

MINUTES OF THE 466th MEETING OF THE OHIO TURNPIKE COMMISSION

March 26, 2001

Pursuant to the bylaws, the Ohio Turnpike Commission met for a meeting at the Commission's Administration Building at 10:00 a.m. on February 12, 2001, with members of the staff: Gino Zomparelli, Executive Director and Assistant-Secretary Treasurer, Dan Castrigano, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer, Rob Fleischman, Asst. Chief Engineer, Pat Patton, Government Liaison Officer, Thomas Amato, General Counsel, Richard Morgan, Director of Information Systems; David Miller, Chief Auditor; William Keaton, Telecommunications Manager and Lauren Hakos, Public Affairs Manager.

A vote of ayes and nays was taken and all Members present responded to roll call. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Mrs. Leever, Mr. Williams, Mr. Strnisha,
Mr. Greenwood
Nays : None

The Chairman advised that Mr. Blair representing the Ohio Department of Transportation Director, Gordon Proctor, was unable to attend today's meeting. In addition, Senator Armbruster and Representative Buehrer were unable to attend.

The Chairman advised that a number of guests were in attendance, and she would like them to introduce themselves.

The following representatives attended the meeting:

G. Alan Plain, consultant; Tom Tarantino, Climaco, Lefkowitz; Eric Erickson, Fifth Third Securities; Frank Lamb, Huntington Bank; Mike Burgess, URS-Greiner, Paul Stubbins, Seasongood & Mayer; John Petty, Nat City Investments; Ryan Connors, Connors & Co.; Courtney Shea, Salomon Smith Barney; Mike Schipper, Tony Yacobucci, HNTB; Katie Knutson, Sandusky Register; Howard O'Malley, B & T Express; Michael DiPerna, Brett Bailey, Tim Long, McDonald Investments; Mark Miller, Eric Carmichael, Apex Pryor Securities; St. Lt. Tom Derr; Capt. Tim Escola, Captain Robert Ferguson, OSHP; Tom Travis, HMS Host; Kenny

McLiplett, Floyd Jeffers, Operating Engineers, Local 18; Tracy Cowley and Diane Pring.

The Chairman welcomed all in attendance and stated she was happy to see the sun shining. This is the Commission's 466th meeting of the Ohio Turnpike Commission. We are meeting here in the Commission's headquarters as provided for in the Commission's Code of Bylaws.

The Chairman also stated she was very happy to be here today and apologize for having missed the last two meetings which was beyond her control. She mentioned she did not feel that well today, but the only reason she was here today was she was afraid of Mr. Williams who might take over my job. She also said she wanted to thank Mr. Williams for helping me out and he is her right-hand person and I want to thank you very much for stepping in.

The minutes of the last Commission Meeting of February 12, 2001 have been distributed to the Members for their comments, and I will accept a motion to adopt them without reading.

The minutes were moved for adoption by Commissioner Strnisha and seconded by Mr. Greenwood. A vote of ayes and nays was taken and all Members present responded to roll call. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Williams; Mr. Strnisha; Mrs. Leever.

Nays : None.

The Chairman advised that various reports would be received and the Commission will act on several resolutions, draft copies of which have previously been set to the Members and updated drafts are also in the Members' folders. The resolutions will be explained during the appropriate reports.

If there are no further questions at this time, we will proceed with the report of the Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Greenwood.

The following items have been sent to the members since the last regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission on February 12, 2001:

1. Draft of Commission Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2001
2. Traffic and Revenue Report, January and February 2001
3. Traffic Accident Summary Report, January and February 2001
4. Financial Statements, January and February 2001
5. Revenue by Month & Year, January and February 2001
6. Investment Report, January and February 2001
7. Ohio Turnpike Construction Project Booklet - 2001
8. Various News Releases

Leever: Thank you Mr. Greenwood. Report on financial and budgetary matters, Mr. Miller?

Miller: Thank you, Madame Chairman, Commission Members. I am pleased to provide the following report of traffic for the month of February 2001. Passenger car traffic during the month of February 2001 totaled 2,302,000 vehicles falling short of the previous record set last year by 28,000 cars or approximately 1.2%.

Commercial traffic for Feb. totaled 637,000 vehicles falling short of the prior record set last year by 80,000 vehicles or approximately 11.2%.

Passenger car traffic during the first two months of 2001 totaled 4.7-M vehicles surpassing the prior record established in the year 2000 by 25,000 cars or approx. 0.5%. Commercial traffic during the first two months of the year totaled 1.3-M vehicles falling short of the prior record set in last year by approx. 79,000 or 5.6%. Total traffic for the first two months of the year exceeded 6-M vehicles falling just short of the prior record set in year 2000 by 53,000 vehicles or approximately 0.9%.

It is worth noting that traffic volumes during the first several months of 2001 were exceptionally high consequently it is a positive sign that year-to-date passenger car for 2001 actually

exceeded the volume from the year 2000. It is also not surprising that commercial traffic volumes for 2001 are not quite keeping pace with those from 2000. Prior to the year 2000 the record for total traffic volume for the first two months of the year were set in 1999. Total year to date traffic volume for the first two months of 2001 exceeded the traffic volume for the same period in 1999 by approximately 339,000 vehicles or about 6%.

A couple other items to report upon – I am pleased to announce that our auditors from Deloitte & Touche have issued an unqualified or “clean” opinion once again on our year-end financial statements. The comprehensive Annual Financial Report is currently being printed and will be available within just a few days. The theme of the 2000 Annual Report focuses on the Commission’s employees.

Also, I’m very pleased to report that on March 14th, Moody’s Investors Service raised the Commission’s bond rating from A1 to Aa3. This action followed the Commission’s placement on Moody’s watch list for possible rating upgrade approximately two weeks earlier on March 2. Moody’s opinion on the upgrade read in part:

“The Aa3 rating, which carries a stable outlook reflects the Turnpike’s position as an established, critical component of the nation’s highway system between the large Chicago, Philadelphia and New York City markets. Other credit strengths include a history of sound financial operations and expected continued traffic growth.”

Finally, an update on our expected bond issue – on March 12, 2001, the Ohio Controlling Board unanimously approved the Commission’s request to issue bonds through a negotiated sale. The RFP for Underwriting Services was issued as planned on March 5th, proposals are due back from the underwriters on April 2. Interviews are scheduled for the week of April 23-27. An award of the underwriting team is expected for the Commission’s meeting on May 14th. The bond issue is scheduled for the month of July. That concludes my report, but I will happy to address any questions the Commission Members might have.

Leever: Thank you – are there any questions? We finally got that upgrade. That’s enough to make us all smile. Mr. Zomparelli, it is your turn.

Zomparelli: Thank you Madame Chair, I have three draft resolutions in your packets. The first one is titled, “Resolution Awarding Control No. 46-01-01.” This is a contract sought for the furnishing and applying of retro-reflective pavement markers on the Ohio Turnpike’s mainline roadway. The contract has been divided into two groups – Group I consists of all the markings placed between Milepost 0.0 to 118.8 in Williams, Fulton, Lucas, Wood, Ottawa, Sandusky and Erie Counties.

Group II consists of all the markings placed between Milepost 127.23 to 230.55 in Erie, Lorain, Cuyahoga, Summit, Portage, Trumbull and Mahoning Counties.

The Commission received bids from two bidders. The bids have been reviewed by the Commission’s Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer. The Resolved of the resolution reads:

“RESOLVED that the combination bid of **Oglesby Construction Inc.**, of Norwalk, Ohio, in the amount of **\$594,989.55** for the performance of **Contract No. 46-01-01** is, and is by the Commission, determined to be the lowest responsive and responsible bid received for the performance of said contract, and is accepted, and that the chairperson and executive director, or either of them, hereby is authorized (1) to execute a contract with said successful bidder in the form heretofore prescribed by the Commission pursuant to the aforesaid bids; (2) to direct the return to the other bidder of its bid security, when appropriate, and (3) to take any and all action necessary or proper to carry out the terms of said bid and of said contract; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that Project No. 46-01-01 is designated a System Project under the Commission’s 1994 Master Trust Agreement.”

A bid tab is attached with your packet. The bids received were in line with the Commission's estimate – slightly above. I recommend that the Commission move to adopt this resolution.

Leever: May we have a motion?

Strnisha: I'll move.

Greenwood: Second.

Roll: Mr. Strnisha-yes; Mr. Williams-yes; Mr. Greenwood-yes; Mrs. Leever-yes.

Resolution Awarding Contract No. 46-01-01 is adopted.

Zomparelli: The second resolution in your packet is captioned, "Resolution Awarding Contract No. 58-00-03 (Parts A, B and C)." This was a bid in connection with a contract for renovations to the Commission's Interchange No. 13 (f/k/a TP-2) "Bryan-Montpelier" area located at Milepost 13.5 in Williams County.

The Commission received bids from 4 bidders for this contract. The bids have been reviewed and analyzed by the Commission's Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer and the Resolved reads:

"RESOLVED that the combination bid of **Blaze Building Corporation** of Berea, Ohio, in the amount of **\$5,124,258.50** for the performance of **Contract No. 58-00-03** (Part A, B and C) is, and is by the Commission, determined to be the lowest responsive and responsible bid received for the performance of said contract, and is accepted, and that the chairperson and executive director, or either of them, hereby is authorized (1) to execute a contract with said successful bidder in the form heretofore prescribed by the Commission pursuant to the aforesaid bids; (2) to direct the return to the other bidders of their bid security, when appropriate, and (3) to take any and all action necessary or proper to carry out the terms of said bid and of said contract; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that Project No. 58-00-03 is designated a System Project under the Commission's 1994 Master Trust Agreement.

Again, a bid tab is included in your packet. The combination bid received by Blaze Building Corp. for Parts A, B and C is just below our estimate. This bidder is currently doing work for the Commission – rather, a company affiliated with Blaze Bldg. Corp. who are working at our old Exit 10 and Blaze Bldg. Corp. is the corporation that the Commission awarded the contract for our new service plazas at Vermilion Valley and Middle Ridge in Lorain County.

Because of all the work they had recently received with the Commission and being a newer entity, we had General Counsel check out the sufficiency of their bond and General Counsel has informed me that each bond for construction is “site-specific” and that rather than legal considerations, he would recommend award. I do recommend award to Blaze Building Corp. on this contract.

Leever: We need a motion.

Williams: I move for the adoption of this resolution.

Strnisha: Second.

Leever: Are there any questions?

Strnisha: Maybe to Dan – we typically get often times a discount when they submit a “combination” bid, I noticed on this one they gave rather a substantial discount for doing all parts. Can you explain that?

Castrigano; No I don't. I just think that they feel they can do the job more economically if they have the total package rather than having to schedule and coordinate with other contractors on the site.

Leever: Any further questions?

Roll: Mr. Williams-yes; Mr. Strnisha-yes; Mr. Greenwood-yes; Mrs. Leever-yes.

The resolution awarding Contract No. 58-00-03 (Parts A, B and C) is adopted.

Zomparelli: The third draft resolution in your packet is captioned, “Resolution Awarding Contract TRM 8C-7 for cleaning and janitorial services at the Commission’s Portage and Brady’s Leap Service Plazas.”

The Portage and Brady’s Leap Service Plazas are the pair of service plazas nearing completion in Portage County. We hope to have those open sometime in April. The Deputy Executive Director will report on those later in his report.

The Commission had advertised for proposals for cleaning and janitorial services at this pair of service plaza buildings for an initial term of two years with one-year extension periods. Copies of the RFP were mailed to 72 firms that expressed an interest in providing the requested services. Five companies did present proposals for the furnishing of such services. The bids have been reviewed by the Commission’s staff and Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer as well as General Counsel.

The Resolved of the resolution reads:

RESOLVED that the bid submitted by **Cornerstone Management Service, Inc.** of Elyria, Ohio, which utilizes the following Schedule of Bids:

<u>Service Plaza</u>	<u>Monthly Fee</u>	<u>Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Annual Fee</u>	<u>2-Year Fee</u>
Portage	\$19,015.00	\$9.50	\$228,180.00	\$456,360.00
Brady’s Leap	\$19,015.00	\$9.50	\$228,180.00	<u>\$456,360.00</u>
		Total Bid		\$912,720.00

is, and is by the Commission determined to be, the **best** of all bids received for the performance of Contract TRM 8C-7 and is accepted;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the executive director and general counsel hereby are authorized to execute Contract TRM 8C-7 [Portage and Brady’s Leap]

Service Plazas which provides for an initial term of **Two (2) years commencing April 3, 2001**, and further provides, at the Commission's option, to extend for one (1) year periods, with Cornerstone Management Service, Inc. in the form heretofore prescribed by the Commission pursuant to the aforesaid bid, and to take any and all action necessary or proper to carry out the terms of said bid and said contract; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission concurs in the above-mentioned rejection recommendation that all other bids submitted for Contract TRM 8C-7 be rejected;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the executive director is instructed to return the bid security of all other bidders as soon as said contract is executed.

As the Commission Members can see, it is not a small fee for janitorial and cleaning services at these facilities. It is definitely necessary that we have quality cleaning and janitorial services. It's what our patrons demand and we certainly see the difference with the new plazas as compared to the old plazas and the old way of doing things.

I would recommend that the Commission move to adopt this resolution.

Leever: Gino, I see that we met with them. I am assuming that if they receive the award today – they have 12 employees and they will increase it to 25. I will assume that's immediate.

Zomparelli: They are not a large company, but we are willing to give them the opportunity to perform. We explained to them our requirements and we would be a very demanding client. We would require them to follow the contract requirements to the letter as far as staffing. They have given us reassurances that they can meet the contract obligations.

Leever: Now, are we the ones that will buy the parking lot sweepers or are they?

Zomparelli: They will.

Williams: How does this compare with previous services in the other plazas – as to the dollar figure.

Zomparelli: Madame Chair, Commission Members, I don't have the other figures but it is in line – probably slightly higher than the previous janitorial service.

Castrigano: The monthly amount bid is slightly lower than our last award at Great Lakes/Towpath as well as Erie Islands/Commodore Perry.

Zomparelli: This is a smaller minority firm and we'd like to give them the opportunity to try.

Leever: That means they will really work hard.

Zomparelli: Well, we'll be the big fish in their pond and maybe we'll get the best quality service.

Strnisha: One question, this is a two-year contract, what would happen if the work is not satisfactory? What conditions are in place, if we have to terminate?

Zomparelli: General Counsel, would you respond? What are the default provisions in the contract?

Strnisha: Some of the items we mentioned, will they be written into the contract as stipulations?

Amato: Well, they have very specific requirements. The number of employees is a requirement – that has to meet specifications. The sweepers are also a requirement. During the course of the contract if they do not meet any specific requirement, they are given 30 days to cure. I think on the janitorial contract, less than 30 days because of the urgency of that type of situation. If they do not cure the defects, then the contract is terminated.

For the record, that's what happened at Great Lakes/Towpath. There was another company that was not performing. We had to terminate and have a new company come in. If that happens, we surely hope that is not the case, we will know how to proceed.

Zomparelli: Madame Chair, Commission Member Strnisha, we would also if they did not have the required staffing, we would provide it and offset it because we would not let the facilities suffer. Obviously, that would be constant communication if they weren't performing. Those plazas are monitored by our Director of Safety services as well as Patron Service Manager on a regular, daily basis. If we felt they were not performing and services were suffering or hygiene was becoming an issue, we would not hesitate to hire a temporary crew to come and work out the financial arrangements.

Strnisha: Two-year contracts are typically what we have done with the other janitorial contracts?

Zomparelli: This is something we started with the reconstruction of the service plazas. Yes, they are consistent, they are two year contracts. That gives the incentive and keeps them on the hook. It is also new for the Commission so we didn't want to have too long of a term in case we had a bad operator and we would be in litigation for sometime.

Strnisha: I'll move for approval.

Leever: Need a second.

Greenwood: Second.

Roll: Mr. Strnisha-yes; Mr. Greenwood-yes; Mr. Williams-yes; Mrs. Leever-yes.

The resolution awarding the cleaning and janitorial contract for Portage/Brady's Leap is adopted.

Zomparelli: Madame Chair, Commission Members, those are all the resolutions that I have, but there are several other items I'd like to report to the Commission on.

The first thing – continuing with the service plazas, as you recall from the last meeting, nothing has changed. We were unable to reach an agreement with Advanced Restaurant Concepts, Inc. (ARCI) for performance of the food concessionaire at Unit #4 at Portage/Brady's Leap. Thus, we

recently issued an RFPs for bids. We plan to open the bids on April 18th – hopefully a new provider for Unit #4. We are not happy that we were not able to proceed with the Denny’s concept and ARCI on their bid, however, the door is now open and maybe Denny’s can bid separately or with another operator as well as the possibility of other bidders submitting their idea for the Unit #4 concept. We will report at our next Commission meeting on the results of that bid.

Strnisha: What are we stipulating on that – sit-down, making it open to other concepts at this point? What are we doing?

Zomparelli: We identify it as a “sit-down” restaurant but it is very flexible. We are not requiring waitress or waiter service 24 hours, but we have made it known to all the bidders that we are keeping an open mind – whether it’s a diner concept or a buffet or sit-down restaurant or something similar to what we have with Panera Bread Co. where you do have the atmosphere of a sit-down, but there is still some self-service done by the customer filling their own beverages. They still have that family-style, sit-down atmosphere. The staff will help clean the trays if people leave them on the tables and you are sitting at tables and not in a food court area. It seems to be very popular with our patrons to have their own identity. The other advantage you have with the sit-down concept is they can provide a mood or atmosphere with music and table and décor. When the plazas are not that busy and you have that large food-court area, a lot of people gravitate to the sit-down area.

Strnisha: We are not restricted as I recall. We awarded one of the units to McDonalds last time. We are not restricted in the agreement with them on anything. There is total flexibility to put in that space – whatever.

Zomparelli: Actually, we have heard that McDonalds has come up with a new concept called Mc-Diner. They opened the first facility in Indiana. We’ll probably go take a look at it. We are encouraging them to submit a proposal for the Mc-Diner concept. They have 122 food menu items. That would be interesting. We are hoping that by re-bidding we’ll have

more competition. There is no exclusivity as to who can go into which plaza.

Greenwood: Mr. Zomparelli – was Panera interested in this location. I think they are interested. Because of the bidding process, we are encouraging them to bid. From the last process, we became aware that they were not aware of some of the changes that the Commission had made in our bidding documents. We have extended the term and decreased the common area charges.

We were a little amazed why they didn't take the time to read it, but I think they are also looking at that location. I expect that HMS (Marriott) will also bid. Maybe this will be a more competitive situation than last time. Maybe Denny's will seek another operator to bid. We knew they were very interested in that area. Because of their arrangement with ARCI, they could come in individually. We are keeping our fingers crossed and hope we get a good Operator.

Greenwood: Madame Chair – what's in there right now?

Zomparelli: It's empty right now. That's the new Portage and Brady's Leap Service Plazas.

Strnisha; It's going to open in April with a McDonalds.

Zomparelli: To follow along, McDonalds will bring in a temporary service until their full-service area is open and we are working on contract arrangements to allow McDonalds to come in with a temporary food concessionaire. They would locate partially in the food court area while they are doing the actual build-out for the permanent McDonalds. It looks like it will be very professionally done – something similar that you'd see at conventions or sporting events.

Dan, do you recall the one he mentioned at our meeting?

Castrigano; The MBA All-Star Game.

Zomparelli: It won't be a revenue raising thing for us, but it will be a 6 weeks service to the patrons so they won't have to wait for

the complete build-out is done. They hope to have their build-out completed in 3 months. HMS will have the coffee concept done probably in that 6 week period also assuming there are not any delays with their permits.

The next item I have is – it involves the plazas but the entire engineering process that the Ohio Turnpike commenced in 1995 with the widening of the third-lane, renovation of all the service plazas, major bridge replacements along the Turnpike.

On March 13, 2001, the Cleveland Engineering Society Design and Construction Division, recognized the Ohio Turnpike Commission with an award of excellence in recognition of the vision, perseverance, planning and overriding mission to promote economic development in Ohio through the construction of the new interchanges, a third-lane in each direction, the renovation of service plazas and major bridge replacements and widenings. This was held at the Cleveland Engineering Society 49th Annual Design and Construction Conference. Here is the plaque we received and I will pass it on to the Commission Members to look at it.

It's nice to get some recognition on the third lane for a change and not the complaints on construction and costs and toll rates. To carry that further, I am also proud to say that our former Executive Director, G. Alan Plain, was inducted into the Cleveland Engineering Society's Hall of Fame at the same meeting. Alan is in the audience, and I'd like to give him a hand and ask him to stand. (Applause).

It doesn't stop there. We received another award – (from the Academy -- - a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting presented to the Ohio Turnpike Commission for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year December 31, 1999. I think every year they have given an award, the Commission has received one. It keeps in line with our credence and requirement of good financial reporting so that we continue to have the trust of all the citizens in the State of Ohio.

Next, the Commission's Customer Advisory Group did not give us an award but did meet on February 27th. I have

included some information – the minutes from that meeting. They had a lot of good ideas. They asked questions about delays on the Turnpike – how we handled them; responses to emergency situations. I thought that would be something good for the Commission Members to look at. What kind of questions our customers ask of us?

We'll continue to meet with the Customer Advisors Group throughout the year.

Williams: How frequently do they meet?

Zomparelli: We are going to try and meet every 3-4 months throughout the year depending upon the issues and things of importance. We have had great attendance. I think we only had one member who could not attend the first meeting and 1-2 for the last meeting. It's a very active and dynamic group. We'd like to meet 3 or 4 times a year.

We encourage them to come up with the ideas for the agenda. We have met here at the Administration Building. We might have future meetings along the Turnpike corridor – maybe at a maintenance building facility –give them a tour – or at our new service plazas.

It's better than any award we could receive – it's the upgrade from Moody's – giving us Aa3 rating – that's the highest rating they have ever given a toll road. We share that rating with several other toll roads. It's better than an award because it should help us with the cost of borrowing and we will have a definite financial impact on our operations.

We have the highest credit ratings from all three services. The highest rating given by Standard & Poor to a toll road facility, however, we're the only public toll road from Standard & Poor that received the AA rating and Eric can correct me if I'm wrong. There is a private toll road in Norway that has an AA rating but it's probably not as large an operation compared to the Turnpike.

As far as I am aware, we are the only one that has the AA rating from Fitch. We have received A honors all the way

through. Eric Erickson will report on the status of our RFP for underwriting services later. I think if there are no other questions, that will conclude my report.

Leever: Thank you Mr. Zomparelli. We are to be congratulated in our excellence in financial reporting certainly. Congratulations to you, Alan, that's a very nice honor. Mr. Castrigano, would be please give us your report?

Castrigano: Thank you Madame Chair, Commission Members. Construction is continuing through the winter as weather permits. It has slowed us down a little bit this weekend. As far as our third-lane projects are concerned, we have two projects totaling approximately 16 miles. Work has continued basically on sub-structure work throughout the winter. In April traffic will shift and we will begin working on the third-lane portion of the project. Both projects are scheduled for completion this year.

Work continues on the Cuyahoga River Bridge on the east-bound structure. Fourteen of the seventeen piers are complete and the concrete beams have been placed in 12 of the 18 spans.

We have four overhead bridge construction projects that are scheduled for completion this year also. We have five toll plaza rehabilitation projects underway-- Exit: 45 (Exit 3); Exit 161 (Exit 10); 173 (Exit 11); 232 (Exit 16) and 234 (Exit 16A). Traffic is being maintained in all these plazas during construction. All these projects are scheduled for completion this year also.

We spoke of the service plazas a little bit previously. Portage and Brady's Leap we are shooting for an opening the second week in April. As Mr. Zomparelli said we will be opening those plazas with temporary food service and gasoline.

Those of you who have come in from the west this morning may have noticed that Middle Ridge/Vermilion Valley Service Plazas have shut-down. They closed on March 6 of this year and work is progressing as scheduled. They are scheduled for completion in May of 2002.

You may remember Bob Arlow, he was always speaking of “on-time and under budget” for our construction projects. I am pleased to report that we have managed to maintain that record through the year 2000 also.

Of our 11 construction projects that we completed and finalized last year, the value of the contract work was approximately 7% below the actual contract award. That relates to a savings in excess of \$6-M. That completes my report, Madame Chair.

Leever: Thank you very much. One of the buildings is totally down, I noticed this morning and the other is partially up. So we are certainly getting there. Now, Eric, it’s your turn, please.

Erickson: You certainly heard the good news. I just wanted to follow-up with a couple of comments. When we went back to Moody’s we took a different approach based upon the Executive Director’s recommendation and really focused upon the Turnpike as an economic development engine for the State – the northern part of the State. We feel that approach and theme really helped in convincing them to come around and look at the road as something beyond a road in a rural section of the State. Again, that whole theme I think was the key to getting that upgrade. I applaud the Executive Director for the idea and for the focus on that.

To follow-up on our Auditor’s comments relative to the RFP. I understand that they are coming back in another couple weeks and we’ll have a recommendation for the May meeting. We probably will have an issue sometime in June or July 2001 depending upon the timing of other issues. We will have meetings with the other two major rating agencies sometime in May. Those meetings should be scheduled in the next couple months. Are there any questions?

Leever: We always like to hear your report when it’s good, Eric. Thank you.

Zomparelli: I also have to give credit to our financial advisor on putting the packet together. It’s easy to come up with the idea.

When you have to do the execution it's difficult. The Commission Members may recall the large packet we put together and we showed part of it at the fall Commission meeting. Eric didn't waste any time putting the project together and getting the information line with Jim Steiner. It was a great team – thank you very much.

Leever: Frank Lamb, trustee?

Lamb: No report Madame Chair.

Leever: On Tuesday, I was privileged to attend the retirement luncheon for Capt. Farris our outgoing OSHP Captain. We shall miss him. But we are very happy to welcome Captain Ferguson – I assume it's official, Captain? We are very happy to welcome you to the Ohio Turnpike. I hope you will enjoy working here with us. We look forward to your tenure with us.

Ferguson; Thank you very much, Madame Chair.

Leever: It's very nice to have our former Captain here – it's good to see you again, Capt. Escola.

Escola; Thank you, Madame Chair.

Leever: Our general consultant – oh I'm sorry, before I go any further, Captain do you have any report for us today?

Ferguson: I'll refer to St. Lt. Derr for that today, Madame Chair. He has been carrying the ball for me since I got here.

Derr: We have recovered some drugs on the Turnpike since our last meeting. That was a major concern for the OSHP and to any police agency, parent or grandparents. On March 19, 2001 at Milepost 17 in Williams County our officer stopped a patron for a speed violation. While talking to the driver of the vehicle they noticed criminal activity and observed some items in the car that were out of place.

They had a K-9 unit from the Williams Cty. Sheriff's Dept. come and check the vehicle and alerted to the vehicle.

During a probable cause search, they found a hidden compartment underneath the vehicle and recovered nearly 17 kilograms of cocaine valued at \$681,000. Also during that search they found a loaded 9-mm derringer so they people were placed under arrest and we removed nearly 17 kilograms of coke from the public.

Leever; Excuse, Lt. Derr, did you say he was stopped for speeding?

Derr: Yes and through the observations of the officer who talked to him and this happened to be a female officer – excellent officer observed some items that would not normally be in a person’s car and from talking to him, observing him and she was able to determine that they could be transporting drugs at that time.

Over the weekend on March 24, we had another officer that made a drug interdiction case. This was at MP 103 in Sandusky County. Again, this was another traffic violation and as the officer approached the vehicle, he detected the odor of burnt marijuana coming from inside the vehicle. After talking to the person, he determined the person was under the influence of drug abuse, placed him under arrest and through a probable cause search they found marijuana inside the vehicle and as they were doing an administrative inventory they found an additional marijuana in the trunk area that was 2.3 kilograms valued at about \$12,000. That person is also under arrest for a traffic violation.

The gentleman that we had stand earlier, Captain Ferguson, was promoted on March 23. He has some prior Turnpike experience. Bob was Post Commander at the Hiram Post from 1988-1992. At that time he transferred to Ashland and was the Post Commander until the time of 1999. He was promoted just a little more than a year ago to Staff Lt. and went to the Massillon District (District 3). He’s done an excellent job there and was promoted to Captain. Bob brings along 27 years of experience. I have known him since my days in District 1 – 20 some years ago. He will be an excellent Captain and serve you well. Thank you very much.

Greenwood: Does the OSHP that patrols the Turnpike have its own K-9 unit or does it always contact a local agency.

Derr: We do not have our own K-9 unit at this time. We have had in the past and as those K-9 owners are transferred to another area, they take the dog with them. We had that instance happen to us approximately 4 years ago. We have availability through our units – we have 14 different K-9 units across the state that are assigned to the OSHP and are handled by OSHP officers, but we can also use other police agencies. In this case, just being closer and the logistics of it was the reason the K-9 unit was contacted and the Williams County Sheriff’s Dept. K-9 unit responded.

Leever: Thank you.

Zomparelli: Madame Chairman, I’d like to make a brief comment, I want to give some recognition to Lt. Derr because I have only been with the Turnpike for 6 years, and we are now on our 4th Captain. But Lt. Derr has been a stabilizing force here, and I am sure he will help our “new” Captain Ferguson make his job a lot easier. Lt. Derr has always been very dedicated on the Turnpike, and they have had some of the same problems we have had with retirements and new personnel.

I will be getting together with Captain Ferguson and also invite Capt. Escola to talk about the uniqueness of the operations on the Turnpike as compared to the other roads. We collect money, we have restaurants, service plazas, many patrons and we provide extra service. With Lt. Derr’s help and the good credentials we have heard about Capt. Ferguson, I think the Turnpike should be fairly well represented by the Ohio State Highway Patrol. I just wanted to thank you, Lt. Derr and welcome Capt. Ferguson.

Leever: I should tell you that when I receive a phone cal from Lt. Derr, I really don’t want it, but I did ask Capt. Farris and Lt. Derr has also helped to keep my abreast of situations as they happen on the Turnpike. Sometimes those are not always “good” situations. I appreciate being kept up to date so when he says, “Ruth Ann, this is Lt. Derr, I just want to hang up

sometimes, but I don't. I do appreciate being informed and Capt. Escola, would you like to say anything at this time?

Escola: Madame Chair, the only thing I want to say is Bob Ferguson worked for me in Massillon headquarters. I have known Bob for 27-1/2 years when we graduated from the Academy together. We has had an excellent career and received many awards. I think you'll be very pleased with him.

Leever: I'm sure we will be. Thank you very much. OK, our general consultant, Mike Schipper?

Schipper: As the construction season begins, we will begin our annual bridge, culvert, inspection work in April.

Leever: Thank you. That's coming up very shortly. General Counsel.

Amato: Madame Chair, Commission Members, I have one item and that we have become aware of the campaign of the local Teamsters Union for representation of our workers – the toll and maintenance workers. They are presently under a campaign for their representation. We anticipate they will be requesting recognition soon and possibly there will be an election. We are monitoring the situation and will keep you advised as we learn more.

Zomparelli: Madame Chair, Commission Members – that's to replace the current union representatives. It still deals with the same employees – the part-time toll collectors, full-time toll collectors and roadway personnel.

Leever: So it's wait and see.

Amato: Yes. It could be splintered. They could have only the maintenance or only the toll. It all depends upon how the election goes. We will keep monitoring it. That's all I have today.

Leever: I'm very glad, thank you. If there is no further business, I will accept a motion to adjourn until May 14th.

Zomparelli: I should have commented when Vice-Chairman Williams asked a question about the Customer Advisory Group, since we got an award and was acknowledging everyone, we probably want to acknowledge Howard O'Malley. He has been a very good participant on this Board. He was originally appointed by Alan Plain. Although he represents the trucking industry and maybe we don't agree on some issues all the time, he has been a very good member and has encouraged good dialogue. Capt. Escola is also on the Customer Advisory Board. We try to balance the Board as well. We are not afraid of having the critical as well as the compliments at our Customer Advisor Meetings. We'll take them both.

Leever: Thank you very much. I think that's a very important aspect of our very existence. I still need a motion to adjourn until May 14th, please.

Greenwood: Madame Chair, I move that we adjourn until May 14th.

Williams: Second.

Roll: Mr. Greenwood-yes; Mr. Williams-yes; Mr. Strnisha-yes; Mrs. Leever-yes.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Leever: Thank you and drive safely.

/dsp