER: Madam Chairman and
10 the Board, this is the first time I ever spoke. I
11 grew up in this neighborhood back in the '70s, and
12 I'm concerned about the \$8 increase on the bus cards
13 going up, and I also speak for a lot of my friends
14 who used to go to Inver Hills with me out in Dakota
15 County. And I think it might affect them, but if it
16 goes up, I guess I can live with it.

17 The other concern I have is having the 8, 5 and
18 7 out there in West St. Paul is very good, but I
19 have a suggestion to make. I don't know if
20 anybody's interested, but here goes.

21 We have a new library opening up near K-Mart
22 November 1st in Dakota County, and what I would like
23 to see if somebody out there could get together and
24 have another public hearing to teach people that
25 riding the bus is very important because we have a

1 lot of people who like to drive, and I think the bus
2 service is very key out there in Dakota County, the
3 8 and the 7. And I'm really impressed. So that's
4 my comments. Thank you.

5 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you, Ron. Our next
6 testifier is Marcella Menchaca.

7 MS. MARCELLA MENCHACA: Madam Chairman,
8 members of the Board, I live in the West Seventh
9 Street area, and I have five children. And like a
10 lot of women, I have become a single parent. And a
11 year ago when I first started using the bus service
12 -- this child here is three years old -- and I was
13 being made to pay a dollar for the rush-hour rate.
14 Some of the bus drivers informed me that, yes, I had
15 to pay it, and some of them said, no, you didn't.
16 So it was not very consistent with what I had to
17 pay.

18 I do have five children. And, yes, children do
19 pay a minimum amount. But because I'm on a fixed
20 income, there is not going to be an increase for me.
21 When I have to start paying the 15 cents that she
22 can elaborately pay, I cannot afford to pay these 15
23 cents. The 15 cents that I wager on is the money I
24 need for food or possibly some clothing.

25 And because I have children, there's always a

1 tendency of having to go to clinics and hospitals,
2 and I need to use the transit system at this point.
3 If I stand there long enough and get agitated, I end
4 up walking because I just feel that sometimes it's
5 just not adequate enough, and I just don't have the
6 money. So it's a choice of using the money for the
7 bus or walking, which is my alternative.

8 And a lot of people say, well, we don't
9 sympathize with you, we just think that that's your
10 problem. But I think it's an increased problem as
11 far as the city of St. Paul, that we do have a lot
12 of single parents, and a lot of them are trying to
13 make a change in their life and going to school and
14 setting up change in their life. We need support.
15 And if we're going to have support from the transit
16 company which a lot of us use, we would like for the
17 fares to stay the same because it's a very hard and
18 a very difficult decision to make between whether
19 you want to use that 15 cents for something like
20 riding the bus or walk. And I think that's really
21 -- it's really a bad time during this recession.
22 Thank you.

23 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you, Marcella. That
24 concludes the list of people who have asked to be
25 heard. Is there anyone else that wants to be heard

1 or is there anyone that would like to ask a question
2 of any of our staff people here? Yes, Julie.

3 MS. JULIE McENROE: I just wanted to offer
4 that the downtown development council is moving into
5 Town Square on October 1st, and we have access to
6 the community room in Town Square. And in the
7 future if you're looking for a site that would be
8 more accessible to bus riders, please let us know as
9 we can make arrangements with you. It's on the
10 first floor and it's handicapped accessible, but
11 also it's right in the core of your bus traffic.

12 MS. RUBY HUNT: Very good. Thank you. Do
13 we have any further comments from the staff? Mike,
14 you've been quiet. You haven't said a word.

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: It's a time to
16 listen not to speechify. But I know we're all going
17 to have the opportunity to vote on this separately.
18 We have seven hearings, and it's hard getting the
19 legislature to give more money. That would be nice,
20 but in the past they haven't been that generous, not
21 to transit.

22 And I guess there's the second worse thing that
23 I've had to do being chair was to vote on a fare
24 increase. The worse thing is cutting the service
25 hours. Even if you have high-subsidy service and

1 the few people ride it, generally those are the
2 people who really have no other alternative. And
3 that's what you end up having to cut first.

4 We're like anybody else. The budget is just
5 like the budget you have at home, you have to pay
6 the mortgage, you've got to pay the lights, you've
7 got to pay the balances. And it's not an easy task.
8 And I wish we could print it. But we're ultimately
9 dependent on the legislature for determining how
10 much extra money we're going to have. So other than
11 that, we'll --

12 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: Could I?

13 MS. RUBY HUNT: Yes, go ahead.

14 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: It brings up another
15 question. Who determines that mil rate? Is that a
16 legislative or was it the Regional Transit Board,
17 the Metropolitan Council?

18 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Set by staff, by
19 law.

20 MR. LLOYD PETERSON: That two mil? I
21 realize -- I know that in order to get any other
22 money it has to go through that, but I thought that
23 is the Metropolitan Council.

24 One other comment that Julie brought up. I'm
25 sorry to hear that the politics may be getting Mr.

1 Christenson. I too have worked with Mr. Christenson
2 on many of these items because I've been an advocate
3 -- you might say advocate for bus transfers, and I'm
4 trying to work with the MTC. I'm trying to work
5 with the St. Paul Department of Public Works in
6 order to increase the visibility and the scheduling
7 of the buses in the downtown area. So far I've
8 almost come up into a blank wall because for one
9 reason or another they can't do anything now or they
10 won't do anything to market the transit system. I
11 feel that they aren't doing a very good job of
12 marketing.

13 One of the things that came out at the last
14 hearing down at Mears Park was a gentleman proposed
15 that that 54 mall bus go through the airport to the
16 mall. This is a great marketing tool of the
17 transit. They are not using all of the marketing
18 abilities that they have. In the future there's
19 going to be a nice big park down in Harriet Island.
20 I wonder if there's any thought of transporting
21 people from Watershelf Ridge way down to the other
22 end of Harriet Island as a marketing tool to get the
23 people to ride the bus down there. There is -- Como
24 Park is another deal. I feel there are many places
25 of marketing where they could increase the bus

1 patternage by making it possible for more people to
2 use the bus rather than making it more impossible.
3 Thank you.

4 MS. RUBY HUNT: Thank you, Lloyd. We'll
5 have one more comment from Corbin.

6 MR. CORBIN KIDDER: Yeah, there's one
7 other thing, again, and that's for somehow St. Paul
8 route 54 and Minneapolis route 80, the express
9 services to the megamall. As a loyal downtown
10 supporter through a -- if McEnroe is listening. I
11 have mixed feelings about this because I don't think
12 we need a third major city in our metropolitan area.
13 But, nevertheless, this is giving us a little clue
14 as to what a transit hub is. And, in fact, by going
15 from St. Paul to south Minneapolis you can get there
16 faster by megamall if you're a died-to-the-world
17 transit rider that plays computer games with
18 schedules to minimize what times and things like
19 that, which is what you have to do if you want to
20 use the service in an area this size.

21 The other thing that I would like to say in
22 terms of packaging this, whatever fare increase
23 proposal comes out of this I think that one thing
24 that ought to be done is to emphasize service
25 improvements at that time. And it is my hope that

1 the RTB, the Regional Transit Board, Met Council,
2 and approximate particularly the City of St. Paul
3 will reverse the April Fool's Day massacre of
4 service in downtown St. Paul in which 27 bus stops
5 were moved and a majority of the streets were
6 rendered unserved. I think that this would be the
7 best thing that all of these agencies could do to
8 put forth the word that we really like transit. We
9 want it downtown as well as elsewhere, and we're
10 willing to improve service, and then we are sure
11 that the people will pay for it. Thank you.

12 MS. RUBY HUNT: All right. Thank you,
13 Corbin. I would just like to in closing make a
14 personal observation, and that is that the RTB is
15 facing a very difficult dilemma. It's the
16 responsibility of the RTB to adopt the budget that
17 comes from the MTC, and as a result it has to be a
18 balanced budget. And if we adopt a budget that's
19 counting strongly on millions of dollars being
20 allocated by the state legislature or the Minnesota
21 Department of Transportation, it could mean that if
22 the money does not come from the legislature or
23 through the Department of Transportation that we
24 will have even a larger deficit to have to make up
25 in a shorter period of a year. So that's one of the

1 dilemmas, and we're hoping that there may be some
2 ways in which we can ease the burden on people who
3 are transit dependent, but that will all depend on
4 how things appear from the legislature and how the
5 hearings proceed and the kind of information that we
6 have before us when we make a final decision.

7 So unless there are further comments from any
8 of the other members of the Board, I am going to
9 thank everybody for coming. If you have further
10 comments that you would like to send in writing to
11 the RTB, feel free to do so. And thank you for your
12 interest and your time.

13 (Concluded at approximately 12:52 p.m.,
14 Monday, September 21, 1992.)

15 * * * * *

16 Public Hearing of the Regional Transit Board,
17 Tuesday, September 22, 1992, commencing at approximately
18 11:35 a.m. at Hennepin County Government Center,
19 Minneapolis, Minnesota.

20 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Good morning everyone.
21 My name is Sandra Hilary, and I'm on the Regional
22 Transit Board, and I represent Minneapolis on the
23 Board. And I also want to introduce several other
24 Regional Transit Board members who are here. Ruth
25 Franklyn, Sharon Feess, Doris Caranicas, and Val

1 Higgins. So we have a pretty good representation
2 this morning from the Regional Transit Board.

3 The Regional Transit Board is responsible for
4 planning and financing transit services in the
5 metropolitan area. As a Board member I must tell
6 you that holding a fare hearing is one of the
7 hardest things for me to do because we know people
8 do not like to see their fares increased, but to be
9 fiscally responsible we must consider higher fares
10 to avoid service cuts. This hearing is one of seven
11 hearings we will be holding throughout the metro
12 area. And there's a sign-up sheet back there. So
13 we've only had one person sign up. So if other
14 people wish to testify, please put your name on the
15 sign-up sheet.

16 The other thing that we have this morning is
17 comment cards. So if you don't wish to speak in
18 public but you would like us to know what you think
19 about almost anything, put your comments on a
20 comment card.

21 The Board has not made any decisions yet on
22 changing fares, and that is the purpose of these
23 meetings. By getting your response on a specific
24 proposal we can think about what this proposal means
25 to you. In the past we have made changes to staff

1 proposals based on public comment.

2 After these hearings, we will be consolidating
3 and tabulating your comments. Changes may be made
4 to parts of the proposal or to the whole concept.
5 The Board will consider changing the fares at the
6 Board's next administrative and finance committee
7 meeting on October 12th. And then it will go before
8 the Board at the next Board meeting. If we vote on
9 a fare change, it will most likely take effect on
10 January 1st, 1993.

11 The procedure for today's hearing is simple. A
12 staff member will go through the current and
13 proposed fare structure, and then we will listen to
14 your comments. Questions will be answered about the
15 fare structure, yet we would like to spend the
16 majority of our time listening to your ideas. We
17 will call on people to talk in the order that they
18 signed up on our list. So if you have not signed up
19 to speak, as I said before, please do so.

20 And now Len Simich will present the proposed
21 fare changes. Thank you. And we will have the
22 microphone -- we're going to turn this around now
23 after Len is through with it so that if you wish to
24 speak, you have the mike. Thank you.

25 As we're waiting, we've been joined by Maryann

1 Campo, who is also a member of the Regional Transit
2 Board.

3 MR. LEN SIMICH: Basically when you came
4 in you were handed a sheet, and that's what I'm
5 going to go over up here both on the overhead. Greg
6 Andrews, our executive director, also has the board.
7 And they're all basically the same information.
8 We're just going to kind of walk through it.

9 I guess before we start I would just like to
10 mention what you're going to see today is a proposal
11 that we're looking at. We're trying to accomplish a
12 number things. One is recover a 35-percent fare box
13 recovery that would cover the cost of the system --
14 or 35 percent of it. Also, trying to balance a
15 budget. We've looked at a number of scenarios, and
16 this is the one staff is currently proposing. And
17 when we're all through with all the public hearings,
18 all the comments will be brought back and put in
19 front of the Board, and it's there where we'll get
20 down to final fare structure.

21 But just to start, this first sheet here, what
22 I'm trying to show is what type of change you would
23 be seeing under this type of situation to our base
24 fare which is the basic off-peak fare currently is
25 85 cents. What we're proposing is to increase that

1 to a dollar. So you would see a 15-cent increase.

2 The zones, we are proposing that the zone fare
3 be eliminated. The rationale behind this was
4 because the zones are very difficult from a rider's
5 perspective to understand. We wanted to simplify
6 the system, as well as from a driver's perspective.
7 The zones were one thing that they had problems when
8 trying to enforce the zone. So rather than going
9 through and having those type of problems exist, we
10 are proposing to eliminate that.

11 The express fare which is here, we're proposing
12 to have an increase of 25 cents added to the express
13 fare.

14 The social fare, the social fare during the off
15 peak we are proposing that the social fare be raised
16 25 cents. Now, what the social fare consists of is
17 the seniors, the youth and the limited mobility.

18 For the downtown zone, we are proposing that
19 the downtown zone be eliminated during the peak. So
20 you would pay the regular transit fare if you're
21 going to be traveling in that zone. On the off peak
22 the charge would remain the same 25 cents.

23 And the for convenience fares you would
24 actually see a 20-cent per ride increase onto the
25 convenience fare. And that's calculated by the 15

1 cents onto the base fare as well as an additional
2 nickel onto the discounting.

3 How this would actually look then is for,
4 again, the base fare would go from 85 cents to a
5 dollar. The basic peak hour fare which is currently
6 at \$1.10 cent would be increased to \$1.25. The
7 off-peak express currently at \$1.35 would increase
8 to \$1.50. The peak express which is currently at
9 \$1.60 would be increased to \$1.75. And the social
10 fares during the peak would go from 25 cents to 50
11 cents.

12 For most of these fare categories the average
13 increase people will see is 15 cents except for
14 those in the downtown zone during the peak and the
15 social fare categories.

16 For those of you that use the discounted
17 passes, basically what you're going to see is a \$2
18 increase on your 10-card punch and an \$8 increase to
19 the monthly pass. So those of you currently using
20 the \$5.50 card, would be paying \$7.50, those using
21 the \$8 card would be paying \$10, those using the
22 \$10.50 card would be paying \$12.50, those using the
23 \$13 card would be paying \$15.

24 Likewise with the monthly passes, if you're
25 using the current \$22 pass, that would increase to

1 \$30; the \$32 pass would increase to \$40; the \$42
2 pass to \$50; and the \$52 pass to \$60.

3 Currently we are not proposing any increases to
4 the Metro Mobility fares. In fact, with the
5 elimination of the zone, the peak zone charge
6 currently would decrease. Currently that fare is
7 \$2.70. That would actually decrease to \$2.20.

8 That kind of covers what the proposal is. I'm
9 now going to turn it back to Sandra Hilary.

10 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Since we started
11 several people have come into the room, so I would
12 remind you again that there is a sign-up sheet. And
13 if you wish to sign up, please do so.

14 The other thing that I would mention is that
15 our employees, the drivers and the other employees
16 of MTC also have their own opinions on some of this,
17 and they will be also in the consideration of how we
18 go forth here because I think it's always important
19 to keep your employees -- their input in the
20 process.

21 So what we're going to do now is turn this
22 podium around so that the audience will have a
23 microphone. And the first person that has signed up
24 is Dave Jansen. So if Mr. Jansen would come
25 forward.

1 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Good morning. My
2 feelings are as follows: I was talking to a bus
3 driver last night on the 94B -- 94H, I'm sorry. And
4 he said if you increase these fares again, you would
5 lose ridership. And that would be counterproductive
6 to what you're trying to do here.

7 Number two, is I do like the fact that you're
8 proposing to raise it to the even dollar. The 85
9 cents, \$1.10, \$1.35, \$1.60 are very confusing. I
10 personally appreciate that.

11 And I would like the fact that you're
12 simplifying the zone fare because every zone is so
13 different, and even the downtown zones are totally
14 different. Like one bus has this downtown zone, and
15 the other bus has this downtown zone. My feeling
16 about learning the downtown zones during the peak
17 hours, I would say eliminate it, period, because
18 that would be very confusing for the drivers and for
19 the passengers.

20 And I would like to propose in addition 25
21 cents for the transfers. I've heard that talked
22 about before. That would, number one, in my opinion
23 eliminate the abuse of the transfers because I'm
24 sure that transfers -- and the transfers are very
25 confusing because I've been riding the bus for like

1 18 to 20 years off and on. That's all I have to
2 say. Thank you very much.

3 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you very much
4 for coming. Next person is Gloria Steinhring.

5 MS. GLORIA STEINHRING: As to the
6 increase, some of us do live on a very low-income
7 budget. And right now I'm paying \$32 for a bus
8 card. And if that goes up, I won't be able to take
9 the bus because my rent comes first, all my other
10 bills comes first, and then what's left over I have
11 to take and pay for my groceries. And what would I
12 have left out of the -- if I have to pay \$40? And I
13 feel the more we pay into the transit, the less
14 service we're getting. The buses are not as good as
15 it should be. So this is my feeling that the
16 service ain't as good. As the prices go up, the
17 service is getting lousy.

18 MS. SANDRA HILARY: All right. Thank you
19 very much for coming. The next person is Catherine
20 Raich.

21 MS. CATHERINE RAICH: I also live on a
22 low-income budget. I see -- I run around with a \$32
23 bus pass. If it goes up to \$40, with the amount I
24 pay for my rent, my groceries, the odds and ends
25 that I have to have in the month, that would cut my

1 budget almost \$8 a month, and I couldn't live on it.
2 I don't think it would be fair.

3 With the other parts of the program, I can
4 understand. I don't think they ought to have the
5 zone changing. I think it ought to be dropped. But
6 I don't think it's fair for everybody. Look at the
7 senior citizens. There's some of them that probably
8 could get by with certain things and some can't.
9 But I don't think it's fair for the bus cards to go
10 up from 32 to 40 bucks a month. So with that, I
11 thank you.

12 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you, Catherine.
13 Do we have more names? W. Streeter.

14 MR. W. E. STREETER: I don't know whether
15 I would have needed this microphone. It seems to me
16 that it's so small of an auditorium I might have
17 been able to address this small group without any
18 trouble.

19 However, my personal representation here, of
20 course, is on the problem of seniors' fares. I
21 think we can all agree that back, oh, say two years
22 ago the bus fare for seniors during discount hours
23 was 10 cents. Now, I agree that that was probably a
24 little too small of a fare for the service that
25 you're providing. But you raised it 150 percent

1 when you did the raise while everybody else's raise
2 was about 15 to 20 percent. And an increase of 25
3 cents this time would double our present fare. In
4 other words, a 100-percent increase. If we balance
5 this against the 10 cents that we were originally
6 paying, that's a 500-percent increase over a period
7 of two years. I don't think that that can really be
8 justified. Assuming that we really do choose to
9 give the seniors some little break, I don't think
10 that we should ride them into the ground.

11 We've got to understand, of course, that these
12 seniors are basically people on fixed incomes,
13 people with a Social Security income or a
14 Minneapolis Supplemental Aid income of possibly \$300
15 to \$500 a month. These people feel very strongly
16 the impact of an increase of 100 percent above their
17 present fares. If they're paying 10 to 12 dollars a
18 month in transportation cost now, this means that
19 they will up to 20 or 24 dollars.

20 When you consider the cost of these people's
21 living expenses and so forth, we can readily
22 discern, I believe, that an increase of this
23 magnitude would have a very deleterious effect upon
24 them. I don't know too much about the situation
25 with the handicapped, but I assume that their

1 situation is much the same as it is with the
2 seniors. Thank you.

3 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you, Mr.
4 Streeter. The next person is Theresa Vanstrom.

5 MS. THERESA VANSTROM: Also being a senior
6 I resent having the fares increased as much as it
7 shows. It will certainly be a hardship for most of
8 the seniors. I use the bus every day mainly to go
9 downtown to pick up a newspaper because in my
10 neighborhood if I had the newspaper delivered I
11 probably would never see it. And also I don't feel
12 safe walking to a neighborhood grocery store to pick
13 up a paper. What I see on the bus every day, during
14 the off-peak hours are seniors, who, I'm sure most
15 of them would not be able to take the bus at the 50
16 cents.

17 But I also see a lot of children. Now, I don't
18 know what the age is that children have to pay. But
19 my feeling is that very seldom do I see a mother
20 holding the child even if the bus becomes crowded,
21 and they have not paid for that child. I feel that
22 before you raise the senior rates, you should change
23 that policy that either children have to be held or
24 if they use a seat they should pay. And I do feel
25 that the school children during the school hours the

1 time for the lower fares, but I do think that they
2 could pay the higher rate.

3 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you.

4 MR. DAVE JANSEN: I've got a question.

5 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Well, let's wait and
6 see first if there are other people. Is there
7 anyone else in the audience that wishes to speak at
8 this time? The next person is Maureen Tai.

9 MS. MAUREEN TAI. Hello. My name is
10 Maureen Tai, and I've lived in Minneapolis for like
11 12 years, and occasionally I go to Milwaukee,
12 Wisconsin. And their bus there is a dollar. And I
13 kind of looked at it as kind of Minneapolis is
14 probably due to have a bus fare increase, but also
15 with that dollar you could travel to your
16 destination and back home, and you can go in any
17 direction you want to. And with this, if you use
18 your transfer, you can only take it for one
19 direction. You cannot take it for two directions
20 and that there is no zone.

21 If you go out to the suburbs in Milwaukee,
22 there's no extra quarter or 50 cents or anything
23 like that. And to me that would be reasonable for
24 the city of Minneapolis that if they do have an
25 increase to a dollar, that it would not go up in the

1 zones because the zones, if you're paying like \$1.60
2 and it goes up to \$1.75, a lot of people will not be
3 able to afford that kind of money because, like
4 different people have spoken, they have a limited
5 income.

6 I also have a limited income, and so to me
7 eliminating the different zones that they have the
8 increase, it would be hard for people. And I would
9 like to see a proposal that if it does go up, that
10 you can travel in both directions. Because if
11 you're traveling in one direction, it gets to be
12 pretty hard to go back and forth. And that's all I
13 have to say.

14 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you. Tim
15 Schleicher.

16 MR. TIM SCHLEICHER: Good morning. I
17 would, first of all, like to echo what the gentleman
18 who first spoke mentioned, and that is if the goal
19 of the Regional Transit Board is to increase
20 ridership, I feel it is definitely counterproductive
21 to increase fares. I believe that the funds for any
22 and necessary improvements in service should come
23 from other sources, especially those people who
24 drive alone in their automobiles, people that drive
25 daily alone to the cities or to their work, wherever

1 that may be. Those funds could include increased
2 rates on parking ramps, gas taxes. These are the
3 people that cause air pollution. These are the
4 people that cause congestion on our highways. It's
5 not the people that ride the bus. These are the
6 people that are helping these situations, the air
7 pollution and the congestion on our highways.

8 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you. Paul
9 Werger.

10 MR. PAUL WERGER: Hi, I'm Paul Werger.
11 I'm trying to think of my words. The increased
12 fare. I live in Minneapolis and ride the bus
13 constantly because I don't have a car. It seems to
14 me that in my rides to the suburbs the buses have
15 have always been nicer and the attention. I did
16 live in the suburb one year, and I took the bus from
17 the suburbs. The fares are better, the drivers are
18 more courteous. I think there has to be some kind
19 of an appeal to the suburbanites to take the bus.
20 But it seems for that appeal there should be a
21 charge. And I would like to propose that the zone
22 be replaced and that charge offset the increase
23 price to the people who live inside Minneapolis and
24 St. Paul so that they may not receive the 20-percent
25 or 15-percent -- to 15-cent increase in their fare.

1 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you. Dickson
2 Schutjer.

3 MR. DICKSON SCHUTJER: Hello. My name is
4 Dickson Schutjer. I use the main line buses quite
5 regularly, at least I use about five different buses
6 on a day on the main line bus. And right now it
7 sounds like my fares from a quarter will be doubled
8 to 50 cents, and I'm downtown a lot, and I work on
9 Nicollet Island on the edge of downtown Minneapolis,
10 and I go there like 4:30, 5 o'clock every night.
11 And my fare will be going from one quarter to \$1.25,
12 and I don't know if I still can afford that or not.
13 So it might be changing my life drastically. Thank
14 you.

15 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you for coming.
16 Is there anyone else that wishes to speak at this
17 time? And keep in mind we do also have the comment
18 cards. Probably we should maybe have them in the
19 back of the room instead of up here so if people
20 want to take them when they leave.

21 You had a question. First let's find out. Is
22 there anyone else that wishes to speak because if
23 there isn't, we're going to close the public
24 hearing, and we'll entertain some questions. So you
25 had a question.

1 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Yes. My question is on
2 the off-peak senior, would that just affect the off
3 peak or the peak for the seniors? How would that
4 work? I guess I'm kind of confused about that.

5 MR. LEN SIMICH: On the off peak currently
6 there's no discounted fares for the social fares;
7 the seniors, the youth or limited mobility. And
8 that would stay intact. What we're talking is the
9 off-peak fare would increase the additional quarter.

10 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Okay. So the off peak
11 would go up to 50 cents. Then during the peak hours
12 they would be paying \$1.10?

13 MR. LEN SIMICH: Right.

14 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Or whatever the new fare
15 is?

16 MR. LEN SIMICH: The new fare. That would
17 be consistent with what is actually happening now,
18 although we don't have that fare in effect, the
19 discount, during the peak period.

20 MR. DAVE JANSEN: And I guess I agree with
21 the lady who talked about the kids, that they should
22 pay something, if not like a quarter or something
23 for each kid to help subsidize.

24 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you. I would
25 like to point out that Tom Sather, a member of the

1 Regional Transit Board, joined us since we started
2 here also.

3 Are there any other questions? Yes, sir.

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I understand from
5 reading the newspaper that RTB is limited by the
6 state legislature that the MTC must come up with 35
7 percent of its fares in order to sustain itself.
8 And I understand that because the state and the
9 federal government are reducing the transportation,
10 mass transit costs, that you have to find the money
11 elsewhere. Could you please explain the rationale
12 for reducing the zone fares?

13 MS. SANDRA HILARY: I'll take a stab at
14 it, and then we'll ask Len if he wants to add to it.

15 You essentially have two conflicting
16 situations. You have people that live in the city
17 and the people that travel to and from the city.
18 The zone changes are very complicated. People
19 really resist the fact that if they're, for
20 instance, a block out of the zone that they have to
21 pay an extra fare. They would rather have it be, I
22 think, a more simplified situation where they know
23 when they get on the bus what it's going to cost,
24 and they don't have to worry about where they get
25 off. That that goes away.

1 So the effort that we're making is to simplify
2 the fare structure and also to take into account the
3 fiscal realities that we're facing. We are limited,
4 as you all know, for every piece of government that
5 the dollars are shrinking, resources are shrinking,
6 and the demands actually as the resources shrink are
7 going up. We've made some great strides. The MTC
8 has made some great strides in service improvements
9 and increase in ridership. We are concerned about
10 the fact that the last time we raised fares, there
11 was a decline in riders. We recognize that.

12 However, the struggle that we have is if we
13 maintain the service we have; everybody seems to
14 want to do that and, in fact, improve service; where
15 do the dollars for all of this come from? Because
16 we don't have a static situation. Costs go up.
17 It's not like you're dealing with a budget that
18 stays the same and the revenue is the same. So it's
19 a very difficult dilemma, and I think your input has
20 been very good.

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: To follow up on the
22 question. It seems like a regressive structure
23 though because the fare percent increase for
24 Minneapolis and St. Paul residents is much larger as
25 a percentage of the fares than it is for someone

1 that lives in Burnsville or the outskirt suburbs.
2 Can you explain why you chose a regressive increase
3 fare as opposed to one that is based on a percentage
4 increase?

5 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Len, I think I'll --

6 MR. LEN SIMICH: Okay. I guess we don't
7 look at it that way. We tried to be as equitable as
8 possible, and for the most part everybody is going
9 to see approximately a 15-cent increase for their
10 ride.

11 Getting back to your earlier question, and I
12 think Sandra did a good job of summing it up. But
13 the way the regional travel patterns are happening
14 currently, we're not having all of the traffic
15 coming into the two downtown areas. We have a lot
16 of suburban traffic flowing between the suburbs to
17 suburbs. And when you have those zone boundaries
18 set up, that's where it's a real detriment because
19 you may be taking a short trip but crossing a zone.

20 So by eliminating that, we eliminate that
21 inequity. In a sense what we've done is charge a
22 higher express fare because most of your trips that
23 are coming out of the suburbs to the downtown areas
24 right now are in the form of express. So by adding
25 an increase on the express as well as the increase

1 to the base fare, their overall increase is 15
2 cents, the same as the central cities, 85 cents
3 going to a dollar. For the suburbs it's going from
4 \$1.60 to \$1.75. So what we've tried to do was
5 spread out this problem so everybody would be
6 impacted in the least negative way. Any time you
7 have a fare increase, it isn't positive, but we did
8 try to square it out and be equitable to all areas
9 of the region.

10 MS. MAUREEN TAI: I have a question about
11 the downtown zone. It says it's eliminated during
12 the peak. Does that mean that like between 6 and 9
13 o'clock there is no downtown zone, and between 9
14 o'clock and 3 o'clock there's a quarter zone?

15 MR. LEN SIMICH: You're right. The peaks
16 are 6 to 9 and 3:30 to 6:30. That downtown zone
17 then would be eliminated. Depending on where you're
18 traveling that would be your fare. So that discount
19 would not apply during the peak period. Off-peak
20 periods, that would be instituted again. So you
21 would have the discount.

22 MR. DAVE JANSEN: What about the kids?
23 Would they still be in the proposed increase? Would
24 they be affected also? Because I know under six,
25 the limit is like four, five per one paid adult ride

1 free no matter what time of day it is.

2 MR. LEN SIMICH: Right. We're not
3 proposing any changes to those policies at this
4 time. They would still be in effect. And the
5 discount that applies to the youth is six to -- what
6 is the age, Bill?

7 MR. DAVE JANSEN: I think it's the same.

8 MR. BILL WILKEN: Under six.

9 MR. LEN SIMICH: Under six is free,
10 correct? It's six to 16?

11 MR. BILL WILKEN: Under 18.

12 MR. LEN SIMICH: Under 18 would fall
13 under the social fair.

14 MR. DAVE JANSEN: So 6 to 18 would fall
15 under the social fair?

16 MR. BILL WILKIN: To under 18. Seventeen.

17 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Seventeen, okay. Thank
18 you.

19 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Are there any other
20 questions?

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: It seems like out in the
22 suburbs if they're going to raise the fares, why do
23 they keep eliminating buses out into the suburbs and
24 they run less and less of the time now and you have
25 to wait longer to get a bus to come from out there?

1 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Len, did you hear the
2 question?

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: It seems like we're
4 getting more lousy service, and then we're having to
5 pay more for getting lousy service.

6 MR. LEN SIMICH: Yeah. Unfortunately with
7 the suburbs in the way the suburbs are laid out,
8 they're not as dense as the central cities. It's
9 very difficult to provide efficient bus service in
10 the suburbs. There is a need out there and a
11 demand, and we're trying to deal with that through
12 the RTB vision. We're laying out the plans right
13 now trying to improve the suburban services.

14 Unfortunately right now we're still dealing
15 with the service that was set up years and years ago
16 where it's really hard with a big bus and most of
17 the service is centered on the two central cities to
18 provide that service. But there is a need, and we
19 are trying to address that.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: And another thing I
21 would like to see done is I go out to Brooklyn
22 Center. It means I have to go clear back down here
23 and then go back northeast again. I would like to
24 see a bus to Brookdale go like to Northtown. Then I
25 could catch a bus to go back to my place, which is

1 seven miles, instead of having to come clear back
2 downtown and then go back straight out the other way
3 I came from.

4 MS. SANDRA HILARY: That's become one of
5 the real issues as we try to provide service is more
6 this suburb-to-suburb kind of connection. And we
7 are working on that, and we have changed some routes
8 to accommodate that. I think the other part of your
9 issue is I don't know how heavily your route is
10 traveled. I mean, how full the buses are.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: They're plenty full
12 because by the time they get to my place, you end up
13 standing on the bus all the way downtown.

14 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Right. But some of
15 the routes have very few riders, and nobody likes to
16 have any service eliminated. But that's, again, one
17 of the difficult situations, if you have, for
18 instance, lots of demand on this route and only a
19 very few people over here, how do you make that
20 work, again, with the dollars involved? I mean, if
21 we had lots of money, you know, we could do whatever
22 anybody wanted to do. But you have to make a lot of
23 choices when you don't have lots of money.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: And I would like to see
25 them run a little later out like towards Northtown

1 so you don't end up having to walk three miles home
2 at 11 o'clock or 12 o'clock at night.

3 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Sure. What I would
4 suggest you do, as I said, we have the comment cards
5 for something that's specific. I would suggest that
6 you write that on the comment card so that the
7 specifics of that are included in the overall
8 discussion.

9 MR. VAL HIGGINS: Also, the service
10 between the hubs would help her too in getting
11 service.

12 MS. SANDRA HILARY: All right. Is there
13 any --

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: May I ask two questions.
15 Can you explain in general summary why the state and
16 federal legislatures have less interest in funding
17 mass transit? I don't understand the mind-set.

18 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Did you say state fair
19 legislatures?

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: State and federal
21 legislatures.

22 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Historically, and I'm
23 not the world's foremost authority on the subject,
24 but historically transportation dollars have been
25 devoted to highways. The mass transit system is

1 really a stepchild. If you think about it a little
2 bit, I mean, you have a heavily invested group of
3 people in building roads and highways and bridges
4 and, you know, all of that. And, in fact, when they
5 first started building the freeway system, that was
6 the link from coast to coast and also was part, I
7 think, the planning for the war effort when we were
8 real concerned about how we were connected across
9 the country. A lot of those reasons are -- we're
10 connected now. And, of course, there's huge
11 infrastructures and that in the country to now
12 repair. So even though they aren't building new,
13 there's a great demand to repair what's already been
14 built. And also with the suburban sprawl that's
15 taken place.

16 Mass transit is essentially always thought of
17 as a city issue. But yet if you travel on any
18 freeway, you see with the congestion on the freeway
19 that it is no longer just a city issue. We have to
20 figure out a cheap, sensible, practical way of
21 getting people from where they are to where they
22 want to go and back. And the highway system does
23 not always accommodate itself to that.

24 I guess for the people that are very interested
25 in mass transit, they have to and should get

1 involved in the organizations that lobby for mass
2 transit. I would say, though, that there's more of
3 an interest now in mass transit than there has been
4 in the past. Now, that's kind of more federal
5 stuff.

6 In the state, the critical mass of legislators
7 is not in the city or in the suburban, the
8 metropolitan area. I mean, somebody in Blackduck
9 does not necessarily think of mass transit as
10 something that's first of their list to fund even
11 though their son or daughter might be living in an
12 area where mass transit would be very practical and
13 very sensible. But they -- any legislator or any
14 elected official always is in that act of balancing
15 what their district needs as opposed to what -- so
16 he might need or she might want roads because that's
17 what he perceives that district to want or need.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Would the Minneapolis
19 city council or the St. Paul city council fund the
20 RTB --

21 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Pardon?

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Would the city councils
23 of the downtown areas fund --

24 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Fund.

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Fund. Give some money.

1 MS. SANDRA HILARY: No, no. And we
2 wouldn't want to do that, number one. And, number
3 two, we don't have any money to do it. I mean,
4 that's not our budget responsibility, and there's no
5 way for us to do that.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's in the cities'
7 interest.

8 MS. SANDRA HILARY: It's in our interest,
9 but we do not have the financial capacity to do
10 that. There is just no way. This is all funded on
11 a metrowide and a statewide basis.

12 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Are you part of state
13 government?

14 MS. SANDRA HILARY: No, I'm on the
15 Minneapolis City Council.

16 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Oh, you're the
17 Minneapolis Council. How about the Regional Transit
18 Board?

19 MS. SANDRA HILARY: And the Regional
20 Transit Board. We're all -- everybody here is a
21 member of the Regional Transit Board.

22 MR. DAVE JANSEN: And that's funded by
23 state government?

24 MS. SANDRA HILARY: By the state.

25 MR. DAVE JANSEN: Okay. I think I'll

1 write to my legislator.

2 MS. SANDRA HILARY: We do have -- for
3 people that are interested in mass transit we do
4 have forms for you to fill out that would go to your
5 legislators. They're in the back of the room. For
6 those of you that have an interest, we had a booth
7 at the state fair. It was very successful. We had
8 a lot of people stopping by and talking about mass
9 transit, and they're interested. We need to, I
10 guess, convince the legislators not only in the
11 metro area but in the outstate area that there is a
12 need because we're at capacity on all our freeways
13 now. The faster you build them, the faster they
14 fill up immediately. So it's sort of like a field
15 of dreams.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a question. Is
17 there a big attempt to try to get those out to
18 people so that they can send them to their
19 legislators?

20 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Well, I know that
21 we've done it at the fair. I don't know. We've
22 done it at the other public hearings. And maybe you
23 want to talk about how we distributed these.

24 MS. BECKY SCUDDER: Currently we're
25 distributing them here, and we've sent them to MTC

1 and drivers are handing them out. Special interest
2 groups that stopped by the fair have my number, and
3 they're sending them out. And also a legislative
4 staff person is working with about six or eight
5 different groups to get them out. And let me know
6 if you would like some because I could get you some.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: So the MTC now has those
8 takeouts that --

9 MR. DAVE JANSEN: I love that idea.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That happened to be a
11 good idea.

12 MS. DAVE JANSEN: I love those takeout
13 thing. Whoever from the MTC, I love it. That is
14 such a good idea. I wished they had that 20 years
15 ago.

16 MS. SANDRA HILARY: All right. Is there
17 -- you want to say something. I'm going to have to
18 apologize. I'm going to turn this over to Doris
19 because I have to leave. It doesn't mean that I'm
20 not interested. It's just that I have an engagement
21 that I have to be at. So I'll turn it over to
22 Doris, and you come forward. Okay.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: If I can, I would like
24 to do it right from here. I have a question for the
25 RTB Board members.

1 MS. SANDRA HILARY: Thank you all for
2 coming.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: About a year ago the RTB
4 had a position that when regular route fares would
5 go up that Metro Mobility would go up accordingly to
6 what ADA would allow for twice that amount. Has the
7 Regional Transit Board reversed their position on
8 that issue?

9 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: At this point it's
10 my understanding that Metro Mobility fares would not
11 go up.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm sorry. That doesn't
13 really answer the question. Have you reversed the
14 position that you have taken in the past?

15 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: Well, it's not part
16 of this proposal. So in a sense, I suppose, we
17 have. Although we are really asking for input about
18 the general fare increase excluding Metro Mobility.
19 We're not considering increasing fares for Metro
20 Mobility now. That would be a totally separate
21 issue, and I'm hoping we don't ever have to do that
22 because it's already pretty tough.

23 MR. LEN SIMICH: I'm going to Howard Blin,
24 our planning manager.

25 MR. HOWARD BLIN: Mr. Grant is right, that

1 at one time the Board made that policy that the
2 regular route Metro Mobility fare would be linked.
3 However, at this time it was decided that since
4 there are discussions about a major restructuring
5 for Metro Mobility which could occur in mid-1993, it
6 would be best to wait for any Metro Mobility fare
7 increase that might come about for that time. So
8 we're not changing the fares and then changing the
9 service structure all within the course of a few
10 months so we would have all those changes at one
11 time. So that's the reason why.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Doris, no one has
13 mentioned the comprehension operations analysis.
14 Would someone speak to that? And would that have an
15 effect? It might change some service to the suburbs
16 more?

17 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: I'll defer to staff
18 for that. Len or Howard, whichever.

19 MR. LEN SIMICH: Okay. That is being
20 taken into consideration. What we're trying to do
21 right now, we're trying to hit a moving target. And
22 when I say that, is we project we're anywhere from
23 three million to seven million dollars off of what
24 we need to do to balance the budget.

25 Fare increases will help us get to that point

1 of balancing the budget, but there is also going to
2 be some service restructuring, possibly even some
3 elimination that has to take place. And the COA,
4 the comprehension operations analysis that you
5 mentioned, will be a key element in determining
6 that.

7 So we're moving on parallel tracks right now.
8 It's just that we're not in a position with the COA
9 to come forth with any specific recommendations
10 because it's not through its final phases. And we
11 really have to move because if a fare increase were
12 to go into effect, we're proposing that it go into
13 effect very early in 1993, in fact, as early as
14 January. So that's why we're moving down the same
15 road together, but they will come together here
16 shortly because both of them will be in a position
17 that we can do that.

18 MS. DORIS CARINICAS: I would like to
19 restate the importance the contacting legislators
20 and telling them how important it is that transit be
21 funded so that it's reasonable. It's the kind of
22 thing -- it's the kind of effort that is a
23 conservation effort. It will help the congestion
24 problems on highways, and we would really like the
25 legislative support, and legislative support is

1 generated by people writing to their legislators.
2 So if you all do that, and get your friends to do
3 that too because legislators do respond to that kind
4 of input from people.

5 Are there any other questions? There's one
6 more here.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I know there are a lot
8 of people that park on the outskirts of the downtown
9 area and are using that downtown fare zone. If
10 that's eliminated, you're going to cause more
11 congestion downtown during the -- say 3:30, 4
12 o'clock, the heaviest traffic.

13 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: It still may be in
14 their best interest to park on the outskirts.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Well, the mentality of
16 people unfortunately is, If I'm going to have to pay
17 that much more, then I'll just pay that much more
18 and park in a downtown parking lot.

19 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: It's a balancing
20 act. That's for sure.

21 MR. DICKSON SCHUTJER: Two trips a day,
22 that would be a \$2 increase. Right now it's a
23 quarter. It would be \$2.

24 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: Any other questions?
25 We do appreciate your input. Be sure to fill out

1 the comment forms because those are going to be
2 helpful to us. And Becky and our staff people in
3 the back are holding comment forms and also the
4 forms that you can send to your legislator. That's
5 just as important as anything that we hear.
6 Whatever you tell us, be sure to tell them too
7 because maybe they will fully fund transit for a
8 change. Are there any other questions? (No
9 response). If not, thank you all for coming. And
10 I'll declare this public meeting adjourned.

11 (Concluded at approximately 12:25 p.m.,
12 Tuesday, September 22, 1992.)

13 * * * * *

14 Public Hearing of the Regional Transit Board,
15 Wednesday, September 23, 1992, commencing at
16 approximately 7:00 p.m. at M.S. Achievement Center, 2200
17 University Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota.

18 MS. SHARON FEESS: It's 7 o'clock. So
19 let's call this public hearing to order. Good
20 evening. My name is Sharon Feess, and I represent
21 the southern Anoka and northwest Hennepin area on
22 the Regional Transit Board. The Regional Transit
23 Board is responsible for planning and financing
24 transit services in the metropolitan area.

25 I would like to introduce our Board members

1 that are here this evening. We have Chair Michael
2 Ehrlichmann and Tom Workman.

3 Thank you all of you for coming. And as a
4 Board member, I must telling tell you that holding
5 fare hearings is one of the hardest things for us to
6 do. But to be fiscally responsible we must consider
7 higher fares to avoid service cuts. This hearing is
8 one of seven hearings we'll be holding throughout
9 the metro area. What you need to know is the Board
10 has not made any decisions yet on changing fares,
11 and that's the purpose of these meetings. By
12 getting your response on a specific proposal we can
13 then discuss what that proposal would mean to you.
14 And in the past the Board has made changes to past
15 proposals based on public comment.

16 After all seven hearings have been completed,
17 we will be consolidating and tabulating your
18 comments and changes may be made to parts of the
19 proposal or to the whole concept. The Board will
20 consider changing the fares at the Board's next
21 administrative and finance committee meeting which
22 is scheduled for October 12th. And then after that,
23 it will go before the full Board at the next Board
24 meeting. If we vote on a fare change, it will most
25 likely take effect January 1, 1993.

1 The procedure for tonight's hearing is simple.
2 A staff member will go through the current and
3 proposed fare structure, and then we will listen to
4 your comments. Questions will be answered about the
5 fare structure if you have any, but mostly we would
6 like to hear your comments. We will call on people
7 in the order in which they have signed up. And if
8 you have not signed up but would like to speak,
9 please let Suzanne know, and she will give you the
10 sheet to sign up. Do we have the comment cards
11 tonight?

12 MS. SUZANNE HANSON: Yes, we do.

13 MS. SHARON FEES: If you are
14 uncomfortable speaking or have some very specific
15 comments that you would like to make, we do have
16 some comment cards at the table too. So feel free
17 to fill those out.

18 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Sharon, just one
19 other thing too. I'm going to ask Suzanne to pass
20 out post cards. We have post cards that you can
21 fill out -- we encourage you to -- that go to your
22 legislators. And it simply indicates, obviously
23 you've shown interest in transit by being here, and
24 our hope is that with the help of the people who are
25 interested in transit we can get adequate funding,

1 frankly, so we don't have to hold hearings like
2 these in the future.

3 MS. SHARON FEESS: Right. We used those
4 post cards at the fair at your booth, and they were
5 very well received. And the bottom line is that we
6 need adequate funds to take care of the transit
7 needs. Now I would like to call on Howard Blin to
8 present the proposed fare changes.

9 MR. HOWARD BLIN: Thank you. I'll just
10 very briefly go through the proposed increases and
11 other changes in the fares. I believe we handed out
12 a sheet that looks similar to this.

13 And essentially what we're proposing is a
14 15-cent increase on the base fare. So the current
15 off-peak local base fare, which is 85 cents, would
16 increase 15 cents to a dollar.

17 We're also proposing to eliminate the zone
18 charge. Currently when you go from Zone 1 to 2 or 2
19 to 1 there's another 25-cent charge tacked onto the
20 fare. We're proposing to eliminate that zone
21 charge.

22 Next, the express fare which is currently a
23 quarter more, it costs a quarter more to ride an
24 express bus, we are proposing to increase that
25 another quarter, so the express surcharge, if you

1 will, will be 50 cents. So to ride an express bus
2 you would pay the base fare of a dollar, plus 50
3 cents for the express charge, and then the current
4 peak hour charge, which is a quarter. So if you
5 rode in the off peak it would be \$1.50. If you rode
6 the express in the peak, it would be \$1.75.

7 Currently for seniors, youth and persons with
8 disabilities there is offered a 25-cent fare in
9 off-peak period. We're proposing to increase that
10 another 25 cents. So in the off peak, seniors, the
11 youth and persons with disabilities would ride for
12 50 cents. So a quarter increase on that fare.

13 The downtown zone, which is currently at 25
14 cents all day long within that zone in the downtown,
15 we are proposing under this scenario to eliminate
16 that during the peak periods. So during the peak,
17 which is 6 a.m. to 9 a.m., 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.,
18 riding within the downtown would cost the full fare.

19 And then finally for convenience fares, which
20 include the monthly passes, tokens and 10-ride
21 cards, those are currently discounted 30 cents from
22 the base fare. We are proposing to lessen the
23 discount. So that now they would only be discounted
24 25 cents. So if you take the nickel base fare
25 increase plus -- I'm sorry -- the 15-cent base fare

1 increase plus the nickel decrease in the discount,
2 the cost per ride for those items would go up 20
3 cents; 20 cents per ride on a 10-ride card, 20 cents
4 per ride on a token, and 20 cents per ride for a
5 monthly pass.

6 And how this looks in the actual fare
7 structure, 85-cent fares would go to a dollar, the
8 current \$1.10 fare would go to \$1.25, the \$1.35 fare
9 would go to \$1.50, and the \$1.60 fare would go to
10 \$1.75; and then again, the 25-cent off-peak fare for
11 seniors, youth, and persons with disabilities would
12 go to 50 cents. The downtown zone would be
13 eliminated.

14 The pricing for the 10-ride cards, they will
15 all increase \$2. The monthly passes would all
16 increase \$8. The tokens would actually go from 50
17 to 75 cents. That's a 25-cent increase per ride.
18 Yes, sir.

19 MR. ERIK LARSON: I'm confused about how,
20 if you're eliminating the zone fare, wouldn't some
21 of the \$1.10 existing fares go to \$1.00?

22 MR. HOWARD BLIN: Right.

23 MR. ERIK LARSON: And if that's for riding
24 an express bus during nonpeak hours, wouldn't that
25 then go to \$1.50?

1 MR. HOWARD BLIN: That's right.

2 MR. ERIK LARSON: Why is this chart like
3 that then? Why don't you list the --

4 MR. HOWARD BLIN: For simplicity sake
5 because there's a lot of different combinations.

6 MR. ERIK LARSON: Will there be such thing
7 as \$1.25 fair under the --

8 MR. HOWARD BLIN: Yes, that would be the
9 local peak fare. You asked me a good question. The
10 off-peak express fare under this proposal would go
11 from \$1.10 to \$1.50. Okay. There's a lot of
12 different combinations, and it's hard to show them
13 in a graphic that's in any way easy to understand.
14 If you have any other questions about specific
15 fares, I can answer that.

16 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: The \$1.75 fare, that
17 would work too.

18 MR. HOWARD BLIN: That would be peak
19 express.

20 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: That would be peak
21 express.

22 MS. LISA LEE: Some of these fares will go
23 down under the new fare structure.

24 MR. HOWARD BLIN: The peak local zone
25 crossing fare, which is now \$1.35, would go to

1 \$1.25. That's the only fare that would go down on a
2 regular route. Now, let me quickly describe Metro
3 Mobility.

4 MR. ERIK LARSON: Is that for local zone
5 crossing also?

6 MS. LISA LEE: What other fares would go
7 down?

8 MR. HOWARD BLIN: That's it.

9 MR. ERIK LARSON: The local zone crossing
10 would go down.

11 MR. HOWARD BLIN: The off-peak local zone?

12 MR. ERIK LARSON: Yes.

13 MR. HOWARD BLIN: Would go down, right,
14 from \$1.10 to \$1.00. You're right.

15 Now Metro Mobility fares, some people on Metro
16 Mobility fares will see a decrease. Currently the
17 fares are \$1.70, \$2.20 and \$2.70 depending on
18 whether you're riding the off peak or the peak and
19 the distance on the fare.

20 With the elimination of the zone fare on
21 regular routes, that would automatically eliminate
22 the zone charge on Metro Mobility which for Metro
23 Mobility's services, two times the fare, or two
24 times 25, 50 cents. So actually for some people
25 they would see the fare go down from \$2.70 to \$2.20.

1 So to put it simply on Metro Mobility no one would
2 see a fare increase. Some people would see a
3 decrease from \$2.70 to \$2.20. Have I confused
4 everyone? Okay.

5 That's all I have to say. If there's any
6 questions about specific fares, I would be happy to
7 answer them.

8 MS. SHARON FEES: Okay. Now we will open
9 it up to the public. The first person that signed
10 up to speak was Jerry Hayes. If you would speak up
11 and state your name and address.

12 MR. JERRY HAYES: Sure. My name is Jerry
13 Hayes. My address is 5560 Shore Road, two words, I
14 believe it's Shorewood, but the mailing address the
15 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

16 I am here tonight representing the Minnesota
17 Senior Federation metropolitan region. And I'm
18 vice chair of the transportation committee. We have
19 a resolution I would like to read.

20 Whereas, senior ridership overall is declining
21 due to factors such as fear and intimidation on
22 buses, and proposed increases will only provide
23 greater disincentives to ride the bus.

24 And, whereas, doubling senior and disabled
25 fares opens the possibility of increasing Metro

1 Mobility fares which many users have difficulty
2 currently affording.

3 And, whereas, accessible bus ridership has
4 increased. It saves approximately 8 to 9 dollars
5 over Metro Mobility rates. I don't know if I got
6 that right or not. Yes. That would be right. I
7 think we it would be 8 to 9 dollars over Metro
8 Mobility subsidies. And regular fare increases
9 would provide a disincentive to ride regular routes.

10 And, whereas, we understand that the MTC did
11 not request fare increases of this type, and these
12 increases will provide an overall negative impact on
13 bus ridership.

14 And, whereas, overall bus ridership has been
15 increasing, and this proposal in fares would have an
16 adverse effect on this trend.

17 Therefore, be it resolved the Minnesota Senior
18 Federation opposes the proposed fare increase at
19 this time. Thank you.

20 MS. SHARON FEESS: Thank you, Mr. Hayes.

21 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Madam Chair,
22 just not a question, Jerry. You mentioned the issue
23 of security on the buses, and we know that's an
24 issue. It's one of the toughest nuts we have to
25 crack relative to providing transportation. Surveys

1 show there is fear, not so much of being on the bus
2 but getting to it and waiting for it. Well, on the
3 bus. And one thing if your committee -- I can tell
4 you that this Board, and I'm sure the MTC as all
5 providers are, certainly are open to any suggestions
6 as to what kinds of ideas to make the bus system --
7 what can be done to make it at least seem safer for
8 people, particularly seniors who ride it. That is a
9 problem. Our marketing research shows us that. But
10 it's a real tough one to understand because so much
11 of it is just general security of the community.

12 MR. JERRY HAYES: Madam Chair, may I
13 respond?

14 MS. SHARON FEESS: Yes.

15 MR. JERRY HAYES: We certainly understand
16 and sympathize with the difficulties. If you've got
17 a gutter mouth or someone who's making a lot of
18 noise and all that, especially the older women are
19 intimidated. There's no law against swearing or
20 anything like that, but they're intimidated. And if
21 they are touched, which sometimes happens, and it's
22 hard to -- that, of course, could be construed as an
23 assault. We understand all these things. I wish we
24 had a good answer for you too other than adding more
25 police on the bus. And we also understand that the

1 driver has to drive the bus. And is required to --
2 that's his number one job. And he's not there to be
3 the policeman. So I understand what you're saying.

4 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Maybe it's
5 something you can discuss in your transportation
6 meetings.

7 MR. JERRY HAYES: But it is a fact.

8 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: No question. It
9 is.

10 MR. JERRY HAYES: We have no concrete
11 statistics on it, but there's no question that at
12 least the senior women especially are concerned
13 about their feelings if not their physical
14 well-being on the bus.

15 MS. SHARON FEES: Thank you.

16 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thanks.

17 MS. SHARON FEES: Before we got on, we
18 had another Board member join us, Ruth Franklyn,
19 who's a member of the Board.

20 MR. TOM WORKMAN: Jerry, may I ask you a
21 question?

22 MR. JERRY HAYES: Certainly.

23 MR. TOM WORKMAN: Your second to the last
24 whereas there where you understand that the MTC did
25 not request the fares. And as the body that

1 oversees the MTC, we obviously don't want to
2 increase fares any more than the MTC does. Do you
3 guys have any ideas or propossals if fares were to
4 not be increased, what might be an option? I mean,
5 really the only way to maybe do that is to cut
6 service somewhere. Do you have some ideas?

7 MR. JERRY HAYES: Well, Tom, I think --
8 Madam Chair, Tom, I think -- this is the story we
9 get, is that it could be done without -- and could
10 operate with proper service without increasing the
11 fares. Now, that's, you know, that's a wild guess.

12 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I think it
13 should be clear that the MTC knows that we have to
14 either increase fares or cut service. Their
15 suggestion was, I think, that we cut some service
16 and which they do suggest. There are a significant
17 number of routes that they've offered us that are
18 part of their budget for cuts, routes which I'm not
19 sure altogether the people who are riding them want
20 them cut. But theirs was to delay it until the
21 legislative session. In the past that has not
22 proven too good a bet. That would force us to cut
23 even more service. We operate -- we're all
24 operating on the same numbers. And they understand
25 that if the money isn't forthcoming, we cut service.

1 And I don't think anybody's operating with any
2 different numbers than anybody else is. It's a
3 perception of whether you cut service or not.

4 MR. JERRY HAYES: Tom, let me just answer
5 Tom's question. If I remember right, you said do we
6 have any suggestions? And I think -- this is
7 personally because I don't think we've reviewed that
8 exactly, is I think that it is premature. I think
9 that after the legislature has sorted everything
10 out, that that would be a more appropriate time to
11 approach this.

12 MS. SHARON FEESS: I don't want to cut off
13 discussion here, but I think maybe we should get the
14 input from everyone here, and then if we have some
15 questions and answers, we would be more than happy
16 to do that. Our next person that signed up to speak
17 was Bernie Skrebes.

18 MR. BERNIE SKREBES: My name is Bernie
19 Skrebes, and I'm a resident of New Brighton, 554
20 23rd Avenue Northwest, the zip code is 55112.

21 You know, I've been with the transportation
22 system now since 1979 -- or rather 1978. And one of
23 the things that we noticed when we go down the
24 street and see the buses pass us by, they were
25 practically empty.

1 So, therefore, we approached the MTC at that
2 time before the inception of the RTB and asked if
3 they couldn't make a reduced fare for the seniors.
4 And we thought about 10 cents, which was something
5 that they weren't getting anyhow, so if the people
6 could get out and shop a little bit more downtown,
7 not only that but there are a lot of them that
8 volunteer for services like the nursing homes and
9 hospitals and so forth. And that's the means of
10 them getting there.

11 Then we went, if you remember; I think Ruth
12 remembers; that we went to the free fare. But that
13 got to be quite a stymie, you might say, or a thorn
14 in the side of the transportation because there were
15 -- what we anticipated at that time about 7,000
16 people to apply for the blue card. But there was
17 over 18,000. And a lot of those were well -- I
18 mean, the people that could well afford the regular
19 fare of 10 cents. So anyhow the legislators started
20 saying, Well, let's go back to the 10-cent fare
21 again. And the people didn't mind that a bit. And
22 even when you increased it now to 25 cents, it
23 wasn't too bad.

24 But, you know, what most of us don't realize is
25 what most of the seniors, especially the widows, are

1 laboring under is the fact that they're on a fixed
2 income. And with everything going up -- have you
3 gone into the grocery store lately and looked at the
4 prices of meat and of all the other items that they
5 have to buy in order to support themselves?
6 Everything is going up sky high, but the balance
7 that they get every month remains the same.

8 So I think it's really a burden to go ahead and
9 to try to raise the fares for the seniors once more.
10 Either that or you're going to have empty buses. I
11 mean, that's the choice you're going to have; either
12 get the 25 cents, which a lot of them don't object
13 to that. But this other raise, I think it's far too
14 much. Not only that, but show me anyplace in the
15 transit system where they have raised the rate over
16 125 percent.

17 It's getting -- to my point of view anyhow it's
18 ridiculous. And that same thing with the disabled
19 people or Metro Mobility and all of that. I'm
20 pleading here for you people to really think about
21 these things before you put it down in black and
22 white. Thank you very much for listening.

23 MS. SHARON FEES: Thank you, Mr. Skrebes.
24 Erik Larson.

25 MR. ERIK LARSON: My name is Erik Larson.

1 I live at 822 Aldine Street North in St. Paul, the
2 zip code is 55104.

3 I've ridden the bus quite extensively over the
4 past five years now. I used to ride it to work as
5 the high school debate coach out in Coon Rapids. So
6 I've experienced transporting out to the suburbs at
7 odd times. And now I live in St. Paul, and I work
8 in Minneapolis as a Vista volunteer. Although, I
9 don't know if I can say this is a Vista volunteer.
10 So don't identify me with Vista action or the agency
11 I work for.

12 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: We won't hold it
13 against you.

14 MR. ERIK LARSON: And I have lived in St.
15 Paul during the past five years. I have experienced
16 using the bus to get to work or to entertainment
17 activities or to go grocery shopping, and I've seen
18 the diversity of people that ride on the bus.

19 About the specific proposals. The first thing
20 I did is looked at the monthly pass, which I use now
21 because I work every day. At first I figured it to
22 be an increase -- the increase amounts to one and
23 one-third percent of my monthly income. Just the
24 increase, not the total of the transportation fare.

25 If I were to continue doing as I do now, which

1 is to ride the express bus because it decreases the
2 transit time by about 15 minutes each way, it gives
3 me an extra half hour a day. If I continued to ride
4 the express bus, the increase would be three percent
5 of my monthly income. And earning just \$600 a
6 month, a stipend that's supposed to pay for my
7 housing and food, it really doesn't go far. And in
8 the work I do I meet a lot of people who are on
9 AFDC, and the amount of money that somebody gets on
10 AFDC is \$436 a month. If that person were to
11 purchase a monthly pass for whatever reason, just to
12 stay on the same level, the \$8 increase -- I don't
13 know if I have the calculation right. I just did it
14 in my head. It seems like it would be about 10
15 percent. That would be too high. Maybe it would be
16 about four or five percent. I didn't have time to
17 figure that out.

18 I didn't get a chance to read the article in
19 the St. Paul paper. I just saw the headline. I'm
20 sure other people did. But I think it would be a
21 bad time to change the fares. The fares didn't
22 change -- was it about two years ago or so? And at
23 that time there was a lot of, I think, opposition to
24 having the difference between the prepaid fare and
25 the cash fare because often times people who are on

1 limited incomes are not able to afford to shell out
2 the money at that time for the prepaid fare. And I
3 think decreasing the amount of difference between
4 the prepaid and the cash fares is a good idea, but I
5 don't think doing it in this manner is the right way
6 to do it.

7 Another thing I've noticed with this fare is
8 the elimination of the zone charge and the increase
9 of the express charges. It's my feeling that most
10 of the people who ride buses to the suburbs, the
11 highest volume are during rush hour. So it really
12 -- the only difference for them will be the increase
13 in the base fare. But what it's doing is it's
14 shifting the burden to the people who ride the
15 express bus within the city. And having ridden the
16 bus to Coon Rapids and out to Anoka where my parents
17 live and Maple Grove where my other parents live, I
18 felt like it was -- I kind of felt obligated to pay
19 the extra quarter because the mileage was that much
20 greater and often times there weren't as many riders
21 as on the buses that operated in the city.

22 I think we need to look at, also, what sort of
23 things we want to use the buses for. One of them, I
24 think, is environmental reasons. And the more
25 people that we get to ride the buses, the better off

1 we are with that. The same goes for traffic flow.
2 For each additional person on the bus, that can be
3 one less car that's on the road which can increase
4 the amount of traffic which decreases the efficiency
5 of the transportation. And when we're increasing
6 fares like this, I think it will discourage people
7 from riding the bus. And when that increases
8 traffic problems, that will further discourage
9 people from riding the bus. It's kind of a downward
10 spiral.

11 What Mr. Hayes pointed out earlier about the
12 senior riders or the increase in accessible buses,
13 decreasing the Metro Mobility. The need for Metro
14 Mobility, I think, is a good point. He's pointing
15 out a way that the MTC is able to change some of
16 their policies to decrease the amount of money that
17 needs to be spent on transportation overall.

18 And one thing that I guess I would like to see,
19 and I know the Regional Transit Board doesn't have
20 the authority to say this, but they have the power
21 to advocate it, I think, is to look at what public
22 transportation is. And the fact is it's a kind of a
23 trade-off for a lot of people that aren't driving.
24 They're giving up driving and they're riding the
25 bus.

1 And if we would look at like parking, for
2 example, if you could put a surcharge each time
3 somebody uses a parking ramp in downtown during
4 certain hours during the day, that may be able to
5 make up for some of the deficit. It's a direct way
6 that we can encourage people to ride the bus and at
7 the same time fund transit. And if that discourages
8 people from using parking ramps and encourages them
9 to ride the bus, well, then the buses are getting
10 more money that way.

11 MS. SHARON FEESS: Thank you. Lisa Lee.

12 MS. LISA LEE: The first point I would
13 like to make --

14 MS. SHARON FEESS: Could we have your name
15 and address, please?

16 MS. LISA LEE: Sure. Lisa Lee, 181
17 Sherburne Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55103. That
18 when there were fare meetings in 1991, there was an
19 evening meeting held at Mears Park Centre in
20 downtown St. Paul. The attendance was much higher
21 that time. And I would say that the times and
22 places where fare meetings were held this time
23 discourages public input because there is no evening
24 meeting in either of the downtowns where people that
25 use transit could go without having to transfer.

1 The fact that that is a deterrent is shown by the
2 attendance at this meeting, which is like something
3 like, (counting) 10 people versus -- I don't know.
4 It seemed like at least 40 people at that other
5 meeting. I'm not sure. Maybe it was 50. Do you
6 remember how many people were at the meeting?

7 MR. HOWARD BLIN: I don't.

8 MS. LISA LEE: It was a lot more than this
9 meeting. The only meeting that was held in downtown
10 St. Paul was held at the St. Paul Civic Center which
11 is at the edge of downtown. And, again, if you're
12 taking any of the buses other than possibly the 12
13 or 21, you have to either walk a long distance or
14 transfer. It seems logical that since the meetings
15 that are held by RTB that at least one of the
16 meetings would have been held at RTB headquarters
17 which is more centrally located for transit users.

18 The other thing is, I would sort of like to put
19 another word in for what Mr. Erik Lason said about
20 the -- that the restructuring of the fares is sort
21 of a reverse Robin Hood. Again, when I take the bus
22 to New Brighton or Wayzata or Stillwater, I don't
23 mind paying the extra money because it's an extra
24 distance. The way it is now, the fare to New
25 Brighton will actually decrease by 10 cents, while

1 the fares for people in the peak period who will be
2 using the bus for only a few blocks, either in
3 downtown St. Paul or Minneapolis, will jump from 25
4 cents to -- it would be either \$1 to \$1.50, I
5 believe, for taking a bus, you know, maybe only as
6 little as three or four blocks, which people do use
7 in downtown because it is a savings over walking.
8 At least when you see a bus come by, you can hop on
9 it. So I would say there's a social justice issue
10 involved in the fares.

11 There is the public policy issue, as Mr. Larson
12 said, of when you're trying to decrease congestion
13 and pollution, why are you doing this? And as Mr.
14 Jerry Hayes said, is this really necessary?

15 When we look at the Mall of America \$3 million
16 transit hub, Louisiana Avenue a \$1 million transit
17 hub. That's \$4 million there. This fare increase
18 is supposed to raise six million. Now, I don't know
19 how much the Rosedale transit hub cost. I preferred
20 waiting inside of Rosedale rather than having to
21 wait outside in an outside shelter. Before you
22 could wait indoors, inside the mall.

23 If you want to encourage public input, you have
24 to make it accessible for the public. I
25 congratulate the people that did make it out here.

1 How many of you had to transfer? Were you all able
2 to take one bus?

3 MR. ERIK LARSON: I took my bike instead
4 of transferring.

5 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: I took a company van.

6 MS. LISA LEE: I thank Mr. Larson for
7 pointing out that some fares would go down. I think
8 I had sort of spotted before, but on the spot it's
9 hard to pick that up again. I think that
10 information ought to be made clear to the public.
11 It ought to be sent out in the news releases to the
12 newspapers because it is news that some fares will
13 go down. Those are the fares for long distance. If
14 you want to charge by distance as far as charging
15 some percentage of what it actually costs, those
16 fares ought to go up as well.

17 The other thing about the cost. MTC hired
18 Stewart Kauffman to do television ads on TV, and I
19 don't know how much those cost. There was a letter
20 in the Skyway News saying, Why are you spending all
21 this money on marketing rather than providing better
22 service which will help keep and attract more riders?
23 Why are you spending on the frills rather than on
24 the essentials? I guess if anyone here agrees with
25 what I said, I hope they will take it back to other

1 bus riders because, again, there isn't a very large
2 turnout for this meeting.

3 MS. SHARON FEESS: Okay. Thank you. And
4 our last person that asked to speak is William
5 O'Hara.

6 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: My name is William
7 O'Hara. I live at 2723 Cedar Avenue South in
8 Minneapolis, zip code is 55407. There's only a
9 couple things I want to point out. One is there
10 should be a zone charge because zones make it fair
11 for people that live far out going in from long
12 distances into downtown Minneapolis to work, if it
13 was 25 cents or 50 cents, however you guys work that
14 out.

15 But the thing that bothers me the most is like
16 students and people in wheelchairs and disability
17 people, students who are under 14 and 17 and going
18 to school back and forth. They're not even allowed
19 to work until you're 16. So you have to get the
20 money from your parents as is to take the bus. And
21 if it's going up 100-percent increase from what it
22 is right now, that's going to cut down on their
23 money as is. And most of them get allowances, and
24 that's just going to take more money away from them.

25 The other thing is the security on buses. I

1 was on the bus on the 21 going to downtown St. Paul.
2 There happened to have been a fight on that bus, and
3 it took the police and security 10 minutes to get to
4 that bus off of approximately between Lexington and
5 Dale on Selby Avenue. Why would it take that long
6 and stuff like that? I ended up going back there
7 and breaking up the fight myself, and the bus driver
8 just kind of huddled up front some place. And
9 that's it for me. Thank you.

10 MS. SHARON FEESS: Is there anyone else
11 that perhaps didn't sign up that would like to
12 speak? (No response). How about any questions?
13 Now is the good time for questions.

14 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I would like to
15 remind people, if I can, that the administration and
16 finance committee, our chairman is right here,
17 Boardmember Franklyn. It meets October 12th to
18 consider the fare proposal that you've heard tonight
19 and commented on. And I will also share with you,
20 and I think I reflect all the Board members is that
21 this is a proposal, a proposal by staff to the Board
22 that by no means have the Board members, all the
23 Board members, made a commitment to all the elements
24 of this fare increase, and that's why we're having
25 these meetings. So if you would be interested in

1 attending that, that will be at our offices at the
2 Regional Transit Board chambers at Mears Park on
3 October 12th. And then following we would
4 presumably act on it.

5 MR. JERRY HAYES: Chairperson, Mike.
6 Chairperson.

7 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Chairperson.
8 Did I say chairman? I usually say chair.

9 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: I've got a question.
10 Approximately how much did you spend on the two
11 television commercials on channel 4, 5, 9, 11, and
12 29 for the two campaigns? One was the bus going
13 past a Porsche or a Ferrari on the express lane.
14 The other one for the person to the --

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I'll just answer
16 that. MTC is responsible for that marketing
17 campaign. That's their responsibility. So there is
18 nobody here who could answer that question for you.

19 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: And have you guys
20 considered the increase of how many people are going
21 to the Mall of America, which was 1,200 people
22 within the first week?

23 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I don't know
24 what the numbers are, but I will comment on one
25 thing that was offered. The money that was spent on

1 building those hubs is what we call capital money.
2 That come from bonds. None of that money could be
3 used to provide service. That could only be used to
4 build things and buy buses. Unfortunately that's
5 not where we're short in revenue. Where we're short
6 in revenue is the money to operate the system. So
7 it isn't money that's changeable. For instance, if
8 we didn't build those hubs, which all of our Board
9 members believe they're important. But if we didn't
10 build them, we wouldn't be able to put that into
11 service. It would just be money that we wouldn't
12 have hubs, we wouldn't have shelters for people.
13 And that's hard for people -- most people don't
14 understand that, and that's understandable. But
15 that is the way our money is divided.

16 MR. ERIK LARSON: I was reading in the
17 little thing that they have hanging on the handrails
18 on the buses about how there are different sorts of
19 express lanes now for the buses going to different
20 places a lot and how they're able to drive on the
21 shoulder on 252 and stuff. I was wondering if
22 there's any possibility that something like that can
23 be added to get out of downtown Minneapolis on I-94
24 going eastbound?

25 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: There's a lot of

1 discussion of that right now whether or not there
2 would be a diamond lane, and 94 will be
3 reconstructed. There's lots of discussion as to
4 what there will be, whether there will be LRT,
5 whether there will be HOV, high-occupancy vehicle
6 lanes, with a separate concrete roadway. There is
7 some discussion right now of diamonding that road,
8 isn't there, Howard?

9 MR. HOWARD BLIN: Right. I should also
10 add, Mn/DOT is currently designing a bypass of the
11 meter at that point so the buses could bypass the
12 meter. Unfortunately it's a hard thing to construct
13 in that area because it's up on an embankment and it
14 takes a lot of construction.

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: But the MTC and
16 Mn/DOT are examining those situations throughout the
17 metro area where they can make the buses move
18 quicker because that's the bottom line for a lot of
19 people. The quicker you move, the more competitive
20 it is with their automobile. And the more
21 competitive it is with their automobile, the more
22 likely they are to take the bus. The more people
23 that take the bus, the more revenue we get in. The
24 more revenue we get in, the less we have to charge
25 for fares or the more service we can operate. And

1 that's where we are.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Could you explain the
3 difference between the RTB and the MTC? I mean, you
4 talk about, well, it's their deal; it's not ours.
5 Here we're talking about fair increases --

6 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: That's a good
7 question.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: -- which you guys are
9 proposing. And then also what's your mandate as to
10 what your budgets are, where these figures come
11 from, how did you determine the dollars? I mean, I
12 guess I see a lot of redundancy.

13 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: You asked about
14 an hour and a half worth of questions, but I'll try
15 to answer them as simply as I can. There are
16 essentially three agencies, metro agencies, which
17 have responsibility for transportation. First of
18 all, it's the Met Council. The Metropolitan Council
19 has responsibility for transportation planning, for
20 planning what systems in the long-term future we are
21 going to have and the use of resources in that
22 planning.

23 The Regional Transit Board and the Department
24 of Transportation, the highway department as we used
25 to call it, and between the two of us and their own

1 staff they plan a transportation system that
2 includes roads and transit. The Regional Transit
3 Board, which is appointed by the Metropolitan
4 Council, has responsibility for planning, financing
5 and -- planning and financing public transit in the
6 seven-county metro area. Then you have the MTC,
7 which is responsible -- and financing, I should say,
8 public transit. Planning and financing public
9 transit.

10 And then you have the MTC which is responsible
11 for operating public transit. They are operators
12 along with several other vendors. There are quite a
13 few other vendors we have throughout the metro area.
14 Most of those are suburban vendors.

15 We then are responsible for taking the revenue
16 that we get, 50 percent of which comes from property
17 tax, about 15 percent of it comes from state and
18 federal funds, and the balance comes from the
19 consumer, 35 percent hopefully comes from the
20 consumer in fares. Then that money then is used to
21 provide revenue to MTC as well as all the providers
22 in the metro area. So 35 percent of this system is
23 operated by the consumer, 50 percent through
24 property tax, and the balance through --

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I wasn't asking where

1 the money was coming form. I was just asking what
2 your budget was.

3 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Maybe Howard can
4 or Judy. The specific numbers on the budgets. It's
5 biannual.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I guess to me it seems
7 like there's a certain redundancy in the system.
8 And I apologize for saying this, but there's a
9 certain callousness in your answer saying that's the
10 MTC's deal when in reality it's public money, right?
11 I didn't hear one figure in your percentages that
12 wasn't public money. It either comes from the
13 public or is financed by the state.

14 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: It is their
15 responsibility as an operational entity though.

16 MS. SHARON FEESS: They submit a budget to
17 us that we approve.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: But it's a public
19 institution that the public doesn't seem to be
20 getting a whole lot of feedback into. That's
21 personally.

22 MS. SHARON FEESS: Any other questions or
23 comments?

24 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: I have a question.
25 In Bloomington there's the 88, 89 line which used to

1 be an 89 line that went from the St. Paul -- I mean,
2 from Southdale mall to the airports, and they
3 switched that to one of the suburban lines. And
4 they got government funding because it makes little
5 loop stops at like senior citizens' homes, community
6 centers or a lot of people go and stuff like that
7 and to Normandale College and stuff. Could you like
8 subsidize some of the routes that don't make so much
9 money and have it set up like those out in suburbs
10 to cut back on cost?

11 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: That's a really
12 good observation on your part because that's exactly
13 what happened in that case. There were two or three
14 lines, MTC lines, that operated there, 89 and 90.
15 And wasn't there another one?

16 MR. HOWARD BLIN: 78, 80.

17 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Yeah. And the
18 last time we went through this whole business two
19 years ago, and the MTC recommended that they
20 couldn't operate that line without a real high
21 subsidy, those lines, and that they recommended that
22 they be terminated. And that's their responsibility
23 to recommend that to us. And while we agreed after
24 probably a decade of -- more than that -- of trying
25 to restructure those routes so they didn't cost six,

1 seven dollars per passenger, what happened is that
2 they were terminated, then restructured and then put
3 out for private bid to a private company. They are
4 still paid for by the Regional Transit Board just as
5 the MTC is. They are another company, Medicine Lake
6 Lines which runs that line.

7 And, yes, you're right. We also have now
8 another list of high-subsidy groups that have been
9 forwarded to the Regional Transit Board. The option
10 on some of those may very well be that rather than
11 terminate them and eliminate them altogether, that
12 they be restructured and put out to bid. That's a
13 possibility. Just as in what you're referring to is
14 what we call the B line, the Bloomington/Edina line.
15 And now ridership has gone back up, and it's
16 represented quite a cost savings. And, you're
17 right, that is a potential answer to some of those
18 routes that are now being suggested to be
19 terminated.

20 MS. SHARON FEESS: And frequently the
21 high-subsidy lines are frequently going to serve the
22 suburban areas, which if you were to listen to the
23 suburban people, they don't feel that they are
24 receiving adequate service as it is.

25 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: I used to live in

1 Bloomington.

2 MS. SHARON FEESS: So it kind of puts you
3 between a rock and a hard place to respond to some
4 of those needs.

5 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: It's not really a
6 question, but the 88 and 89 should run on a Sunday.
7 It does not run on a Sunday at this time, but it
8 should be run on a Sunday so that it does go to the
9 Mall of America, and a lot of people that live in
10 Bloomington would take the bus instead of driving
11 their own car and fighting for parking.

12 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Those are the
13 kinds of things that are being looked at right now
14 since the mall just opened. Actually service has
15 been increased, and they're looking at actually
16 increasing quite a bit on the B line. And those are
17 decisions that the RTB will be taking a look at in
18 the next year and two. But it's hard to kind of
19 increase service too when you're cutting other
20 areas. But that's one that's being looked at
21 specifically.

22 MR. ERIK LARSON: There was another thing
23 that I've been thinking about that I hadn't written
24 down in my notes, but it came back to me about
25 parking ramps and buses and all that. Looking at

1 the current fare structures for a prepaid fare for
2 somebody using express inner-city service from say
3 downtown St. Paul or someone in St. Paul to
4 Minneapolis. Under the current fare, a round way
5 trip each day would be \$2.10. And under the revised
6 fare it would be \$4. The \$2.10 is 85 plus 25 plus
7 25 minus 30. So \$4 is \$1 plus 50 plus 75 minus 25.

8 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: You lost me.
9 You got me.

10 MR. ERIK LARSON: Actually \$3; \$1 plus 50
11 for the express plus 25 for to the peak hours, 25
12 cents for the prepaid. And I know that parking
13 downtown, I've seen places that are maybe five or
14 six dollars for all-day parking if you get there by
15 a certain time. And when you're looking at
16 basically \$2 to \$3, that's a dollar difference. I
17 mean, that brings the parking that much closer. And
18 if the person decides that, well, I can get home 5,
19 10 minutes earlier in my car and/or I don't have to
20 wait outside for that, that's one of the ways that I
21 think the fare increase will discourage ridership.
22 And as I pointed out earlier, each rider that
23 decides to drive is one more car that's on the road.
24 And I think it kind of has some sort of exponential
25 effect on traffic if I remember the traffic

1 equations right.

2 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I think the
3 points that you bring up regarding parking, those
4 are other issues that we've talked about a lot, and
5 we've made strong advocations to the legislature.
6 There's a lot of things our community is going to
7 have to do to get to understand that we have to quit
8 subsidizing the car and begin to subsidize public
9 transit. And those are things that hopefully our
10 community and our country are going to begin to
11 understand with greater clarity. We do subsidize
12 the automobile a lot.

13 MR. ERIK LARSON: Our family has friends
14 in the Netherlands, and one of the people was
15 telling us about the amount of taxes on a new car
16 and the amount of taxes on gasoline that go to pay
17 for the public transportation. And you can get
18 anywhere in the country, anywhere on the bus.

19 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: You pay four
20 bucks for a gallon of gas though. And like you say,
21 most of it goes to -- not most of it, I would say,
22 but at least half of their tax goes to public
23 transit, at least in Germany I know it does, and
24 that's why they have transit systems that literally,
25 like you say, get you to wherever you need to go.

1 MR. ERIK LARSON: And they're very well
2 utilized.

3 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: We have trouble
4 getting a nickel off Washington. That was the
5 proposal last year was to raise the gas tax
6 nationally five cents, and it failed. And so
7 obviously you can see Germany gas is \$4.25 a gallon,
8 in France it's \$3.50.

9 MR. ERIK LARSON: Like I said, at the
10 regional level, at the Metropolitan Council level,
11 something could be done to look at parking and how
12 you could use parking as an disincentive to use the
13 car as opposed to public transportation. I don't
14 know if that's been done or not.

15 MS. SHARON FEESS: Those are things that
16 we do discuss, that we do look at. Ride Share is
17 something that we work with. All sorts of
18 alternatives. But, again, it goes back to our state
19 legislature. What, in fact, they are willing to
20 fund. So I would encourage you, please, to send in
21 those comment cards to your legislators.

22 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: This will be my last
23 question. We were talking about security on buses
24 earlier. Okay. For a lot of the rough routes, like
25 I can name a couple. There's a 21 line, the 16 line

1 out here, the 5 bus line of Minneapolis, the 19 bus
2 line, the 9 bus line that goes down Fourth Avenue.
3 Is there any way that you could -- this would be a
4 cost, not a discost, but give them radios to get
5 ahold of the police officer, security police, right
6 at the bus instead of calling the terminal, have
7 someone answer at the terminal to have them call the
8 police to the buses to decrease on time of the
9 police getting to the bus?

10 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: To be honest,
11 I'm not sure how the security system works, whether
12 it goes to the garage or --

13 MS. SHARON FEESS: It goes directly to the
14 garage.

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: But it's a good
16 suggestion. I don't know why it doesn't go right to
17 the police department.

18 MR. WILLIAM O'HARA: That would make sense
19 to me. Four, five, six minutes down.

20 MS. SHARON FEESS: And I'm not sure
21 exactly what the dispatch is from the terminal then
22 to the police, the MTC police cars. That may be
23 quite quick. I'm not sure, but it does go into the
24 garage.

25 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I don't know. I

1 don't know.

2 MR. ERIK LARSON: One time I was riding on
3 one, and I think it was about two miles, maybe three
4 miles down Lake Steet until there was an officer
5 there, and it was at the end of the route that the
6 officer met the bus.

7 MS. SHARON FEESS: Any other comments,
8 questions? (No response). I thank you for coming.
9 I invite you again, if you're interested, to join us
10 on October 12th for the administration and finance
11 committee meeting where we will be coming up with
12 some sort of recommendation, I guess, for the Board,
13 the whole Board.

14 MS. LISA LEE: What time is it?

15 MS. SHARON FEESS: Four o'clock at Mears
16 Park.

17 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: That's 230 East
18 Fifth Street. It's down the block from Galtier
19 Plaza.

20 MS. SHARON FEESS: Thank you for coming.
21 (Concluded at approximately 7:55 p.m.,
22 Wednesday, September 23, 1992.)

23 * * * * *

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1 Public Hearing of the Regional Transit Board,
2 Thursday, September 24, 1992, commencing at approximately
3 7:05 p.m. at Sabathani Community Center, 310 East 38th
4 Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

5 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I'm Maryann Campo. I
6 represent the members of the Regional Transit Board.
7 We're here to get your comments. We do have a court
8 reporter here, and when you want to make a statement
9 for the public, we would appreciate you getting over
10 to the court reporter so we have it down accurately.
11 I represent this area. I represent Minneapolis,
12 this whole area, this whole south area.

13 I want to thank you for taking the time tonight
14 to come to this meeting. I'm sure you all have busy
15 schedules. The Regional Transit Board is the board
16 responsible for planning and financing transit
17 services in the metropolitan area. So it's not only
18 the MTC but it's the opt-out communities which is
19 our suburban communities also.

20 The Board has not, our Board -- we're the
21 policy board. We don't run the bus company. They
22 have their own board. Our Board has not made any
23 decision yet on changing fares. And the purpose of
24 this meeting is to get your input regarding a
25 decision we might have to make in the very near

1 future. By getting your response on specific
2 proposals we can make the recommendations that are
3 necessary. In the past we have made changes based
4 on public comment. So you're not just here to make
5 statements that we've already made the decision.
6 That is not the case.

7 After these hearings we will be consolidating
8 and tabulating your comments. Changes may be made
9 to parts of the proposal or the whole concept of the
10 proposal you will see tonight. The Board will
11 consider changing the fares at the Board's next
12 administrative and finance committee meeting on
13 October 12th. And then it will go before the full
14 Board, our full Board, at our next regularly
15 scheduled meeting. If we vote on a fare change, it
16 will most likely take effect on January 1st, 1993.

17 The procedure for tonight's hearing is simple.
18 A staff member will go through the current and
19 proposed fare structure, and then we will listen to
20 your comments. Questions will be answered about the
21 fare structure, yet we would like to spend the
22 majority of our time listening to your ideas. We
23 will call on people to talk in the order they have
24 signed up on our list. If you have not signed up on
25 the list and you would like to speak, just raise

1 your hand and we'll come over and take down the
2 information.

3 We did have overheads prepared, but we're not
4 able to use those because we don't have the
5 equipment. Somehow the messages did not get very
6 straight about the meeting tonight when we rented
7 the facility.

8 I would also like to ask -- I have other
9 members. We are an 11-person board, the Regional
10 Transit Board. And I have some of my other Board
11 members here with me that represents a suburban
12 area, and as a matter of fact he is the mayor in a
13 suburban area. I'm going to ask my colleagues to
14 introduce themselves, and I'm going to ask people
15 here with us from the Regional Transit Board to
16 introduce our staff people, themselves, and tell you
17 a little about their job functions so you know who's
18 here and what they're in charge of.

19 MR. TOM SATHER: My name is Tom Sather. I
20 am the mayor that she alluded to, and I represent
21 District B which is northern Ramsey County.

22 MR. GREG ANDREWS: I'm Greg Andrews. I'm
23 the executive director of the Regional Transit
24 Board, and I'm responsible for administering the
25 policies set forth, that the Board members set.

1 MR. LEN SIMICH: I'm Len Simich also with
2 the Regional Transit Board. I'm a staff member. I
3 oversee all regular route services here in the Twin
4 City metropolitan area.

5 MS. JUDY HOLLANDER: I'm Judy Hollander,
6 I'm the director of planning and programming for the
7 Regional Transit Board.

8 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: We have one more
9 coming in.

10 MS. JANE FITZ: I'm Jane Fitz. I'm a
11 writer for public communications of the RTB.

12 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: We should remember not
13 to talk in acronyms between the RTB and MTC, and we
14 start to do that so automatically that you kind of
15 -- people glaze over. The first person I would like
16 to call is Marcia O'Neall.

17 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: My name is Marcia
18 O'Neall. I feel that the rates are high enough as
19 they are. We don't need any changes. We could cut
20 some bus service. I know the 94B, is it, runs every
21 five minutes to St. Paul. Where my bus runs every,
22 say, 15 minutes, 20 minutes, and that's in the peak
23 hours. I don't get unlimited bus. I think the
24 rates are high enough as they are.

25 I know cities that charge nothing for their bus

1 companies. There's a city down in Houston --
2 Austin, Texas, that don't charge anything to ride
3 the bus. They're trying to get people to ride the
4 bus. Right now you got people riding the bus. All
5 right.

6 Say you're on welfare or you're trying to find
7 a job. How are you going to get downtown? You
8 don't have a car. You'll have to rely on people to
9 take you, drive around the block because you sure
10 can't afford to park downtown or you sure can't
11 afford to take the bus anymore because the rates are
12 going up. That \$1.25 or, what is it, \$1.75? You
13 know you could buy a loaf of bread for \$1.75, feed
14 your kids.

15 So what are you going to do? Just stay on
16 welfare? Well, I can't take the bus downtown to
17 find a job. If I get a job, I can't afford to go to
18 it because I'm getting minimum wage. I'm one of the
19 lucky ones, but there a lot of people I see out
20 there that aren't. And I don't like the idea of
21 raising it. I mean, I started riding the bus when
22 it was 85 cents in peak hours, and then it just kept
23 going up. Every year it went up and up, and I'm
24 tired of it. So I thank you very much.

25 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you for putting

1 that into the record, and you might have some
2 specific questions that you would like to address
3 once we do the presentation. As a matter of fact,
4 if you want to do the presentation before we further
5 call on people. And then we'll go back to you, and
6 then we'll go to more questions.

7 MR. LEN SIMICH: I'll start out, since
8 this is the sixth of seven public hearings that
9 we've had, there's been some confusion going on
10 about what fares are actually being proposed with
11 the increase.

12 Right now with the Metro Mobility fares no
13 increase is being proposed at this time. In fact,
14 on one of the types of trips, the trip that crosses
15 the zone during the peak hour which is currently at
16 a rate of \$2.70, I believe, that would actually
17 reduce to \$2.20 because of the elimination of the
18 zone.

19 I would also like to point out that the whole
20 Metro Mobility program is being examined at this
21 time. So that is why fares on that program are not
22 -- nothing is being proposed at this time. So just
23 contrary to what you might have heard, I just wanted
24 to set that straight first off.

25 What I thought I would do is kind of go over

1 what is being proposed. Again, I say proposed
2 because nothing has been officially acted on. And
3 the reason we're in this position is we need to
4 balance the budget for 1993. Currently our
5 forecasts show we will not have enough operating
6 dollars to provide the services that are on the
7 street right now.

8 There are a number of things being looked at.
9 One similar to what you said is reducing services,
10 the nonproductive services. But the last thing
11 staff or the Board would like to do is actually cut
12 out what we see as productive services.

13 So what we've done is try to come up with a
14 fare policy that we felt was fair to all areas of
15 the region, and for the most part everybody would
16 see a 15-cent increase. Now, there are some special
17 cases where the increase will be larger, and I'll go
18 through that in a minute.

19 Basically what we're proposing -- and the sheet
20 that was passed out earlier are the same that I'm
21 going to be covering on these two boards. And the
22 first one has the 15 cents up in the corner. Maybe
23 to start there. This is just exactly the type of
24 increase that we are talking about. On the base
25 fare, on your local base fare during the off-peak

1 hours we are proposing a 15-cent increase.

2 The zones are being proposed to be eliminated,
3 and there's a number of reasons for that. One is
4 they are very difficult to implement and understand
5 from a passenger and a driver perspective as well as
6 we're seeing more and more suburban-to-suburban
7 travel. And some of these cases may be taking a
8 short bus trip but crossing a zone and having to pay
9 the zone surcharge. So we're proposing for that to
10 be eliminated.

11 The express fare would increase an additional
12 quarter. The off-peak senior, youth and limited
13 mobility, which we now refer to as the social fares,
14 would increase 25 cents. The downtown zone which is
15 currently a quarter is being proposed to eliminate
16 that zone during the peak periods.

17 And convenience fares, the 10-ride monthly
18 cards, the passes and the tokens would be
19 discounted, still have a quarter discount but
20 currently there's a 30-cent discount on that. So
21 what we would be doing is taking a nickel off of
22 that discount that's available.

23 How actually it will look in reference to the
24 fares you are paying right now would be the local
25 off-peak base going from 85 cents to \$1. The local

1 peak base fare would go from \$1.10 currently to
2 \$1.25. The off-peak express in Zone 2 basically
3 goes from \$1.35 to \$1.50. The peak express, again,
4 out of the Zone 2 area would go from \$1.60 to \$1.75.
5 And the social fares, again, would raise 25 cents.

6 For the 10-ride cards and the monthly passes,
7 again, they all have a discount applied of
8 approximately 25 cents per ride, and they're
9 calculated by the 10-ride cards, 10 rides, and the
10 monthly passes are calculated at 40 rides per month.
11 What you'll see is an increase basically of \$2 in
12 your 10-ride cards. So those of you that are using
13 those cards paying \$5.50 will all pay \$7.50, \$8 will
14 pay \$10, \$10.50 would pay \$12.50, \$13 would pay \$15.

15 On the monthly pass there would be an \$8
16 additional charge per month. So those of you that
17 are using the \$22 pass would see an increase to \$30,
18 \$32 to \$40, \$42 to \$50, \$52 to \$60. Again, these
19 are all calculated by the additional 15 cents added
20 for the base fare, but you're still discounted a
21 quarter. And on the tokens which are currently 55
22 cents, those would go to 75 cents.

23 And as I stated in the beginning, right now
24 Metro Mobility fares, there are no increases planned
25 at this time. With that I'll turn it back over.

1 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: One of the things I
2 would like to -- we've had two more Board members
3 join us since the presentation. I would ask you to
4 introduce yourself and state what district you
5 represent. This is our chairman of our Board, Mike
6 Ehrlichmann.

7 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Mike
8 Ehrlichmann, chair. I represent the whole.

9 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: He's in charge.

10 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: I'm Doris Caranicas.
11 I represent the disability community.

12 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you. I would
13 like to continue with your testimony, and then I
14 would like to go to any questions that you would
15 like to ask, any way we can clarify, and we have
16 enough staff here, I hope, to answer it. Next
17 person is Janice Dietz.

18 MS. JANICE DIETZ: Can I refer to this?

19 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: You sure can do
20 anything you like as long as we can hear you. I'm
21 sorry we don't have a microphone.

22 MS. JANICE DIETZ: My name is Janice
23 Dietz, and currently I'm unemployed technically.
24 I've been searching for work for five months, and
25 buying a \$5.50 bus card has been hard for me, and

1 making sure that I make appointments in off-peak
2 hours.

3 The rates that are going up will be -- I don't
4 know how people are going to be able to go to look
5 for work. Students that are on very limited
6 incomes, how are they going to be able to go to
7 school paying \$2.50 a day just to go to school? I
8 just finished college a couple years ago, and I know
9 how hard it was for me to get bus cards. It was
10 almost impossible because you just don't have the
11 income.

12 Again, I don't know what you're proposing for
13 the seniors and students extra. For seniors it's an
14 extra 25 cents on the off hours.

15 I don't know where your money comes from. I
16 don't know if it comes from state, from the city, or
17 if it's independent. I mean, are you paying for
18 your own expenses by the money that you receive from
19 the fares? I guess I need to know a little bit more
20 where that is coming from. Why we have such high
21 prices here anyway? And maybe we don't. Are there
22 other cities that have much higher prices? How do
23 we compare to them in Minneapolis? I don't have
24 that experience.

25 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: That's a very, very

1 good question. And it's so comprehensive, I will
2 ask for a response now so that we can start to
3 address.

4 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: First of all,
5 let me just tell you so I don't forget. We do have
6 a job seekers program for people who are seeking
7 employment. A number of agencies, quite a few
8 agencies, it's 20, 30, 40 agencies offer. We
9 subsidize bus passes up to 75 percent for people who
10 are seeking employment. So you may want to contact
11 staff here before you leave tonight and find out how
12 you go about getting one of these job seeker --
13 connected with one of those programs because they
14 can help pay all but 25 percent of the cost of the
15 pass.

16 Relative to your question about where do we get
17 our money. Thirty-five percent, or that's what we
18 try and maintain as a level of subsidy by state
19 directly from the state legislature. Thirty-five
20 percent of the cost of running the bus comes from
21 the consumer from what you put into the fare box.
22 So just about a little over a third the consumer
23 pays for. The two-thirds of it, at least two-thirds
24 will be subsidized. We get -- half of that money
25 comes from -- or no, half of all the money we spend

1 comes from property taxes. And I'll just add that
2 those property taxes are -- we can't raise those.
3 They're at the maximum which they have been at since
4 1984. The balance, the remaining 15 percent, about
5 six percent comes from the federal government, and
6 the remaining nine percent comes from the state
7 legislature. All of those sources have gone down in
8 funding unfortunately. So that's where our funds
9 come from.

10 Where do we relate in terms of fare price? I
11 would guess we're pretty much average around the
12 country, and it depends on the cost of living. The
13 cost of living is higher some places so fares are
14 higher. The cost of living is lower in some places
15 so fares are lower. But I would guess it's
16 relatively standard in terms of between -- I would
17 guess between 80 cents and \$1.20 is where you're
18 going to find fares around the country per ride.
19 But hopefully that answers your questions, and I
20 would encourage you to use the job seekers program.
21 That's what it was intended for.

22 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Nancy Marigold.

23 MS. NANCY MARIGOLD: I have several
24 concerns here. Just as my friends Ms. O'Neill and
25 Ms. Dietz said, that how can people who are just

1 struggling to get by afford bus fares? And I'm sure
2 they can't afford to go and buy a car if they can't
3 afford to get a bus fare. I'm expecting a child. I
4 rely on the bus daily. And I am not happy with this
5 fare increase. I think it's astronomical as it is
6 right now. I mean, right now I buy a monthly pass.
7 I would have to pay \$40 a month. I feel that is
8 unacceptable.

9 And I guess another question, we just got
10 handed this pie chart of the regular route funding,
11 and I was wondering why doesn't the city contribute
12 to this funding? Even though that these prices are
13 proposed, and I don't know if your company has
14 anything to do with it. The service is not that
15 great in the first place. On the buses I get sick
16 because the fumes going into the buses. The seats
17 are falling apart. The windows don't even open.
18 Even though they don't even have air conditioning,
19 you can't even open the windows to get some air.
20 And if we could arrange that they could up the
21 services or up the better maintenance of buses so we
22 don't get sick on there. If these do get passed
23 January 1st, I will seriously consider car pooling
24 or buying a car and skip the bus service altogether.
25 I think that you will lose customers. And,

1 therefore, you will lose more money.

2 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you. Thank you
3 very much. To address what our responsibility is,
4 we're the policy -- the policy agency. When you
5 have questions or concerns, like you're addressing
6 about fumes, et cetera, I am going to give out a
7 memo that I have written for you on my opinion on
8 what's going on currently. And on it it has the
9 executive director of the MTC, which is the bus
10 company you use, and the Board's phone numbers
11 because those are the people that while we are the
12 policy and overseer, our agency, they're really
13 running the bus company.

14 MS. NANCY MARIGOLD: Another thing I want
15 to point out that a lot of times when I take the bus
16 where a person gets on and refuses to pay, and the
17 bus driver does not do anything about it, and they
18 get a free ride. That hurts all of us who do pay.

19 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Right, absolutely.
20 Every time someone doesn't pay, someone else has to.
21 Absolutely. I couldn't agree more with that. Joyce
22 Konak.

23 MS. JOYCE KONAK: Well, MTC has got a real
24 good bus company. I pay \$32 now for a bus card.
25 And if it raises, it will be \$40. I've just gotten

1 back to work. I was unemployed for nine months.
2 The thing that really bugs me is I'm paying \$32 for
3 a bus card and the next person gets on and he gets
4 on for nothing. If you have to have a raise, I
5 would really like to see an improvement on the No. 5
6 line and the No. 21 line. There is so much drunks
7 on those lines at night between 9 o'clock and 10
8 o'clock it's just horrible to ride the bus. Thank
9 you.

10 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you very much.
11 I believe the next person is Elaine Weber.

12 MS. ELAINE WEBER: Elaine Weber here. I
13 pay \$42 a month, and I work out on 77th in
14 Bloomington, and the buses out there run once an
15 hour. And I work from 7:15 in the morning until
16 4:10 in the afternoon. And like my friend here,
17 Joyce, getting on the bus, you take and see people
18 that refuse to pay the fares. And you're sitting
19 there, and it's very irritating to me that we have
20 to pay the fares. Also, I have one question. After
21 the last raise here, was there more people riding
22 the bus or did the ridership go up or go down?

23 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: That's a very good
24 question. And generally after an increase ridership
25 goes down. So that's why it's hard when you make

1 comparatives. And then you say we're about 18
2 months from the last increase and ridership is
3 quote, up, but not necessarily up over the lost
4 period. I'll ask the staff person who can give you
5 those figures. That's a very good question. Thank
6 you.

7 MR. LEN SIMICH: I think Boardmember Campo
8 summed it up very well. Every time you have an
9 increase, you are more than likely going to have a
10 decrease in ridership. What we have done through
11 our projections is show that where the fare
12 structure, the ones that I covered this evening, if
13 we were to raise on additional six to six and a half
14 million dollars in revenue. But there is a cost
15 involved, and that cost would be approximately four
16 million in passenger trips less that would operate
17 in 1993 versus 1992. So there would be that loss.

18 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I would like to ask
19 you a question. After the last fare increase, are
20 we yet back to where we were prior to that increase?

21 MR. LEN SIMICH: I don't believe so.
22 We're going to have to ask somebody who was here at
23 that time. Judy or Greg, can you answer that?

24 MS. JUDY HOLLANDER: I believe the
25 ridership finally after 18 months is up to where it

1 was before the increase, but it took that long.

2 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: And what, of course,
3 concerns me is the revenue, the revenue aspect.
4 Thank you. Pam Wise.

5 MS. PAM WISE: Yes. I thank you for
6 listening to us this evening. I just would like to
7 encourage you to -- it seems to me that every time
8 there's -- because I use Metro Mobility. I started
9 using Metro Mobility years ago when it was 60 cents
10 to ride Metro Mobility. And it seems like every
11 time you raise the bus fares, it trickles down to
12 Metro Mobility fares. I know for a fact that some
13 of my friends at Seward Square are not riding Metro
14 Mobility very much anymore because they can't afford
15 what is already here.

16 You talk about needing to go increase the
17 fares, but you don't understand the fact that Metro
18 Mobility fares are tied directly to what the buses
19 concerned with. And the Americans With Disabilities
20 Act has been used to punish us by saying that
21 they're allowed to -- you're allowed to charge us
22 twice as much as whatever the regular route fare is.

23 The ridership is down with Metro Mobility.
24 People cannot afford this. You act as if the bus is
25 the only thing we have to pay for. We have to pay

1 for rent and food, and there's no way I'm going to
2 -- I'm in a mental health program, and the hours of
3 that program, there's no way that I can get off of
4 being there until at least 4, and so I'm forced to
5 pay the peak fare every day.

6 It seems that the only answers you people seem
7 to have to any of the problems that you may be
8 having, and I'm not saying that you're not, but the
9 only answer you seem to be able to come up with is
10 raising fares. There's got to be a better solution.
11 And I would suggest that before you think about
12 raising the fares again, that you try other options.

13 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I think we need
14 to make it clear here that there is no fare increase
15 proposed for Metro Mobility. And, in fact, the
16 fares will actually go down for those who previously
17 crossed the zone charge. It will go down 50 cents
18 from \$2.70 to \$2.20.

19 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: But you're right.
20 That does leave the option available.

21 MS. PAM WISE: That leaves the option
22 available, and it opens the door. I don't think
23 we've been -- up until this evening I don't think we
24 really have been listened to very well by the people
25 that are in charge.

1 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Well, one of our
2 responsibilities as Regional Transit Board members
3 is to lobby the legislature and to get the funds for
4 Metro Mobility. And it has been no secret that
5 we've had cuts in our funds, and it's of great
6 concern to us because we're directly responsible.
7 And I don't think we can put any of the money into
8 that, can we, Mike?

9 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: No.

10 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: It has to come
11 straight from the legislature. So in your concern,
12 we share that concern. We go to the legislature and
13 say, Would you give us money for Metro Mobility?
14 They say, Here is X amount, or, No. And your
15 concern, although you've often been told to call
16 your legislature.

17 MS. PAM WISE: I have called them.

18 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I don't mean you. I
19 mean people in general. I think that's a good idea,
20 and I think that where you should call is your
21 leadership. You see the way the house and the
22 senate work is really majority leaders dictate the
23 policy. So when you call your legislator, if your
24 legislator in the senate is not Roger Moe, which is
25 not in this district, he is the person. He is the

1 majority leader. He really does set the policy.
2 And what the leader does is set the tone and
3 prioritize those. And the leader oversees the
4 budgets.

5 So my suggestion would be, and Brian and I have
6 talked about this before, not to just call your own
7 personal legislator, but to call the decision-maker.
8 And there are four. There are two minority and then
9 there are two majority. Of course, the majority
10 outweighs the minority, and literally does the
11 policy. And we're very lucky that we have
12 Representative Dee Long who represents Minneapolis.
13 And I don't think it's this district, but I might be
14 wrong.

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: No, it's not.

16 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: She's the Speaker of
17 the House. She sets the policy. Those are really
18 the decisions in her court. And my suggestion to you
19 and to your friends. We go there, we ask for money.
20 They are the people that set the policy. It's true
21 you have 201. But that's not really true because
22 it's the leadership that makes the policy. So my
23 suggestion would be to call Representative Long in
24 the house, and in the senate to call Senator Roger
25 Moe because they are the leadership, and the

1 decision is more in their court than in anyone
2 else's. So thank you very, very much. Sandy
3 Altman.

4 MS. SANDY ALTMAN: I've been listening
5 what I have to pay for express by MTC. Like Pam, I
6 would again like to say that I am glad our fares are
7 going down. I would just add that if they are, then
8 we raise in the future, like Pam said, that opens
9 the door. Just remember that there are disabled
10 people that are already spending between 30 and 40
11 dollars a week just on programs, like Monday through
12 Sunday with work and evening meetings and one week
13 just have bills. And I really think that people
14 when we increase Metro Mobility like we have, we've
15 not been on listened to, like Pam said. She has to
16 pay that peak fare. And one day goes down, let's
17 leave them down so that our rides can get up there
18 until more people can use Metro and get a job and go
19 to school and get out into society instead of
20 saying, I can't ride because I can't afford that.
21 Like Pam said, I think there should be other ways to
22 cut before prices are increased at all.

23 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you very much.
24 Is there anyone else that would like to testify?

25 MR. RONALD SHELK (ph): My name is Ronald

1 Shelk. I was just curious was the budget balanced
2 before they had accessible on-line transit? I know
3 it's after --

4 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Is part of the
5 problem the cost added of making buses accessible?
6 Is that what you're saying?

7 MR. RONALD SHELK: Yes. Is making buses
8 accessible --

9 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: An extra cost?

10 MR. RONALD SHELK: Yes.

11 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: No. Frankly,
12 there are two types of money, and this is kind of
13 confusing. We have what's called capital money and
14 then operating money. Capital money we get from a
15 different account. We're not allowed to use that
16 money for anything other than building like bus
17 shelters and buying buses, buses that would have
18 lifts.

19 And then you have a different account which is
20 your operating. That's what you use to pay your
21 mechanics and your bus drivers. You can't change
22 between accounts.

23 Also, it's now law, federal law, that all new
24 buses are required to be accessible. And that's the
25 buses that we have now. We have about 10 percent of

1 our buses are accessible. And those were all
2 required to be accessible under federal law.

3 MR. RONALD SHELK: So, in other words,
4 that did not unbalance --

5 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: No, it wouldn't
6 have affected. Any money spent on lifts on buses
7 could not have been spent on operating the system
8 nor money put into shelters or transit hubs. It's
9 different funds.

10 MS. JUDY HOLLANDER: Madam Chair, I think
11 it is also important to realize that making buses
12 accessible makes more Metro Mobility services
13 available and can ultimately reduce the cost of
14 providing Metro Mobility.

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: So there would
16 be more rides?

17 MS. JUDY HOLLANDER: Even though the
18 dollars are separate, the two really are very
19 complementary. And for those who are able to pay
20 for that, which isn't everybody, you can bring down
21 the cost of Metro Mobility and make more Metro
22 Mobility rides. So they work well together.

23 MR. BRIAN ALTMAN: My is name Brian
24 Altman. And, first of all, I would like to thank
25 you for having these hearings in different areas of

1 the Twin City area so that we can have smaller
2 groups to discuss the issue. I really appreciate
3 that.

4 Second thing. Two things. Number one is that
5 I'm a little bit confused. I believe you said that
6 there was nothing proposed for Metro mobility at
7 this time. And yet on this sheet it says, "Proposed
8 Metro Mobility fares."

9 Now what I need to know, is this proposal going
10 in January 1st along with the regular rates or is it
11 in fact that nothing is going to be done, Mike, in
12 your letter I have received until July of 1993?

13 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: First of all,
14 the proposal is to reduce the fare not to increase
15 it. That's why it says "Proposed." The proposal
16 isn't to increase it. The proposal is to decrease
17 it from \$2.70 to \$2.20. It would change, but it
18 would only change by going down not by going up.
19 And because we said there might be changes in the
20 program in July '93, that doesn't mean the fares are
21 going to be increased or even proposed to be
22 increased in July '93. That might be something --
23 something like that, I suppose, could happen any
24 time. But I'm not saying that's going to happen.

25 MR. BRIAN ALTMAN: What changes are you

1 talking about in '93?

2 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: We don't know
3 yet, and right now it's being discussed. We don't
4 have enough money. The legislature -- as was said,
5 the legislature has put providers with \$27 million
6 to run the program. They can put a cap on that.
7 They said, You can't spend any more money. If all
8 of you sudden you became a millionaire and gave us a
9 million dollars, we couldn't spend it on that
10 program because the legislature has put a cap on it.

11 So in order to provide the same number of
12 rides, we've got to make it more efficient, and to
13 make it more efficient we're taking a look right now
14 at the program. There may not be any changes. But
15 we're looking at -- people were concerned that
16 changes would be made without their having an
17 opportunity to know about it or see it.

18 What we've said is there won't be any changes
19 at least until July of '93. So that's to give you a
20 sense. People were concerned that it was going to
21 happen right away because we did announce that we
22 didn't get from the legislature the money that we
23 needed. We went over there and asked for \$5
24 million. They didn't give us five. They gave us a
25 million and a half. Well, the bottom line is that

1 we've got to learn how to become more efficient.
2 We've got to make that money stretch farther. So
3 that's what we're working on right now.

4 MR. BRIAN ALTMAN: So what you're saying
5 is we will be informed of any changes and have the
6 opportunity to come to a hearing before?

7 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Yes. There will
8 be public hearings and notices, and there will be
9 ample opportunity for people to respond to any
10 proposed changes.

11 MR. BRIAN ALTMAN: Okay. And the last
12 comment I have, a concern that has been shared with
13 me, especially for people living in some of the
14 outlying suburbs. They're increasingly being denied
15 rides when they put ride orders in. And this is a
16 real concern for those people who choose to live in
17 the suburbs. And many would to have use Metro
18 Mobility, and my concern is that for them these
19 people are going to be cut out completely. It's
20 really frustrating for them because I'm sure I don't
21 need to tell anyone here that transportation for
22 people with disabilities is absolutely key to every
23 facet of our lives. And you're talking about -- and
24 this is a very critical, critical issue. And, you
25 know, I just need you to -- and I hope all of you do

1 realize that it does have a direct effect on our
2 personal lives.

3 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you.

4 MS. SANDY ALTMAN: I have a comment for
5 Mike. Mike, I'm wondering if you're looking for a
6 way to improve the service or looking for ways to
7 cut here and there and everywhere? Why don't you
8 ask some of the drivers like Ebenezer, Handicab
9 drivers, Metro riders, ask the drivers who are out
10 there daily to come be on the board and say, You're
11 out there, where can we cut? What can we do?

12 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: It's a good
13 suggestion.

14 MS. SANDY ALTMAN: I'm wondering why we
15 don't go to the floors instead of just for getting
16 in our mind cut. Why don't go to the source, the
17 drivers?

18 MS. PAM WISE: And why don't you take some
19 of your colleagues on the Regional Transit Board and
20 ride with the Metro Mobility drivers and see what
21 they put up with in a day? And I bet you would
22 change your mind in 10 seconds if you saw how some
23 of the people kept them waiting and some of the
24 things that went on. But you don't do that because
25 you've got your mind set on these fare increases.

1 And it's getting very maddening and upsetting. And
2 I hope that you will, before you consider doing this
3 anymore, that you will please go out there and ride
4 with the drivers or talk to the drivers or talk to
5 people that frequently ride Metro Mobility and get
6 their ideas and start using them.

7 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you.

8 MS. SANDY ALTMAN: And like the MTC
9 people, we have people on Metro that don't pay.
10 They say, We'll pay on the way back, or, We'll pay
11 next week. And I'm wondering why aren't they being
12 looked at and different parts of the program being
13 looked at?

14 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you. I know
15 with Doris being in charge, she is your
16 representative or official representative on our
17 Board, and we do have a committee. And the
18 suggestions that you give tonight are something that
19 she does bring back to the committee. As you know,
20 we do have a committee just addressing this very
21 issue.

22 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: As a matter of fact,
23 we've had several consultants talking to us about
24 the program, and I've made a suggestion to them. I
25 said, Look, talk to the some of the drivers.

1 They're the people out on the front lines. They can
2 give you firsthand experience, information. I've
3 seen it because I ride Metro Mobility quite a bit
4 myself. Maybe not as often as you do, but I do
5 ride. And I know that it's a difficult job, and
6 they put up with a lot of difficult different
7 things, and it's really hard. I think the drivers
8 do a spectacular job under very difficult conditions
9 many times. So it's a kind of --

10 MS. PAM WISE Yes, but I don't think
11 they're being rewarded for what they do. And I
12 really feel that unless the Regional Transit Board
13 as a whole starts listening more, that you're going
14 to have a mutiny of people not -- providers not
15 wanting to sign contracts. Some of these things
16 that are so difficult happen, they tell me, because
17 you don't listen to them, that you don't listen to
18 anybody, that you've got your minds closed and made
19 up.

20 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: I think you should
21 understand, though, that we have tried very hard to
22 get the legislature to fully fund this program. And
23 it comes down to this: The legislature has not
24 fully funded the program. So we're faced with a
25 shortage of funds. There is nothing we would like

1 more than to be able to fully fund this program and
2 to let it operate the way ought to, the way it was
3 initially designed, where people who lived out in
4 far areas can get rides as easily as people who live
5 in the central city. That's not happening now. I
6 know that's not happening now. It's very unfair,
7 and it's the kind of thing that only the legislature
8 is going to be able to help us with because they're
9 the ones that control the money.

10 And calling the legislature. I know it sounds
11 like you've heard it many times before. You have.
12 I have. But it does help when they know that there
13 are people who live in my district really depend on
14 this service, they really want this service, we've
15 got to fund it. Sometimes three phone calls sound
16 like a mandate for a legislator. Afterall, they
17 don't hear from that many people.

18 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you.

19 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: I have a question.
20 Does the city of Minneapolis and St. Paul contribute
21 anything to transportation?

22 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: No.

23 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: I think that ought to
24 be seriously looked at. If these people can tax me
25 for living in Minneapolis to buy a sports center,

1 the Target Center, they can say, Well, help pay for
2 my ride to work. Because I just noticed here the
3 fare revenue, of course, I pay to go to work and
4 come back. I buy a bus card. That's going to be
5 \$40. I see property tax. I own a home. My
6 property tax keeps going up. I just added those two
7 up. Do you know I am paying 101.5 percent of this
8 little pie? The pie itself totals 119 percent.

9 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Those are
10 dollars.

11 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: Still, I don't like
12 paying that much. I'm paying this much to ride the
13 bus.

14 MS. NANCY MARIGOLD: Already. That's not
15 including the increased fares.

16 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Actually, you're
17 actually paying the whole thing. One way or another
18 you're paying the whole thing.

19 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: We would love the city
20 to help us.

21 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: I think the city
22 should. Why don't they?

23 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Because we're not set
24 up that way. We're really controlled by the state,
25 and we are dependent on state funds. If you have a

1 heart attack --

2 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: The city depends on
3 us getting into town.

4 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: If I can, the
5 city has a property tax, and they have a mil levy
6 which they control. We have a mil levy too. We're
7 allowed two mils by the legislature. One mil
8 translates into approximately \$30 million, about 30
9 million. So we're given those two mils. And that's
10 all we can tax. We have can't tax above that.

11 Now, unfortunately in our case, and it's the
12 city's case too, it used to be that that tax went up
13 because people's property valuation went up every
14 year. Twenty-five percent of the property was
15 reevaluated. We would get the benefit of that extra
16 revenue. We don't now because frankly properties
17 values have leveled off. They're about two percent
18 now growth, but there's no default. So that revenue
19 is actually dropping.

20 The problem is the city -- and I'm not here to
21 defend the city, but I would tell you that all the
22 municipalities are facing the same thing. They have
23 budgets. They have services that they're trying to
24 provide, and likewise, they don't have enough money
25 to pay for their services. And they've had the same

1 thing happen to them by the legislature. The
2 legislature used to give them money like they used
3 to give us more money, and then they've cut out that
4 support for the cities. And so the cities
5 unfortunately have had to do exactly what we're
6 doing, and they have to raise taxes and cut
7 services.

8 And primarily because those two, the black and
9 the white ones, the federal and the state government
10 used to be a lot bigger to both us and the cities.
11 I mean, a lot bigger. And over the last two decades
12 that has just really gotten smaller and smaller and
13 smaller and smaller and smaller every year. So more
14 money has had to come from both the passengers and
15 the property tax. And I'm sure that's true in
16 municipal services as well. And we have a mayor
17 here of a city, not of Minneapolis, of a community
18 in northern Ramsey County, who has got the same
19 experiences.

20 And it's frustrating, and frankly we take the
21 money from whoever would give it to us because we
22 don't like being faced with the option of having to
23 cut services to people because unfortunately that
24 hurts people with little -- the first services then
25 of getting cut are weekends and evening. The people

1 who use the bus on weekends and evening are usually
2 those people who have got a job that they don't have
3 a lot of options. And if they could drive, they
4 probably would. But they probably can't afford a
5 car. So we cut out that bus service, and that's
6 usually the first that's cut when you don't have
7 enough money. You're really taking a job away from
8 somebody. And that's a tough choice for us to have
9 make. It really is. It's not a choice, believe me,
10 anybody up here enjoys or even enjoys thinking
11 about. And we share your frustration just simply
12 because it's not a task -- believe me, we would
13 rather hold hearings to talk about how to spend
14 money.

15 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: That's more fun.

16 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: And adding new
17 service.

18 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: I really do think
19 they should kick in. Again, maybe I'm whipping a
20 dead horse, but I didn't vote for spending money on
21 the Target Center. I mean, that's very well and
22 good. But every time I buy something downtown or
23 anywhere in the Minneapolis downtown area, I'm
24 paying for that Target Center. I would rather see
25 that little bit of money that I'm throwing into the

1 Target Center go for my bus, go for the MTC.

2 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: We would take
3 whatever we got.

4 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: We would take whatever
5 the -- call your city council person and let them
6 know that. There are several people with hands up.
7 Greg is our executive director. He would like to
8 speak.

9 MR. GREG ANDREWS: Maryann, I would just
10 like to add, included in this property tax column
11 which is half of this pie is not only what
12 homeowners or renters pay but also the businesses in
13 the downtown Minneapolis, and the Target Center is a
14 private business. They have to pay property taxes
15 as you and I pay property tax, but I think your
16 point still is that there's government buildings and
17 other government -- that don't contribute to this
18 issue. But those businesses, your restaurants and
19 everything, pay taxes.

20 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: The lady in the front.
21 Could you give your name please for the record.

22 MS. PAM SPENT: I'm Pam Spent. I have
23 been listening, and you have seen me at meetings.
24 And I have been handicapped. How could I help you
25 get more money?

1 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I think one of the
2 things you're asking is how can you help so that we
3 can provide more funds for your programs.

4 MS. PAM SPENT: How can I be of help?

5 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Well, and we go back.
6 Brian and I have talked about this. Brian is one of
7 my neighbors. I go back to telling you what I do
8 professionally in my other life is I'm a lobbyist,
9 and I as a paid lobbyist for different things that I
10 might work on, one of the things that you do when
11 you're lobbying is you focus on who is the
12 decision-maker and who sets the stage. And that's
13 why I gave you the names of the majority leaders
14 because they set the stage. They set the focus.
15 They decide on the priority of their caucus. In
16 other words, last year they made health care the
17 highest priority.

18 Now, if you want Metro Mobility, which we do,
19 to be a very high priority, you lobby them. You go
20 there. You ask to talk to them. You visit with
21 them. It's very difficult to say to you, and Brian
22 and I have talked. And I don't like it when I hear
23 our staff saying to you, Go to the legislature and
24 lobby the legislators. There's 200 of them. You're
25 just not going to do it.

1 But the people that really make the decision --
2 yes, your legislator needs to always hear from you.
3 But the real decision-makers are the leaders of the
4 majority. The minority are lovely people, but they
5 alone cannot -- I mean, you could have the entire
6 minority vote 100 percent to increase us by \$10
7 million, and it goes absolutely nowhere unless the
8 majority also votes. So to call first your majority
9 leader because they set the tone. Then call your
10 minority to make sure that you have them on board
11 also. That's how the professionals do it.

12 MS. PAM SPENT: I've tried to talk to Dee
13 Long. She didn't want to talk.

14 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: That's very nice. My
15 suggestion is you go up there again. If you sit in
16 their office long enough, they are going to
17 eventually talk to you. That's the way it's done.
18 That's the way lobbyists work. That's what we do.
19 All of us. We hang out. They get sick of seeing
20 us, and they eventually will talk to us. So I
21 respect and appreciate what you're saying. All I
22 can tell you is what we do as professionals. We
23 just go and make absolute pests of ourselves until
24 they, we hope, give us what we want so they can get
25 rid of us. Now the mayor, he's saying, Oh, my God,

1 I'm glad she's not lobbying me.

2 MS. PAM WISE: I guess I would second what
3 Pam said, because I tried to talk to Dee Long's
4 staff over the phone, and they had already made up
5 their mind. And it wasn't going our way very well.

6 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: The legislative
7 agendas are being set right now as we speak. The
8 legislators will convene again in January after the
9 election and after the holidays. So my suggestion
10 is if you wait -- my suggestion is to organize your
11 community. And if you wait until January or
12 February or March, you're going to be told, That
13 didn't get prioritized this year; we didn't know
14 that you needed more funds. But if you start your
15 lobbying effort now, it's very difficult for them in
16 January, February, or March to say, Why didn't you
17 let us know that so we could have prioritized that
18 in the budget?

19 And it does not go over very well that I tell
20 you this by the way. I received a personal note
21 from Dee Long telling me how much it was
22 appreciated, how happy she was to have my input.

23 However, I'm telling you that's how it's done.
24 That's how a professional does it, and that's how
25 you have to do it. Brian and I have talked

1 extensively about this.

2 We want to provide Metro Mobility. We have no
3 choice but to go to the legislature and ask. When
4 you ask, you get a heck of a lot more than we do as
5 professionals because you're seen as constituents
6 even though you don't live in Dee Long's district.
7 When your legislator knows you're up there speaking
8 to their leader, your legislator then can actually
9 say to their leaders who are making the policy,
10 Gosh, I've got 10 people in my district and can't we
11 do something? I mean, it's a twofold process.

12 And there are really four people in charge,
13 then there's the governor if you want to name five.
14 But the governor has never vetoed the Metro Mobility
15 funds. He even put in the last budget to restore
16 them. But you can cover that base also. You never
17 let anyone think you're absent. But it's your
18 leadership. I can't give you better advice than
19 that. I'm not telling you to go talk to 201. I'm
20 telling you don't waste your time. Focus and camp
21 out there until they listen to you. Andy, is that
22 your name?

23 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I would just like to
24 listen a little bit more, but I came in late. Could
25 you just introduce yourself real quickly?

1 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I'm Maryann Campo. I
2 represent this district on the Regional Transit
3 Board, and I have several other Board members here.
4 We are conducting these public hearings because of a
5 budget problem that we have with the MTC. And while
6 our ridership is going up, our revenues are going
7 down because, as many of you have pointed out, our
8 paid fares are not going up. So the newspapers can
9 keep talking about how great it's going, but we're
10 here tonight to tell you that we have a problem and
11 we possibly need more funds.

12 And I'm going to ask the other people that I'm
13 working with to introduce themselves, and I will ask
14 our staff to introduce themselves again. Several of
15 you came in after we went through introductions.
16 And any of you can read whatever you want now into
17 the public record.

18 We have not voted on this yet. I have
19 something I'm going to give you letting you know
20 where I'm leaning in my decision. And my decision
21 right now is not to vote for this, not to vote until
22 I'm absolutely convinced that there is no other
23 alternative. And I am not convinced of this, not at
24 this time.

25 MR. ANDY PLETTA: Did you give a detailed

1 explanation of the budgetary problem? I mean, at
2 some point somebody said, Oh, we're going to have to
3 raise fares. You don't have enough money to do
4 what, for example?

5 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Continue the service
6 at the current level with our current funding, which
7 is when you look at this you see where you get your
8 funds from. And our fare box has gone down. And
9 we're regulated by the state to have a certain
10 amount of our funds come from our fare boxes.

11 MR. ANDY PLETTA: Right. What I'm saying
12 is there's no indication on this as to expenditures
13 because what you're showing here is route funding.
14 I guess what I would ask is, do you have a problem
15 with paying salaries for drivers or is it buying
16 fuel for buses?

17 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Both. It's a
18 combination. It's all of the above. We are now in
19 arbitration. We don't have a union contract signed
20 yet. We're in arbitration. Yes, I don't think the
21 drivers necessarily make too much, but we have a
22 question as a Board, and we go on record questioning
23 certain health care packages that we would have
24 liked to have seen consolidated and negotiated.
25 We're a policy board, which means we oversee all the

1 transit. MTC is our biggest provider, and we give
2 them suggestions. We can't force them. They have
3 come to us with this proposal that they have to --
4 we have to. They have a fare increase. You notice
5 they're not here tonight. We are. We're the policy
6 group.

7 MR. ANDY PLETTA: There's no one from the
8 MTC here tonight?

9 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Not to my knowledge.
10 No, no.

11 MR. RONALD SHELK: Why is that?

12 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: You would have to call
13 there. I'm going to give you a memo that I made up
14 today telling you who their board members are and
15 who their executive director is. You've been
16 introduced to Greg, our executive director. Our
17 executive director is here. We're really, I want to
18 say, a volunteer board in the sense that we do get
19 paid a certain per diem, but we are volunteers. We
20 have other jobs. So the board is not our primary
21 job. Neither are their board members, but they do
22 have an executive director on staff where it is
23 their job.

24 MR. BRIAN ALTMAN: Have they been invited
25 as to any of these hearings?

1 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: To my knowledge they
2 have been informed of all these hearings, and
3 they've left us out there to say to you you might
4 have to have a fare increase. This is a memo from
5 me that I asked Judy to help me make up today on my
6 opinions of what's going on.

7 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I don't mean to belabor
8 this point.

9 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Please put your name
10 in for the record.

11 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I'm Andy Pletta. I live
12 in New Brighton. Are you saying that the MTC has
13 proposed the fare increase?

14 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Yes.

15 MR. ANDY PLETTA: They have?

16 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Yes. I have staff
17 people here that I'm sure are eager to answer that
18 and eager to answer your question further than I
19 already have.

20 MR. LEN SIMICH: I didn't hear your
21 question.

22 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I guess the question I
23 have is based in two parts. Number one, who
24 specifically wants the fares to go up? And part B.
25 is, what exactly happened with the MTC's budget that

1 got someone to come to the point to say, We need to
2 consider raising the fare?

3 MR. LEN SIMICH: To your first question, I
4 don't know if there's anybody in this room that
5 would say they want to see the fares go up, and
6 representing transit, transit across the whole metro
7 area, that's a last resort that we don't want to
8 see.

9 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I'm not asking who wants
10 it. I'm saying who's proposing the fare increase?

11 MR. LEN SIMICH: Whose proposal. That is
12 the Regional Transit Board staff taking into account
13 the budget that has been delivered to the RTB from
14 the MTC from all the metro area providers of regular
15 route transit. What we do is collectively negotiate
16 all the budgets. We see where the bottom line
17 dollar limit is going to be, and then we look at the
18 anticipated revenues through the fare box, we look
19 and see what we can anticipate through the property
20 tax, what we will be receiving through federal and
21 state resources. Then we have to come to a
22 determination. They don't balance. How do we
23 balance them? Do we cut service? Do we raise
24 fares? Do we do a combination of both? And that's
25 what we're looking at.

1 Right now the Board has policies on service.
2 We don't like to take what we consider productive
3 service that's meeting certain performance criteria
4 off the streets because that is rides that people
5 are depending upon.

6 So your second alternative then is really
7 raising fares, getting separate appropriations and
8 so forth. And what we're doing is we're working on
9 parallel tracks right now because we're going
10 through the budgetary process. But if we come up
11 short on January 1, we can't then say we need to go
12 with a fare increase because then we're playing
13 catch-up.

14 So what we're doing is doing both tracks at the
15 same time. And that's why you see everything in
16 front of you is proposed because down the road here
17 where the Board has to make a decision, everything
18 should start to become a little more clear, and
19 we'll know where that bottom line is. We're trying
20 to hit a moving target. And we're estimating we can
21 be anywhere from \$3 million short to \$7 million
22 short. We really don't know because, as Boardmember
23 Campo stated, the labor contract right now is in
24 binding arbitration. We don't know what that
25 settlement is going to be, and that is binding. So

1 we don't know that.

2 Funds have been requested from the federal
3 government to help offset some of our costs on
4 Interstate 394, the new sane lane or the HOV lane is
5 there. We're putting on additional bus services for
6 that project. An application to the federal
7 government is going to be made to cover some of
8 those expenses. Right now that's not a given.
9 There are other things. I can tick off a number of
10 them that are really questionable right now. But
11 unless we start moving towards trying to balance
12 this budget at this time, if we come in January and
13 say we need a fare increase, that doesn't give
14 anybody enough time to really react.

15 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I think you're making a
16 good effort, but I work for a tube bending
17 manufacturer. I think you're missing a really
18 important third track which is lowering costs. If
19 we bid on a job for a company, and they want
20 such-and-such a product at such-and-such a price on
21 a certain date, and if we gave them two
22 alternatives, either to reduce our service to them
23 or to raise the price; they would come back and say
24 to us, Well, are you incapable of lowering your
25 manufacturing costs? And we would say either we are

1 or we aren't. If we're incapable of lowering our
2 costs, they would go elsewhere.

3 MR. LEN SIMICH: And you make a good
4 point. That's a part in the negotiations between
5 the MTC and their labor union. They're trying to
6 get to that point, bringing up more part-time
7 drivers and so forth.

8 From our standpoint we have to kind of play the
9 cards we're dealt. One of the things we're dealt is
10 there's a legislatively mandated area that MTC
11 provides the service unless it's not meeting those
12 certain performance criteria that I mentioned
13 earlier. So regardless of when you talk about
14 getting into privatization, bringing in others that
15 could provide the service, we can't do that.

16 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I'll give you a specific
17 example. I notice very often that during rush hour,
18 for example, the No. 6 bus in Minneapolis, people
19 are very often standing up. They're paying a
20 rush-hour fare, and they get to stand up. And then
21 if you ride the buses at 11 or 12 o'clock at night,
22 you could ride the No. 4 from downtown Minneapolis
23 to Apache Plaza, and there may be only two or three
24 people on the bus.

25 I wonder doesn't that represent a significant

1 waste in terms of resources and fuel to drive a
2 full-sized bus for three people who are going to
3 ride that bus? And I think we ought to say that
4 we're either going to raise the fare or not run that
5 bus -- leaves out the option of having a smaller
6 vehicle that can transport those people where they
7 need to get to at a cost that you people can find
8 affordable.

9 MR. LEN SIMICH: You make a good point. A
10 lot is tied into the labor union. Because when you
11 mentioned earlier in the peak times, many of the
12 buses you see on the road are only needed for a
13 short segment of the day, and that's to handle that
14 work trip. However, there are agreements with the
15 drivers where there's a minimum -- for somebody to
16 work just as a professional work two hours a day, it
17 doesn't work. There's like a four-hour minimum and
18 so forth. So it's very expensive to provide those
19 few trips during the peak. That's why you see peak
20 express surcharges because what we're trying to do
21 is cover some of those costs.

22 Now, when you're saying the services in the
23 evening. There's other criteria. There's a
24 transit-dependent market out there that one of our
25 jobs is really to service that transit-dependent

1 market as well as if you have somebody who's
2 employed for eight hours, that shift can be extended
3 into the evening, where the additional cost isn't as
4 great as putting on for a short segment of the day.
5 I mean, it gets very complicated, but it's all tied
6 into different labor agreements and the way to
7 employ staff.

8 MR. ANDY PLETTA: You're somewhat
9 restrained now. But to give an example, if I had
10 been running the MTC 10 years ago, I would have
11 said, Okay, we only need large buses during rush
12 hour. We're going to buy a certain number of large
13 buses. And if we only need vans or half-sized buses
14 like on the No. 23 which I came down on, then we'll
15 buy those and those will be dedicated for certain
16 routes at certain times.

17 And it seems to me that -- I mean, my attitude
18 is basically very dependent on the kind of work that
19 I do for a living. We're dependent on our
20 customers, and we have don't have a luxury of
21 taxpayer funding or government funding. And that
22 kind of situation forces us to really clear thinking
23 on how you get things done. It seems to me that
24 there's a lot of resources that are just being
25 wasted. I really think so. And to say we're going

1 to try to meet a budget that includes this amount of
2 waste on fuel and people on who knows what schedule,
3 I think it's asking the wrong question. I think the
4 correct question is to say, What is the best use of
5 resources at the lowest cost to achieve what we want
6 to do? Rather than to say we're going to cut
7 service or raise fares.

8 MR. LEN SIMICH: Right, and I'm not saying
9 we're not. What we're doing is looking at the
10 entire package. But, again, to get back to my
11 earlier point, 1993 isn't that far off, and we can't
12 wait until the last minute. All things are being
13 analyzed, all things will be laid in front of the
14 Board, and the Board will have to make some of those
15 tough decisions.

16 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you. Thank you.

17 MS. JUDY HOLLANDER: Maryann, I think one
18 of the earlier things, in a couple weeks you'll see
19 notices for high-subsidy hearings, and in those
20 cases we will be looking at routes which are costing
21 more than the performance standards and to determine
22 if they can be provided by a different mode of
23 transportation or eliminated. So it's exactly the
24 kinds of things you've suggested are on the books
25 and will be discussed over the next couple of weeks.

1 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: Judy, isn't that
2 exactly how that B line was formed in Bloomington
3 and Edina? There were a couple of lines that were
4 both very inefficient, and they were consolidated
5 into one line which is now working quite well.
6 There was some disruption for people because the
7 buses no longer go right by their house, you might
8 have to walk a couple blocks. But it did make it
9 possible to provide service to all of that area
10 where we were faced with having to cut it out.

11 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: But in that area,
12 that's not part of our MTC area. That's part of our
13 opt-out community where there's more flexibility.
14 The opt-out are private providers, and the MTC is
15 the largest public provider. And that's why I gave
16 you this memo because I strongly share a lot of your
17 sentiments. And I would like you to express those
18 sentiments to the MTC. We give them direction. We
19 have staff here. We're trying to work. We express
20 your point of view. We would like to see more
21 consolidation.

22 And when we run up against union contracts,
23 we're very limited in what we can do. And they are
24 very limited also, but I think they need to hear
25 your opinion. And that's why I gave you the names

1 of all the Board members. Again, as I say, they're
2 more difficult to reach in the daytimes because they
3 have job job also. But you do have the executive
4 management which are full-time employees of the MTC.
5 And, in fact, if you would like more of these, if
6 you would like to pass them out to friends and
7 neighbors, I brought about 50, and I would be very
8 happy to give them to you. Thank you.

9 MS. PAM WISE: May I take a few?

10 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Absolutely, as many as
11 you want, because these are the people that you have
12 to make your impact on.

13 MS. JANICE DIETZ: I have a couple more
14 questions.

15 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Sure.

16 MS. JANICE DIETZ: I know that there are
17 companies in the Minneapolis area that used to give
18 discounts when you bought your -- like Hennepin
19 County and a couple other places used to give
20 discounts when you bought -- if you were an employee
21 when you bought your bus card through them. But
22 when they had the last raise, that was all
23 eliminated. Was that because of the companies or
24 was that a bus -- an MTC proposal that the discounts
25 are now eliminated?

1 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I'm not sure. I would
2 like to ask the staff to address that.

3 MS. JANICE DIETZ: That's one question.
4 Can you answer it? And I'll ask you another one.

5 MR. LEN SIMICH: Under the last fare
6 proposal, that was one of the areas that was
7 eliminated. Some companies just passed off the
8 discount that was provided by the MTC at that time.
9 Some other companies matched it or provided
10 additional reductions. The MTC still in some areas
11 has a discount program. It's not as extensive as
12 you see to date -- or in the past, I should say.
13 But that was part of it. It was eliminated, again,
14 because of budgetary considerations.

15 MS. JOYCE KONAK: The other thing, I would
16 like to know what other alternatives have been
17 thought of other than raising the price? Now, I
18 know you were saying that they're in negotiations
19 with the union, and they've got their expenses that
20 have to be paid. What other -- it's like going back
21 to what he's saying. What else is being even
22 thought of as an alternative to raising the price?

23 MR. TOM SATHER: What we've done is
24 package a line. The region asks the MTC to submit a
25 budget. That was, I think, about three to five

1 percent in operating dollars less than 1992's.
2 Because as we hit our revenue forecast from the
3 State Department of Revenue, those were the numbers
4 that we thought would be available realistically to
5 run the MTC for 1993. And in so doing we suggested
6 that they take a very hard look at the expense line,
7 as Andy mentioned, and that they also work to
8 consolidate services where possible, eliminate
9 unproductive and nonprofitable service and that they
10 also try to work diligently to reroute to absorb
11 some of the service that had been cut. That's the
12 process that's going on.

13 We use an analogy that doesn't sound very good,
14 but it's a big ship and it turns slow. It can't
15 stop on a dime and turn right around. There are a
16 lot of things to consider with public transit. And
17 the last thing that you would like to hear would be
18 that on a particular Friday at 4 o'clock when you
19 say, See you later, Mr. Bus Driver, see you on
20 Monday. And he says, No, this is the last run for
21 this baby. That's not the kind of information nor
22 is that how you want to get word of the cut in
23 transit service for your area or your route.

24 So there is a very methodical process that is
25 gone through. We try to make sure that the

1 ridership is, in fact, absorbed either on the
2 adjoining line or an adjacent line, that the times
3 are revised so that the structure can be as
4 profitable as is possible. I'm not saying that
5 we're doing it to generate revenue, but it is to
6 generate revenue. Do you understand what I mean?

7 MS. JANICE DIETZ: What I seem to be
8 hearing is that the MTC isn't willing to change.

9 MR. TOM SATHER: I don't think that's
10 necessarily true. I think that they are, but I
11 think that -- and Andy mentioned. I share with
12 Andy. I own two small businesses, and I know when
13 the customer calls; and I take a lot of those direct
14 calls myself; that the cost of the manufacturing and
15 the distribution, the cost of the product that I'm
16 selling has to be competitive and has to be fair.
17 And my customers tell me that either by placing
18 orders or they don't place orders. It's a pretty
19 simple deal.

20 MR. ANDY PLETTA: The difference there is
21 you do have other options. The MTC does not have to
22 compete against anyone. If they did have to
23 compete, they would have an incredible, powerful
24 incentive to say, We are either going to provide a
25 product and service that people want in a way that

1 they want it or we're going to go out of business.

2 MR. TOM SATHER: I'm not at all
3 suggesting, Andy, that the MTC is razor sharp or on
4 the cutting edge on the expense line or on the
5 service line for that matter. There are problems.
6 But I think that with the help of RTB staff and the
7 input of the passengers, the ridership, you people,
8 that in fact it's getting better.

9 And I'm not sure that up until a few years ago
10 they were being pushed. And I think, Doris, you'll
11 agree that now we're pushing them because the
12 dollars are very tight. It's tight for the Regional
13 Transit Board. We fund other providers not just the
14 MTC. It's tight in the cities. It is tight
15 everywhere. And the first thing that you're going
16 to hear about in the newspaper is another revenue
17 shortfall projection for the state.

18 MS. JOYCE KONAK: Is the union a problem
19 with the MTC moneywise? Are they willing not to cut
20 or decrease their staff? If we have to pay more, is
21 the union not willing to decrease some of their
22 staff, some of their employees?

23 MR. GREG ANDREWS: As I think Len
24 indicated earlier, the MTC has their contract with
25 their union representatives which are about 1,800

1 out of 2,200 employees are union members. That
2 contract expired on May 1st of this year. They have
3 been in contract negotiations even a couple months
4 prior to that, and they are in binding arbitration
5 right now which an independent third party is going
6 to make a decision on what the wage rates will be
7 for next year. As it relates to the staffing, in
8 determination that's the management of the MTC's
9 responsibility not the union's responsibility to
10 staff the agency. I realize that the union --

11 MS. JOYCE KONAK: I don't mean people
12 working in the office. What I'm talking about is
13 Norwest -- I mean, Northwest Airlines employees had
14 to take a pay cut to keep in business. Has that
15 even been considered as an alternative? I mean,
16 what I'm wondering now, is the union so strong in
17 that place that they can't cut people's hours?
18 They've got people that have been there for many
19 years that maybe should not be driving buses anymore
20 that are just waiting out their pension. Should
21 they be pensioned off at 55 or 60 if they've been
22 driving for 20 years? Is this a problem with the
23 union is what I'm concerned about?

24 MR. GREG ANDREWS: Those are all issues
25 that you're pointing out that are part of the

1 negotiation process. The Board itself doesn't get
2 involved in the negotiations. MTC commissioners, as
3 are indicated on the back of that paper --

4 MS. JANICE DIETZ: These are questions I
5 should be --

6 MR. GREG ANDREWS: They are the ones that
7 are responsible for negotiating that contract. I
8 wanted to make one comment that, I think, several
9 speakers addressed, and it was in response to your
10 question, what we're doing.

11 One of the things that the Board encouraged the
12 MTC in their capital budget is to put in place
13 electronic fare boxes. Fare boxes that address, I
14 think, what several speakers said here is that we
15 pay the fare but somebody else doesn't pay the fare.
16 What they're going to be implementing later on this
17 fall is electronic fare boxes which part of the
18 beauty of those is that it requires that everybody
19 pay the fare or else everybody on the bus knows that
20 those people didn't pay the fare. So I think that
21 will at least --

22 (Several people speaking at once.)

23 MR. GREG ANDREWS: The bus driver has to
24 physically look and count the money that's placed
25 into the fare box.

1 MS. NANCY MARIGOLD: They do that already.
2 It doesn't make a difference.

3 MR. GREG ANDREWS: But this would show in
4 big numbers what the person actually paid in there.
5 And right now it's very difficult for bus drivers
6 when a lot of people get on the bus to count the
7 fares.

8 MS. PAM WISE: We'll write a check in 10
9 days or something like that.

10 (Several people speaking at once.)

11 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: We thank you all for
12 your input and would take several more questions
13 from you and see how we can direct them to our
14 staff. You do have a lot of questions that really
15 are the operating company's. They are Mike
16 Christenson's questions and the rest of the staff
17 that's listed.

18 MS. JOYCE KONAK: I just have a closing
19 suggestion. Why don't they lower the prices to get
20 more people to ride? That would generate more
21 money.

22 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: They need money. You
23 have to still run the buses, and they have done
24 that. In fact, that is one of our current concerns,
25 is we have had a lot of promotions and a lot of

1 coupons, we've had a lot of discounts. I mean,
2 we've been doing enormous amounts of that in
3 comparison to the past of being a passive bus
4 company. They have become more aggressive. What's
5 happened is the revenues are down because we do give
6 away so much, and we are trying promotions.

7 MS. JOYCE KONAK: Why don't you put
8 50-cent coupons in the paper instead of a free ride
9 then?

10 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I suggest that you
11 might also suggest that to the MTC because those are
12 definite questions that we bring up and our staff
13 brings up all the time.

14 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I think all of us are
15 frustrated that there's no one from the MTC here to
16 field questions. My question is, is there any point
17 in continuing the hearing from this point on?

18 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Yes, because this is
19 for the record. We are a policy agency. We will
20 vote on this increase. We will bring your feelings
21 to the MTC members, their executive director and
22 some of the board members. But their executive
23 staff will often have anywhere from 5 to 10 of them
24 at our Monday meetings. So they do come to our
25 Monday meetings, and they do hear what goes on at

1 our Monday meetings.

2 And they have their meetings on Tuesdays at the
3 Mears Centre, and those meetings are open to the
4 public, and they start off with their policy
5 committee at 4, the same as ours start on Mondays
6 generally. Ours start generally on Monday at 4.
7 Theirs start on Tuesdays at 4, and they operate a
8 little bit differently. Our committees meet many
9 different days, and their committees meet right
10 prior to the meetings, which means their whole
11 five-person board is all their committees, whereas
12 various of us are on different committees. As the
13 big policy and planning agency we do more of that.
14 So you would hear what goes on in the policy
15 committee that Tuesday, and then their regular board
16 meeting takes place at 4:30, and there are always
17 public comments.

18 MR. ANDY PLETTA: Okay. What I would like
19 to get back to -- unless someone else wants to talk
20 -- on the bus coming down here I wrote down some
21 things that I've been thinking about over the last
22 12 to 18 months that I think could be implemented at
23 some scale over whatever time frame to increase
24 ridership. First, I want to comment on this idea
25 about electronic fare boxes. I don't mean to burst

1 anyone's bubble here, but that to me represents an
2 expenditure that the MTC is now committed to. Is
3 that?

4 MR. GREG ANDREWS: It's a capital
5 expenditure.

6 MR. ANDY PLETTA: It's a capital
7 expenditure that -- are we in for this now? In
8 other words, these things have been purchased or
9 there is a bid for someone to actually manufacturer
10 these electronic fare boxes?

11 MR. GREG ANDREWS: They have awarded a
12 contract to a firm to purchase them, yes.

13 MR. ANDY PLETTA: So they're going to be
14 in the buses. Now, here's the problem. There was a
15 real lack of clear thinking there because to be
16 realistic about the situations that happen at the
17 front of a bus is that when someone comes on the bus
18 to pay, they're already on the bus. And a lot of
19 these people are saying if a person does not pay the
20 fare, what do you do? Do you resort to some sort of
21 violence to expel this person? So then the
22 realistic way to --

23 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: Stop the bus and
24 don't move it.

25 MR. ANDY PLETTA: The realistic thing to

1 do is to say, We know that a certain percentage of
2 our riders are simply not going to pay the fare, and
3 we either live with that or we invite the community
4 to comment on that. I think that would have been a
5 far more appropriate plan of action to say as a
6 committee, We're going to have electronic fare boxes
7 because we think that will solve the problem. Then
8 you're already committed to a capital expenditure
9 that people here who ride the buses know is not
10 going to solve the problem. So what you've done is
11 you've wasted more money. You've wasted money
12 because you're trying to solve a problem, and your
13 intent is good, your intent is there, but you don't
14 have the right answer to the problem.

15 MR. LEN SIMICH: I would just like to
16 respond to that. A little bit about the electronic
17 fare boxes, like Greg said, it doesn't help us on
18 that problem. That's not the main purpose for the
19 electronic fare boxes. It does a number of things.
20 Electronic fare boxes, you see we have many fares
21 currently over a dollar. One of the things the
22 riding public -- the majority of the riding public
23 said, Why can't we get a fare box that would accept
24 a dollar bill so I don't have to walk with almost \$2
25 in change in my pocket? That's one thing.

1 The second thing that can happen with these
2 electronic fare boxes is every time someone gets on
3 at every location, not only is money going into that
4 box, but it's being recorded. It's a very good
5 planning tool. A very efficient planning tool.

6 Right now to get a good snapshot picture of the
7 whole region, where people are riding, where they're
8 getting on, off, where they're going, getting off,
9 it's costing almost \$400,000 to do that type of
10 study for one day of data. So electronic fare boxes
11 will allow us to do that every day of the year if we
12 want to. So it serves more than one purpose. It's
13 very cost effective as well. Before this was all
14 determined in front of the Board, a cost benefit
15 analysis was done on these things. So it serves
16 more than the one purpose.

17 MR. ANDY PLETTA: That puts a whole
18 different light on this than just the idea of
19 determining whether or not someone paid a fare.

20 MR. LEN SIMICH: But that's not the
21 purpose of it.

22 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Do we have any more
23 questions?

24 MS. KATHY MORAN: My name is Kathy Moran,
25 and I would like say something about the proposal.

1 I think it didn't go far enough. Like, for
2 instance, I don't like to see the fares -- the peak
3 fare stuff because I think it makes it very
4 confusing for people that need to ride the bus for
5 one time. I would like to see eliminating the peak
6 fares and stop punishing the people who ride the bus
7 during peak times. You can do that with this
8 15-cent increase on the base fare, you would drop
9 the peak fare by 10 cents, which some people might
10 say, I'm getting a deal, maybe I should ride the
11 bus. And I'm all for encouraging people to ride the
12 bus.

13 I think the zone fares elimination is an
14 excellent idea. Again, I think that's something
15 that's been confusing, and I agree that it's hard
16 for the drivers to determine this and that and the
17 other thing.

18 I ride the bus frequently, and another thing
19 which has been mentioned, but it's with the youth
20 fare. Not all kids -- I'm a former teacher. I know
21 how kids are, but I would say the majority of the
22 kids 14 or over can afford to pay these prices, to
23 pay the full adult fare. And I think it would stop
24 the horsing around which they get into which is
25 getting on bus at a peak time and see if they can

1 ride for free, because, Hey man, I paid my quarter.
2 And that's the argument that was on a bus I was on
3 just two nights ago, and it happened like two blocks
4 apart, two groups of kids. And they may have even
5 been together, the way it was organized and the same
6 sort of argument.

7 And I used to work with people that rode on the
8 mobility card too, and it's a nice gesture, but I
9 don't know if it's really necessary. I see where
10 the seniors need a discounted ride. And, you know,
11 I've seen a lot of drivers that will make someone
12 that's obviously over 65 pull out a little red and
13 white card, but I don't see them make the youth pull
14 out their ID to see if they're underage and can ride
15 for a quarter.

16 And I would like to see some sort of policy
17 that would enforce the things that are already in
18 place. And some of that could even start now with
19 some of the kids. It wouldn't take more than a
20 couple weeks for it to work. Starting November 1st
21 or whatever, every kid that gets on the bus has to
22 show an ID or they have to pay the full fare no
23 matter what time of day it is. I know it's hard for
24 the drivers to enforce that, but if you have an
25 extra person ride the bus too, somebody from MTC

1 ride the bus to help the driver for a while. But
2 once you have started enforcing it and everyone's
3 consistent with it, it's not a problem.

4 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Thank you. Those are
5 some excellent suggestions.

6 MR. ANDY PLETTA: And I would like to
7 respond to that. I think that what you say there
8 reminds me of the problem IRS has in trying to get
9 delinquent taxpayers to pay their taxes. The IRS
10 has to incur an expense which may be some percentage
11 of what they hope to get. And I think, number one,
12 the idea of having a second person on board is
13 something that probably a lot of people are not
14 going to be excited about at the Regional Transit
15 Board because they're going to say, Okay, what's
16 that going to cost us? And will that cost bring in
17 more revenue in terms of the fares that we can
18 recoup? Maybe they will.

19 MS. KATHY MORAN: And if they increase the
20 security for two months to get the kids to pay. I
21 mean, there's money. There are other ways to get
22 it.

23 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Sometimes it's by
24 policies that you set and not by another person
25 obviously on the bus. That would probably be

1 absolutely financially impossible because security
2 is something we're always concerned with also. But
3 word gets around pretty quickly, and the young
4 people -- I have a 17-year-old and I have a
5 21-year-old, and they have a wonderful network of
6 finding out things that are going on. So I think
7 there's other ways of starting some kind of
8 implementation certainly without going to the
9 extremity of another person on the bus. Your points
10 are well taken. There are other ways of getting
11 those messages.

12 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I would like other
13 people just to feel free to butt in because I would
14 like to get through this whole list here. But the
15 thing that struck me the most, and again I go back
16 to a manufacturing analogy. Where I work there are
17 a dozen or so machines that are used for tool
18 bending. When the president of the company walks
19 down to the shop and sees that only seven or eight
20 of these machines that are being used, what he sees
21 is an asset that is not in a productive mode. When
22 I look at the MTC bus system and I see buses that
23 are at best half full, maybe the No. 4 that has
24 three or four people at 11 o'clock at night, I see
25 an asset that is not being productively used.

1 And one of the alternatives that has not been
2 mentioned here but would be to actually fill the
3 buses that are already run because obviously people
4 are driving their cars to Rosedale, people are
5 driving their cars to Minneapolis public libraries,
6 people are driving their cars to fitness centers to
7 work out. So your competition is not with other
8 metro transit authorities, but your competition is
9 with automobiles.

10 And I believe that unless the MTC addresses the
11 existence of different types of customers, it's
12 going to be very difficult. I'll give you an
13 example. My mother lives in Eagan. She would like
14 to take the bus to St. Paul where she works, but
15 she's not going to because she doesn't like the
16 discomfort that's involved in riding an existing
17 type of bus. She would be willing to pay probably
18 \$1.50 or \$2 in fares if there was a bus that would
19 make her feel like she was in a vehicle that's more
20 like her automobile because people are so -- they're
21 so used to the convenience and largely the comforts
22 of their cars that they're not going to enter into a
23 bus that is going to make them feel very
24 uncomfortable.

25 Now, I don't mind it. A lot of these people

1 don't mind it. But let's be realistic. People who
2 are affluent are not going to stop driving their
3 Tauruses to go on a bus. And I think that -- you
4 know, I tell this to my friends, and they agree with
5 me. That there's a real killing to be made here for
6 someone to compete with the MTC and say, Okay, we've
7 got all these people coming in from Eden Prairie and
8 North Oaks to downtown Minneapolis, and they're
9 driving their personal cars. They're paying all
10 this money for parking, they're spending money for
11 gasoline and maintenance on their cars. If I was to
12 provide -- call it elitist or what have you -- a
13 higher end service where the fares would be
14 substantially higher than \$1, \$1.10, if you were
15 charge those people \$2.50, you could probably do a
16 pretty good business.

17 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: In Minneapolis it is
18 the MTC, and that's it, in Minneapolis and St. Paul.
19 But, however, in the suburban areas there are some
20 areas that are addressing that. That's Dial-a-Ride
21 and their comfortable vans and things like that.
22 That's when a community chooses to opt out and not
23 be part of the MTC system and to choose to run their
24 own systems. So that is being done.

25 MR. ANDY PLETTA: Right. But you see

1 what's happening? By the time the community chooses
2 to drop out, the dissatisfaction has grown to a
3 level that is already uncomfortable.

4 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I don't accept that.
5 That's a community's decision. We can't make policy
6 and tell them what to do.

7 MR. ANDY PLETTA: You can't make policy.
8 But, for example, the gentleman that was here
9 earlier mentioned being in business. No one goes
10 into business from the standpoint of making policy.
11 You go into business as a risk, and you say, I'm
12 going to offer a service or product. And I think --
13 I believe this to the best of my knowledge there's a
14 demand for this product at this price, and I think I
15 can make a profit on that. The MTC did not do that,
16 and as a result of the years of -- well, I'll use
17 the word neglect, but maybe lack of attention would
18 be a more appropriate way of putting it. But years
19 of lack of attention to a whole sector of people
20 with real transportation needs. Yeah, the
21 communities now have chosen to opt out because they
22 don't want to ride the buses that now exist.

23 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I don't disagree with
24 you at all. Do you go to the MTC meetings on
25 Tuesday?

1 MR. ANDY PLETTA: No.

2 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: It's a real treat. I
3 think you should. We would love that. You're
4 voicing a lot of the things we voice as a Board.
5 I'm not saying you can make all, and I understand
6 part of this whole process is that people have jobs
7 to earn a living, but if you don't want to go to the
8 subcommittee, their regular meeting starts at 4:30.
9 And I don't think they get to other business much
10 more before 5 o'clock or so. They wouldn't adjourn
11 too much before 5 and sometimes go on till 6 or so.
12 But, again, that's why I provided you -- your
13 suggestions are excellent, and we make them very
14 frequently. And people like you go into those
15 committee meetings with suggestions, that's how you
16 get changes.

17 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: Does this mean that
18 the MTC has a monopoly in the Twin Cities, that no
19 one else can come in?

20 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Absolutely.

21 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: Sort of like cable
22 companies, isn't it?

23 MR. ANDY PLETTA: If I had Ross Perot's
24 money, I could set up a transit system and put the
25 MTC out of business.

1 MS. MARCIA O'NEALL: Would another company
2 be allowed to bid in the Twin Cities?

3 MS. JUDY HOLLANDER: Not if they receive
4 public subsidies.

5 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: But a private company
6 could compete and just say -- well, but that's quite
7 impossible because it's an enormous expenditure of
8 equipment.

9 MR. ANDY PLETTA: It's not more enormous
10 than operating an airline which is extremely a lot
11 more complex than running a bus system.

12 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Maybe people will have
13 that proposed some day or maybe you can locate a
14 company willing to do that, then we'll have a more
15 competitive system. I didn't know if that was
16 allowed, but they can do it apparently as long as
17 they have no public subsidies. And right now buses
18 and lots of things are bought with federal dollars,
19 other ways for our tax dollars, and I think that's
20 probably what keeps that from happening.

21 MR. ANDY PLETTA: Right. And I realize I
22 may have a minority view on this, but I'm 100
23 percent against public funding of the transit
24 system. I believe that if you have something that
25 is something that people want and truly need, that

1 they will pay what they're willing to pay for it.
2 And what we have here is a noncompetitive situation
3 where there's no incentive to innovate. There's no
4 incentive to be creative because --

5 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: There is, of course,
6 the opt-outs, and there it operates differently.
7 But if you could get someone to want to come into
8 the Twin Cities and operate services without the
9 subsidy, and what our staff is saying, that would be
10 perfectly permissible. Doris.

11 MS. DORIS CARANICAS: Some of what you
12 said suggesting car pooling or ride sharing might be
13 a great benefit to you or to your friends or the
14 people that you're talking about.

15 MR. ANDY PLETTA: Well, I know people who
16 simply don't care to car pool because when they're
17 going to work, people that I work with have told me
18 that one of the reasons they will not ride the bus
19 is because when they leave home and go to work in
20 the morning they need that time to be alone. They
21 need that time to sort of energize themselves, think
22 about their day, plan their day, think about their
23 family life or their personal life and get their
24 head in order before they get to work. And what I'm
25 saying is that if someone came along and said, Yeah,

1 those are real forces at work in the communities,
2 and I'm going to build a system, supply a service
3 that actually addresses those real needs and not
4 just pretend that they're not there.

5 MR. RONALD SHELK: Wouldn't you be
6 defeating that purpose of a car if you had all of
7 those public needs in a sense? Why have a car if
8 you're going to take public transit all your life?
9 What would the car dealers --

10 MR. ANDY PLETTA: I think there's a real
11 place for automobiles. I think the problem we have
12 in our society is that we're dependent. We use
13 automobiles in almost all circumstances regardless
14 of the extent to which it's appropriate. Where, for
15 example, you would laugh at me if I left my
16 apartment building and drove one block to go to the
17 Fena Mart to get some groceries. Now, on the other
18 hand, if I was handicapped, I might need something
19 like that. And then in a situation like that, you
20 would say, That's an appropriate situation. What we
21 have is we have millions of people who could be
22 bicycling, they could be walking.

23 If there were other alternatives to mass
24 transit systems, they would have a whole menu of
25 things to choose from. What we have now is we have

1 a bus system that does not address people's real --
2 I'm not just talking about getting from point A
3 to B. I'm talking about psychological dynamics that
4 people consider when they buy cars. They think of
5 comfort, they think of speed, they think of image,
6 personality, all of these things.

7 And I'm saying that if someone was to come
8 along and say, I'm going to build a transit system
9 that addresses the psychological forces like that
10 that are behind people's decisions that they make to
11 get from point A from point B, you have an entirely
12 different framework, and you would not see people
13 incurring the expense of owning and operating an
14 automobile because, let's face it, most people will
15 go to work 40 hours a week, and they will work one
16 hour a day or more just paying for their
17 transportation. That's a well-known fact. The last
18 I heard is they work 25 or 30 percent --

19 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: Twenty-five percent
20 was the figure several years ago.

21 MR. ANDY PLETTA: So imagine working two
22 hours on an eight-hour shift, and all you've
23 accomplished -- if you started at 9 o'clock in the
24 morning, all you've accomplished by 11 a.m. is
25 you've paid for your transportation for that day.

1 That's all you've done. When you think about that,
2 it's pretty scary.

3 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: That's part of our
4 charge, and part of our charge is transit not just
5 buses. And we have in the past, although not as
6 much in the present because of limited dollars, but
7 I am the liaison for the joint powers board on light
8 rail, and that's how I got started being a
9 transportation advocate. Since 1986 I've been
10 working to try to get that to be one of our
11 components. So that is part of our charge, and it
12 is something that the Regional Transit Board works
13 very hard at. We don't deal with just buses either.

14 Do you have any more comments?

15 MR. ANDY PLETTA: Yes, I do. One of my
16 main concerns is that the buses are not real
17 reliable in the sense that they do not always run on
18 time. Now, I realize that there are -- snow comes
19 along and there are detours or there's construction.
20 But just coming down to the bus, it seems to me that
21 if a person knew, absolutely knew that if I open a
22 bus schedule, and here's a No. 6, and I open up and
23 it says a certain bus is going to be at
24 such-and-such location at 7:08. What does that
25 mean? To me right now it means nothing. It means I

1 have to be at the bus stop at 7:08. Maybe it will
2 be on time and maybe it won't be on time. If it's
3 not on time and I have a connection to make, it
4 means I don't make my connection.

5 So here's a list of the things that the MTC
6 could consider to address this issue of buses
7 running on time. Number one, define what is meant
8 by on time and communicate that definition to the
9 public. This is what airlines do. The last I
10 heard, if you are scheduled to board a flight that's
11 supposed to leave at 10 a.m., the airlines can say
12 if the flight leaves at quarter after 10, we're
13 still considering that an on-time flight. They've
14 opened their window. But nonetheless, the public
15 has to understand what the expectations are and
16 everyone knows what's being expected of each other.
17 There's nothing like that with the MTC. There's a
18 best guess here, but there's no guarantee that what
19 I have in my hand here is going to happen.

20 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: So we're really into a
21 lot of the operations that we are not into at all.
22 We're into policy. And when you get to the
23 operations, your suggestions and even some of your
24 comments aren't ones that we haven't necessarily
25 heard before speaking from a policy committee, which

1 is very confusing.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Whose job is that?

3 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: And a lot of those
4 suggestions are excellent and really should be made
5 directly to the MTC because they're excellent
6 suggestions, and they are the runners of it. We
7 can't say to them -- we can make suggestions as to
8 policy. But those are operations, and we would be
9 considered micromanaging them if we started to make
10 our agenda all those kinds of specifics.

11 MR. ANDY PLETTA: So maybe a lot of these
12 things I have here, maybe this really isn't the
13 forum for these things.

14 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: I think, frankly, it's
15 the right forum. I mean, if we started to -- and
16 certainly it's going into the public record. But a
17 lot of your suggestions are operational suggestions.
18 They're not policy. And we can make some
19 suggestions, and our staff does all the time. But
20 you have to understand the position we're in. Where
21 we get told, Don't micromanage us. You're supposed
22 to be policymakers; you're not running this; you're
23 not operations. So we have to watch that.

24 MS. PAM WISE: It's also true when it
25 comes to Metro Mobility because for years they have

1 written in the guide book what you get when you join
2 Metro Mobility. And in succeeding guide books when
3 they changed different policies and things that
4 there is a window of time in which you have to be
5 ready, and most of the people in my complex as a
6 matter of fact do nothing but take them literally.
7 So they say, We will be there at 7:15, that's when
8 they start coming downstairs not that they're down
9 waiting already. And this is one of the problems
10 that the drivers -- and they have several people on
11 their list that they know are going to be like this.
12 By the time the end of the day is there or the end
13 of the shift, they're part of the shift, they're
14 already behind.

15 MS. MARYANN CAMPO: And those are
16 operational suggestions. And they are excellent,
17 and you can filter them through our agency staff.
18 But when they directly relate to the scheduling of
19 the buses, my suggestion is your greatest impact is
20 letting them know. Is there anything else anyone
21 would like to say regarding fare increases into the
22 public record? (No response).

23 I'm going to adjourn the meeting tonight. I'm
24 going to thank you very much. I would have to say
25 when our members get together that my people that I

1 represent will probably be lively. So I thank you
2 very much for coming and for your input and for your
3 honesty. Thanks.

4 (Concluded at approximately 8:53 p.m.,
5 Thursday, September 24, 1992.)

6 * * * * *

7 Public Hearing of the Regional Transit Board,
8 Tuesday, September 29, 1992, commencing at approximately
9 12:09 p.m. at Coffman Union, University of Minnesota,
10 Minneapolis, Minnesota.

11 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you for
12 coming. My name is Mike Ehrlichmann. We are
13 members of the Regional Transit Board, and we are
14 here today to hear your response, your public and
15 personal opinions relative to the proposed fare
16 increase that has been presented to us by our staff.

17 If I can, I'll just introduce our Board members
18 who are here today. I'm Mike Ehrlichmann, chair of
19 the RTB. This is Doris Caranicas, who represents
20 the disability community; Val Higgins, who
21 represents the senior population on the RTB; Ruth
22 Franklyn, who represents the northern suburbs and
23 northwest suburbs; and Mayor Tom Sather, who
24 represents northeast suburbs and Ramsey County.

25 And as I said, we're here to hear your response

1 to the proposed fare increase. Nothing has been
2 adopted by the RTB. We have this proposal before
3 us. We're faced with another problem and a dilemma
4 that a lot of governments are faced with, and that
5 is that we haven't sufficient revenue, existing
6 revenue to maintain our existing level of services
7 and that we either are faced with increasing revenue
8 from the fare box, fares, or we are faced with the
9 prospect the cutting service. And that really is
10 the dynamic of the fare increase and the proposal
11 that's before us. I think we have the actual fare
12 and the proposal in the back. Len will go through
13 it for us. Len Simich on our staff will go through
14 the fare increase, take a look at it. If you have
15 comments, please share them with us.

16 I think the one thing that's important to
17 remember is that 50 percent of our funds come from
18 property tax. That property tax is frozen
19 essentially. We have the same revenue from that as
20 we did in 1984. Thirty-five percent of our revenue
21 comes from the fare box, presumably from the fare
22 box. That has dropped or we anticipate that will
23 drop in the next year. The remaining 15 percent
24 comes from state and federal sources which are flat,
25 or in the case of federal government could drop

1 slightly. So that's the dynamic, that's the problem
2 we're facing, why we're presenting a fare increase
3 to the public for their response.

4 And with that I would ask Len to review the
5 proposal. And I will again repeat to you, we have
6 not voted on this proposal or the elements of it.
7 We could adopt the proposal as it's offered to us by
8 staff, who could adopt portions of it. We could
9 implement it January 1st or we could implement it at
10 a later date. And that's why we're here, to find
11 out from you what we should do and take into
12 consideration your response to this initiative.
13 With that, Len, do you want to.

14 I should ask, is there anybody here who needs
15 to have signing who has a hearing impairment? If
16 so, we will have a signer. If not, thank you.

17 After Len finishes, we will take public
18 testimony.

19 MR. LEN SIMICH: What I want to do is just
20 kind of go over what is being proposed right now and
21 a little bit of the rationale for what we're
22 attempting to do. As Mike mentioned, we are having
23 some budget problems right now, trying to balance
24 the budget as well as maintain the 35-percent fare
25 box recovery ratio. Right now we're projecting

1 anywhere from \$1.5 million to a \$7 million shortfall
2 conceivably. So what we have done is put together
3 some fare options that would help us balance that
4 budget for the next two years.

5 What this sheet here -- and again, there are
6 handouts available in the back of the room. This is
7 the actual effect you would see to the fares as they
8 appear right now. We would have a base fare
9 increase of 15 cents. The zone fare would be
10 eliminated. The express fare would run an
11 additional 25 cents. The social fares which are the
12 off-peak senior, youth, and limited mobility would
13 raise an additional 25 cents. The downtown zone
14 would be eliminated during the peak periods. And
15 the effect on the convenience fares, the 10-ride
16 punch cards or the monthly pass would be an
17 equivalent of 20 cents per ride. There still would
18 be a discount on those tickets of 25 cents per ride.
19 However, with the increase on the base fare of 15
20 cents plus an additional nickel on that discount,
21 you would see a 20-cent increase.

22 How this would actually play out. Now, this is
23 for the majority of the fares that we see currently.
24 There are a couple that don't appear on this chart.
25 I'll cover those in a minute. But the local base

1 fare which is currently 85 cents, under this
2 proposal would go to a dollar. The local peak base
3 fare which is \$1.10 would go to \$1.25. The off-peak
4 express which in Zone 2 which is currently \$1.60
5 would increase to \$1.75, and the social fares again
6 would raise a quarter. For the most part everybody
7 would see a 15-cent increase to their current fares.

8 However, there are a couple fares that this
9 does not apply to. I'll cover those really quick.
10 That is the local express in the Zone 2 area. Here
11 we would have a decrease going from \$1.10 to \$1.
12 And the express in Zone 1 which is currently \$1.10
13 would have a 40-cent jump to \$1.50.

14 Similar in the peak we have the Zone 2, the
15 local Zone 2 going from \$1.35 down to \$1.25.
16 Express in Zone 1 going from \$1.35 to \$1.75. Again,
17 these are kind of the exception to the overall
18 15-cent increase that we've tried to maintain
19 outside of the social fares and the downtown zones.

20 Going through the discounted rides on the
21 10-ride cards and the monthly passes, generally each
22 of those had an increase for the 10-ride cards of \$2
23 and the monthly passes of \$8. So those of you that
24 are currently purchasing the \$5.50 ticket, you would
25 see that going up to \$7.50, likewise the \$8 going to

1 \$10, the \$10.50 to \$12.50, the \$13 to \$15.

2 On the monthly passes, those of you that are
3 purchasing the \$22 monthly pass, would see an
4 increase to \$30, \$32 to \$40, \$42 to \$50, \$52 to \$60.
5 Those of you purchasing tokens, there would be the
6 discount of 20 cents still available on that. You
7 would see it going from 55 cents to 75 cents.

8 At this time there are no increases being
9 proposed to Metro Mobility. In fact, with the
10 elimination of the zone there will be a discount in
11 one of the zone crossings where currently the fare
12 is \$2.70. That will be going down to \$2.20. I
13 would also like to point out that the Metro
14 Mobility, that whole program is now in the process
15 of being evaluated, and there could be some changes
16 forthcoming in the next year. But at this time
17 nothing is being proposed. With that, I will turn
18 it back over to Chair Ehrlichmann.

19 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you, Len.
20 What we would like to do now is just simply ask
21 those people who signed up on this list, and we'll
22 take you in the order in which you signed up to just
23 come forward and offer us your response. Sheila
24 Miller. If you could give us your name and address.
25 Sheila Miller.

1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: She's not here, Mike.

2 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Jeff Winker.

3 You would give us your name and address.

4 MR. JEFF WINKER: My name is Jeff Winker.

5 I live in St. Paul near the intersection of Grand
6 Avenue and Snelling Avenue. I'm currently a
7 graduate student here at the University in the
8 master's program. I've been here about two years.
9 I guess I would have to say that I'm speaking on my
10 own behalf, but like all here at the University I
11 think that my circumstances are not that different
12 from certainly the graduate students and I think
13 many students in general. That is to say I'm not
14 endorsed by any specific organization, but I would
15 like to think I'm a man of the street.

16 I live about five miles from the University,
17 and I'm an occasional bus user. Normally I bicycle
18 because I like to because in many ways it's more
19 convenient. But every now and then when it's 10
20 below zero or when it's raining or when I just want
21 to get up and out the door and not to have to pedal
22 my way in, I'll take the bus.

23 And in reviewing the proposed rate increases I
24 have a couple concerns. I'm not really that
25 concerned about the 15-cent increase or the change

1 in zones. Certainly that's beneficial for all
2 concerned or the increase of 5 cents on convenience
3 fares, which is what I normally use, that's about 20
4 cents, and I appreciate the realities of costs which
5 also never go down.

6 What I am concerned about personally, and I
7 think on behalf of others, is the the doubling of
8 the express fare. I live one block from an express
9 bus route, the 52F, and that's invariably the one I
10 take because the alternative is to take a 4 and 16
11 which always takes about twice as long as it would
12 to pedal in.

13 So in addition -- so I see -- I'm one of the
14 people who gets the worst possible deals from this
15 proposal. I see my rates going -- I think it's 45
16 cents, almost a 50-percent increase. And that's a
17 little hard to take. In addition to that, I'm just
18 reviewing the schedule that's here. I've made a
19 habit of taking the 5:30 bus home. I'm finding
20 there is no longer a 5:30 bus on that route. The
21 last one that leaves is a 4:30.

22 I can't speak for all students, but a lot of
23 graduate students really need to stick around at the
24 University after 4:30 at night either because they
25 find it's more accommodating to study at the

1 University or simply because the resources they need
2 in the libraries or the access to the labs simply
3 are not available at home. So what that is doing is
4 imposing a certain amount of hardship on them.

5 If I can cite my own experience is at this
6 point in time now I'm extremely reluctant to
7 consider taking the bus because I guess I take the
8 50-percent increase in the cost as something like a
9 slap in the face. I mean, quite frankly. But
10 basically it's much more of a service issue, is that
11 it no longer meets the needs that I have as a
12 student. I look at the schedule and find that there
13 are buses almost hourly from 8 in the morning coming
14 in until about noon, and then they start going back
15 out about every hour. But I wonder if it wouldn't
16 be useful to have one -- like maybe consolidate some
17 of those and have one that leaves perhaps at 8 in
18 the evening sometimes so that students who have a
19 need to stay at the University would be
20 accommodated.

21 I would say if that increase in service were
22 forthcoming I would find the increase in the cost
23 quite acceptable because it really would meet the
24 need and you would find more people using that
25 service. But as it stands, it's really difficult to

1 have an increase in cost and the decrease in service
2 and it would really be dissatisfying with what's
3 being provided. Thank you.

4 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you very
5 much. I think one thing we didn't make clear or to
6 at least clarify is that route 52, if you take route
7 52, while the Regional Transit Board, our fare
8 policy extends to all the services that fall under
9 our umbrella. Route 52 is operated by the
10 University of Minnesota, and I can certainly
11 sympathize with the change in schedule that
12 diminishes the opportunity for people to be able to
13 use the bus after 4:30. I would suggest that you
14 make those same feelings known. We will certainly
15 take them into account. And I know there are
16 representatives from the University here at this
17 meeting and Roger. But anyway, there are
18 representatives here who will take into account the
19 information that you're providing relative to
20 service on route 52, and that they're working very
21 actively to try and meet growing student and faculty
22 needs relative to that system, but that service
23 issue on route 52 are University controlled. I
24 don't mean that as an excuse, but simply that that's
25 a place you may want to direct some of your concerns

1 in the future. Paul Jackson.

2 MR. PAUL JACKSON: My name is Paul
3 Jackson, and I'm a graduate student here at the
4 University in chemistry, and I live near Silver Lake
5 Road and County Road E in the northeast Minneapolis
6 area. I'm a heavy user of the bus ever since I
7 moved here this summer in June including routes 52
8 for the U. and also MTC routes, all of them in that
9 circle in my area which are about four, and I've
10 been very happy with the bus service so far. But
11 this increase in fares has me a little bit
12 discouraged. And I have a couple questions
13 actually, and I wonder if you could answer them.

14 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: We'll try.

15 MR. PAUL JACKSON: And one is, what is the
16 projected drop in ridership versus your increase in
17 fares? There was an article in the Star Tribune by
18 the MTC chairman that has estimated that they would
19 lose 200,000 riders per month. And where is that
20 offset?

21 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: I guess we
22 anticipate with the fare increase as it's proposed,
23 it's a four- to five-percent decline in ridership,
24 is that what we're projecting?

25 MR. LEN SIMICH: We're projecting about a

1 loss of four million passenger trips.

2 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: What is that
3 percentage? Four to five percent?

4 MR. LEN SIMICH: About that, yeah. And
5 increase in revenue of approximately six million.

6 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Right, five to
7 six million. So that's where we are. It's the
8 unfortunate byproduct of raising fares. It's kind
9 of a vicious cycle. You raise fares, you lose
10 riders. You lose riders, you lose revenue.

11 MR. PAUL JACKSON: My second question
12 would be, and it was mentioned earlier, you're
13 anticipating a drop at the fare box. And I wondered
14 where that is coming from every since this summer
15 that ridership has increased, thus fares should be
16 increasing in the fare box. And so I'm wondering
17 where that figure also stems from?

18 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Len, do you want
19 to?

20 MR. LEN SIMICH: The increases that we've
21 seen due to ridership have been primary in the
22 no-pay category or in the youth category or that
23 received the discount. They're paying 25 cents. In
24 the no-pay category there's a lot of reasons for
25 that. Primarily the MTC did some aggressive

1 marketing campaigns where they offered a number of
2 free rides, coupons trying to attract those riders
3 into the system in the future. And that may work,
4 but right now the jury is still out on that. But
5 there was an increase, however the revenue didn't
6 increase along with the passengers.

7 MR. PAUL JACKSON: My next concern is in
8 terms of the zone fares. Eliminating the zone
9 charge was in my estimation a good thing for those
10 accessing Zone 2 in terms of those riders coming
11 from that area.

12 But upon looking through all the foils that
13 were presented, it seems that those riders that go
14 from Zone 1 or within that area seem to get hammered
15 with a fare increase where those from Zone 2 really
16 actually are reaping the benefits because some of
17 their fares are decreased. And that concerns me as
18 a rider who primarily goes from Zone 1 to Zone 1.
19 It means I bear the brunt of the fee increase.

20 And yet in terms of demographic areas of the
21 cities and that Zone 1 is not necessarily an area
22 that has a lot of stability necessarily in terms of
23 income, and one thing as a graduate student that I
24 necessarily don't have that stability either. And
25 so I'm going to be asked to bear the brunt of a

1 large zone increase -- or well, it seems to be a
2 large zone increase for me or for other people. And
3 I don't believe that is fair in terms of the
4 distance traveled. So there should be something
5 proportional in that possibly in your fee. And that
6 basically disturbs me.

7 Another concern of mine is one of the
8 environment, and that if you're providing public
9 transportation for all, we should be concentrating
10 on the idea to promote education and to promote what
11 the bus service means. It not only means something
12 that's accessible, something that's convenient or
13 something environmentally sound especially in the
14 time like the '90s where the abuse of the
15 environment is becoming a real great issue. And I
16 would like to see that emphasized more versus the
17 fare travel. And that may also help you to increase
18 your anticipated drop at your fare box. Thank you.

19 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you very
20 much. I do want to say that you're absolutely
21 right, is that the more people we get to ride the
22 bus, the less pollution we put into the atmosphere
23 with automobiles. Right now we're passing out --
24 the RTB unfortunately is one of those agencies which
25 depends on the legislature for our funding and for

1 control. And what we're passing out is very
2 important. We can all go up to the legislature and
3 frankly we're looked on just like any other
4 department, you're trying to get more money. But if
5 it comes from the people and the people say, We
6 think transit should play a greater role in the life
7 of our community, that has a genuine impact.

8 And what we're passing out frankly are post
9 cards that if you fill out and mail to your
10 legislator, it will help us. If you don't know who
11 your legislator is and you just want to fill it out
12 and leave it with us, we'll see that it does get
13 mailed to the appropriate person. But it really is
14 important. And what you say is absolutely right. I
15 mean, that's the goal that we're trying to pursue.
16 And we are caught kind of here in a rock and a hard
17 place. And I think you've helped us understand the
18 dilemma that you as a student face. Thank you. I
19 have RAFM.

20 MR. RAFM: My name is Roger Allen Francis
21 Merberger (ph), and I went to the University of
22 Minnesota here from 1954 through 1962, and I used
23 the bus about half of the time. I drove and parked
24 in the parking lots down on the river bank the other
25 half. And I use the bus quite a bit in my present

1 situation. I use a taxicab too almost every day
2 because I drive one. I've done a number of other
3 things, and I am a number of other things. I've
4 practiced law. I've taught law. I think of myself
5 as a writer although I'm not yet published or
6 anything yet.

7 As far as these categories go, the convenience
8 fare, the 5 cents there, I feel that's perfectly
9 fair. I don't think the base -- the increase of 15
10 cents is appropriate at all. And I'll come back to
11 that. I think there should be no increase. I
12 realize you feel there is a problem there, and there
13 is. But it shouldn't come out of the blood of the
14 riders here. The zone fare increase would be
15 eliminated. I see no problem with that. The
16 express fare, I would say, should go the other way
17 as the one gentleman indicated. It's an elite
18 process to be riding an express bus. It's almost
19 like riding a limousine or a taxicab, if I can say
20 that, or something else or a private car. And you
21 should pay for that. And you should pay more. You
22 can pay more.

23 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: That is going
24 up.

25 MR. RAFM: Pardon?

1 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: That one is
2 going up.

3 MR. RAFM: I think it should be more than
4 25 cents. And you go on the freeways, so you should
5 pay for that too.

6 Now, as far as the off-peak senior, youth,
7 limited mobility; that should not be increased at
8 all. Again, those people don't have anything to
9 add. Just because there's a freeze, as the first
10 gentleman indicated -- are you the chairman, sir?

11 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Yes.

12 MR. RAFM: As the chairman indicated, a
13 freeze by the legislature, a freeze by the federal
14 government, a freeze by the state government. So
15 what do you do? You tell the poor consumer whether
16 you can afford it or not we'll take it out of you.
17 There should be a freeze or there should be one on a
18 legislative freeze on service. Run the buses until
19 you run out of money, and see if the legislature or
20 the federal government or someone to do something
21 rather than simply saying, We'll raise the prices of
22 wheat and flour and everything else to the consumer.
23 Either they eat or they starve. That has been the
24 greatest oppression we've had throughout history,
25 throughout this century today, and that's what

1 you're doing here. You're providing the greatest
2 oppression to the consumer by going into that
3 process. So I would say just say no here. You
4 should put a freeze on basic off-peak fares and on
5 off-peak senior, youth, limited mobility. Thank
6 you.

7 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you very
8 much. Gary Gottfried.

9 MR. GARY GOTTFRIED: My name is Gary
10 Gottfried. I live at 328 -- well, I don't live, I
11 work at 328 West Kellogg Boulevard in St. Paul for
12 the Westminster Corporation (ph). We provide
13 affordable housing to the low-income persons. We
14 have a social service contract with the PHA housing,
15 public housing 10 West Exchange and 565 Wabasha, I
16 believe it is. Yes, 565 Wabasha.

17 I am speaking on their behalf. I'm their
18 employee actually and someone who's hopefully
19 becoming more sensitive to their issues. Many of
20 them would have liked to be here today but cannot
21 afford the transportation.

22 To the members of the Regional Transit Board,
23 we are opposed to the proposed 25-cent increase in
24 off-peak bus fare for seniors, youth, and those with
25 limited mobility as this 100-percent increase will

1 create a hardship for many who have a very limited
2 income and for whom buses are a necessity not an
3 option.

4 We also oppose the elimination of the downtown
5 zone during peak hours as this will increase
6 automobile traffic into downtown and increase
7 pollution of the air that we as downtown residents
8 must breath.

9 There are about 270 persons that live in those
10 two high-rises in downtown St. Paul. They have
11 signed a petition to that effect and would like to
12 leave that with whoever is appropriate.

13 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Len. Thank you.

14 MR. GARY GOTTFRIED: Just one other
15 comment. I just want to say that I, as an
16 able-bodied person, am more and more sensitized to
17 the issues of what is being said there. It is very
18 clear to me that they probably will pay the extra 25
19 cents because they have no other option. The
20 alternative, of course, is to be more secluded and
21 be less able to get out and about. That would be
22 greatly unfortunate. Thank you.

23 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you very
24 much. That's all the people we had who signed up.
25 Is there anybody else that wants to talk? Anyone

1 else who would like to speak to us?

2 MR. RON PAJARI: My name is Ron Pajari,
3 and I live in downtown St. Paul. I'm a member of
4 the senate district 65 central committee which is
5 Senator Sandy Pappas' district and Carlos Mariani,
6 who is a representative. And they've both been
7 active in supporting the Metropolitan Transit
8 Commission.

9 It seems to me that transit is a service, and
10 we ought to encourage people to use it for all of
11 their needs, going to school, to work, to church,
12 to places of entertainment and to raise the fares
13 instead of putting more cars on the street. And I'm
14 concerned with people with limited incomes. That
15 it's going to make them more isolated. We need to
16 remember that the church, as any society, is what we
17 do for those who are on the fringes of life, as has
18 sometimes been said, and it seems to me that this is
19 going the wrong way.

20 I would also encourage you to wait and see who
21 our next president is because I have a feeling that
22 if Clinton is elected there's going to be a change
23 in terms of the federal budget, that the military
24 will be cut back, and that they will have money
25 available to pay for such things as mass transit.

1 And, frankly, the fares are really getting out
2 of control. You're pricing yourself out of the
3 market. And you've got a good thing going right
4 now. In terms of -- with the new schedules that
5 have come out, such as increasing the 94B to running
6 until after midnight every night of the week. So
7 don't discourage people, what I'm saying, from using
8 the system. Encourage them, promote, work with
9 schools and places like the Guthrie and the
10 University and the colleges and the churches to get
11 people onto the buses in terms of scheduling times
12 and what have you.

13 I don't think the MTC always does a good job of
14 educating the public in terms of that they can
15 really get to some to the cultural events that are
16 going on. They've begun to do that with the
17 Superbowl and the World Series and the state fair,
18 and they should do more of that type of thing. So
19 don't stab yourselves in the back all of a sudden
20 with this fare increase.

21 Getting rid of the downtown zones during the
22 rush hour is just going to put more cars on the
23 street. We need to remember that, as one of your
24 employees recently said, even putting seven, eight
25 people on the bus on one trip cuts pollution

1 dramatically. And pollution doesn't respect race or
2 sex or education level, wealth or anything else.
3 And I might add that I'm an alumni of this
4 university. And to come over here, frankly, if you
5 don't take the bus is just about impossible because
6 there's no parking on the place, and we need to
7 encourage people to use transit.

8 So let's use our heads. Let's wait and see
9 what happens with the presidential election, and
10 let's wait and see. Frankly, I think you can wait
11 until after we know who the president is going to be
12 at least because if Clinton is elected things are
13 going to change rather radically. And so give the
14 people a chance, and let's wait, at least until
15 after November 3rd. (Applause).

16 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Mr. Phil Radtke.

17 MR. PHIL RADTKE: I just had a few points
18 I wanted to make. My name is Phil Radtke, and I
19 live on the corner of Hennepin and 12th in downtown
20 Minneapolis. So some of the downtown issues are
21 important to me. And I guess I understand that the
22 downtown fare will be completely eliminated during
23 peak periods?

24 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: That's proposed
25 to eliminate it, period.

1 MR. PHIL RADTKE: So there would be no
2 quarter?

3 MR. LEN SIMICH: The proposal is during
4 peak hours eliminate it. Off peak you would retain
5 that 25-cent fare.

6 MR. PHIL RADTKE: And then one -- a few of
7 the points I want to make is that as the fare goes
8 up, the convenience of paying a cash fare gets more
9 difficult for people who might run out on their
10 punch card or may not have planned ahead. And I see
11 that as a difficulty. Maybe you have more
12 experience with that, but I think that's a point
13 that's worth considering. If it's \$1.15 or \$1.35 or
14 whatever to ride now or it will be, then that's
15 difficult for a person who doesn't have much change
16 lying around. And I know that some bus systems in
17 the Midwest have the machines that will take
18 dollars. And maybe that's something that you're
19 considering already.

20 The decrease in ridership to me is absolutely
21 negative. I think that in light of the current
22 environmental awareness that we have in our city.
23 And the statements or whatever that MTC has made
24 about, Geez, we're doing good things for the
25 environment. I think it directly is contradicted by

1 this action which you know is going to decrease
2 ridership four to five percent, four million rider
3 fares per year. I think it's ridiculous because it
4 absolutely goes against environmental principles.

5 Which kind of brings me to a link that I see
6 between other transit issues such as clogged
7 freeways and parking costs and congested parking
8 areas and how the MTC supposedly kind of has your
9 hands tied because you really don't control all
10 those issues. You don't control the funding for
11 highways, is that right?

12 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Right.

13 MR. PHIL RADTKE: You don't control
14 funding for parking.

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: We don't control
16 our own funding.

17 MR. PHIL RADTKE: Yeah, you don't control
18 your own funding. And it gets me to a point where,
19 can you be effective really in serving the ridership
20 of MTC? And if not, I mean, I realize it's sort of
21 an idealistic position I'm taking, but if your hands
22 are constantly tied by the legislature or by city
23 governments or state governments or whatever it is,
24 it's time to throw in the towel and just say, Hey,
25 you folks doing this to us, you take it, it's your

1 ball. You don't want us to -- on one hand you want
2 us to encourage ridership, on the other hand you
3 don't give us -- you want us to unclog the freeways,
4 but you're building more parking downtown or
5 whatever and trying to serve more people commuting.
6 So that's just kind of how I feel about it.

7 I think that there needs to be a direct link
8 between parking and bus ridership. And if you folks
9 don't have the power to do it, then it's time to put
10 pressure more on people who can help get that issue
11 connected. So I see the post card campaign as a
12 really positive move in that direction because I
13 realize too that 6 or 12 people on the MTC can't
14 necessarily get legislators to change their mind,
15 but I suppose a bunch of people could. Again, if
16 it's effective remains to be seen. So we'll have to
17 do our part in trying to get those post cards in.

18 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you very
19 much. I think you hit on a couple very important
20 issues, and unfortunately it is the legislature that
21 controls the purse strings of our operation, and
22 we're left with the choice of cutting -- what we
23 call high-subsidy services, which is weekend and
24 evenings. So the people have very few options
25 relative to their transit or work options. Anne

1 Kupferschmidt. Did you want to speak?

2 MS. ANNE KUPFERSCHMIDT: I guess I do want
3 to say something.

4 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Just come right
5 up to the microphone. Tell us your name and where
6 you live. It's no big deal, believe me. It looks
7 kind of formal, but we're pretty informal. Please
8 share with us whatever you have.

9 MS. ANNE KUPFERSCHMIDT: My name is Anne
10 Kupferschmidt, and I live at 1611 South Sixth
11 Street, and I take the bus very frequent. I really
12 depend on it. And I guess the thing is I have a
13 real question because I'm on -- I have a fixed
14 income, and what I've heard was proposed was -- I
15 wasn't real sure. Some of them like a dollar for
16 nonrush hour. I'm not sure what it is.

17 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Going up 15
18 cents.

19 MS. ANNE KUPFERSCHMIDT: And I heard
20 \$1.85. Is that wrong for rush hour?

21 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: No, you might
22 have heard it wrong.

23 MS. ANNE KUPFERSCHMIDT: Someone didn't
24 know what they were talking about.

25 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Are you talking

1 about express bus or just regular bus?

2 MS. ANNE KUPFERSCHMIDT: Regular bus.

3 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Regular bus you
4 would go up 85 -- or it would go up from 85 to a
5 dollar during off peak, what we call nonrush hour,
6 and then rush hour it would go from \$1.10 to \$1.25.

7 MS. ANNE KUPFERSCHMIDT: I got the wrong
8 information.

9 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: It's still an
10 increase, and a lot of people are going to feel it.

11 MS. ANNE KUPFERSCHMIDT: I guess I just
12 want to say that I really want to support that the
13 fares not go up because it's hard on us. I mean,
14 and money -- I'm on a fixed income, and money is
15 getting more and more tougher to come by. And I
16 guess that's all I really want to say. I feel bad
17 knowing --

18 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: We appreciate
19 that, and I think that the Board does need to hear
20 that. As I said, we haven't voted on anything, and
21 we're going to be looking at this.

22 And I should remind you all that October 12th
23 we're bringing it to our administration and finance
24 committee. Ruth Franklyn is the chair of that
25 committee. At the RTB at 4 o'clock. And then the

1 following Monday we'll bring it before our full
2 Board. We could do a lot of different things. We
3 could adopt all or part of these fare increases.

4 Some people mentioned the senior and the
5 mobility impaired and youth fares and the downtown
6 zone. We can adopt all or part of them. We could
7 implement them on January 1st or we could wait. We
8 have a lot of options that are before us, and that's
9 why we're here. And we certainly -- we're here
10 because we really want to hear how it does impact
11 people.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are you up against the
13 cost of raising the wages of MTC drivers?

14 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Well, that will
15 be a part. Right now the drivers are in binding
16 arbitration with the MTC for their contract. It's a
17 two-year contract. That binding arbitration, both
18 parties have signed onto it. So whatever settlement
19 comes out of that will be that what they are
20 required to follow. The current budget does not
21 allow for any increase in salary. Just being
22 realistic, I expect that there will be at least some
23 increase of salary to the drivers under that binding
24 arbitration. So that's one consideration, but it's
25 not the total consideration. But that's one where

1 we have to consider when we look at revenue that's
2 coming into the Region Transit Board in order to
3 provide transit service.

4 And as I've said, and I think we're all
5 sensitive to, the second worst action that we can
6 take as members of the RTB is to raise fares. The
7 first worst action is cutting service, and I think
8 because it denies people and very often it's the
9 service that people depend on the greatest who have
10 the severest limitations in their life relative to
11 work. And that's the dilemma that we're faced with,
12 and it's very frustrating for us. That's why it's
13 very important for you to sign those -- and I can't
14 stress it enough, to sign those post cards.

15 MR. RON PAJARI: Can I add on that, the
16 DFL special committee for 65, I think about just
17 leave the DFL out of it.

18 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Just keep --
19 actually Sandy Pappas is a very strong supporter.
20 We need a lot of other people like Sandy Pappas. I
21 know -- Boardmember Sather.

22 MR. TOM SATHER: I was going to mention
23 that, and I think it was mentioned earlier, but the
24 proposed fare increase or changes that we are
25 proposing here and discussing are not scheduled to

1 take effect until after January 1st or effective
2 January 1st, '93. So there is a window of
3 opportunity given the events that one of our
4 participants here had mentioned. There are things
5 obviously that are going to change in the meantime.
6 This is a public policy procedure that needs to
7 happen to get that kind of input so that we can in
8 fact go back as a Board and discuss some --
9 reasonably some of the alternatives after having
10 heard from the general public.

11 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Sir.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, I have a question.
13 Will the comments of from all these meetings be
14 compiled and available to the state legislature?

15 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: And that's a
16 good idea. And if we hadn't planned to before, we
17 certainly want to make sure that they do get a
18 record. We're doing a legal transcript of all of
19 the meetings. We've held seven public hearings.
20 This is the seventh and final. And that's a good
21 idea.

22 I think that we will share that with the
23 legislature. It really helps when legislators get
24 -- just the comments, and I could share with this
25 Board and just heard recently that one of the senior

1 leaders in the legislature, said, Well, we haven't
2 heard enough about the need for transit funding so
3 it won't be a high priority. That comes -- not from
4 us. They expect it from us. And frankly they kind
5 of ignore us because they kind of see it as
6 feathering our own bureaucratic nest. But if they
7 hear it from people, and even the people in this
8 room probably would double the number of contacts
9 they had last year if everybody would send the post
10 cards. And that really is critical, and I can't
11 emphasize it enough. And if you know other people
12 who can do it, grab a bunch of those post cards
13 because that will have tremendous impact, more than
14 if we hire a lobbyist to go over there for us.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: You know, we've been
16 made so aware of airfare and the airline controversy
17 in the wake of the pilots and all, and somewhere
18 along the line there was the matter of freezing
19 their wages. And yet I'm not interested in airfare
20 when you've got a day-to-day land problem of using
21 the transit and more important, more of a concern of
22 mine. So I don't expect that cost-of-living
23 increase will be denied to drivers. But boy, I wish
24 there were a way to put a cap on some of that these
25 days. Anything that contributes to inflation is

1 always going to have a multiple effect when we come
2 around to paying for it.

3 MR. MICHAEL EHRLICHMANN: Thank you.

4 Well, is there anybody else who hasn't had an
5 opportunity to contribute who would like to? (No
6 response). If not, I want to thank you all for
7 coming. We appreciate your taking the time to show
8 up and give us your input. Thank you very much.

9 (Concluded at approximately 12:50 p.m.,
10 Tuesday, September 29, 1992.)

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