Port Authority Welcomes Public Comments On Historic Capital Plan

The Port Authority on January 31 hosted the first of two public meetings to gather input from residents, local politicians, community leaders, and other stakeholders on the proposed $32.2 billion Capital Plan – demonstrating the PA’s commitment to transparency and public outreach as it advances the largest plan in its history.

The meeting was held in the Board Room at 4 World Trade Center and moderated by Chief Operating Officer Stephanie Dawson. She joined Chairman John Degnan, Commissioners Kenneth Lipper and William “Pat” Schuber, Executive Director Pat Foye, and Chief Financial Officer Libby McCarthy in listening to about 30 members of the public, who provided input that the Board will carefully review before taking action at its next meeting on February 16.

The PA took comments on various aspects of the plan, including PATH’s extension to Newark Liberty International Airport, the George Washington Bridge Rehabilitation (“Restoring the George”) Program, and the replacement of the Port Authority Bus Terminal.

Watch the proceedings on the PA’s corporate website. The second and final public meeting will take place at 5 p.m. on February 7 at 2 Montgomery Street and also will be livestreamed.

Día de Los Reyes: A Time for Tradition, Camaraderie, And Dance!

More than 100 members and supporters of the Port Authority Hispanic Society united on January 20 for the group’s annual celebration of Día de Los Reyes (translated “The Day of the Kings”) – an important holiday in the Latino community that commemorates when the Three Wise Men journeyed to see the newborn Jesus Christ.

This year’s event, which continues a PA tradition that started in the 1980s, was held at Iberia Peninsula Restaurant in Newark, which possessed a core venue requirement: a sizeable dance floor.

Another Record Year for Aviation – More Than 130 Million Reasons for PA’s Redevelopment Programs

No, you’re not having déjà vu.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Port Authority’s airports have seen record-setting passenger levels, with 130.2 million passengers, including 45.6 million international, using the world’s busiest airport system in 2016 – approximately six million more than in 2015.

Calendar

Capital Plan Public Meeting
Feb. 7, at 5 p.m. 2 Montgomery Street, third floor, Classrooms B & C. Staffers are encouraged to join PA leadership at this meeting to hear the public’s comments on the proposed Capital Plan.
PAPD Retiree Shares Photo Of Icon Honoring K-9 Partner

Retired Port Authority Police Lieutenant David Lim was kind enough to provide PA News with this photo from 2002 of actress and cultural icon Mary Tyler Moore, who passed away on January 25. Ms. Moore, who was a dedicated animal rights activist, had presented an award to Lt. Lim’s K-9 partner Sprig, in honor of his previous partner Sirius, who was killed on 9/11.

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PATH Project Coordination Supervisor and former PAHS President Al Anton served as emcee while his daughter Illeana worked the DJ booth, mixing a variety of dance music to energize attendees.

According to Vice President Jennifer Tejada, partygoers considered the celebration to be more of a reunion, where they had the opportunity to reconnect with colleagues they hadn’t seen in a year.

In her remarks, PAHS President and Management & Budget Senior Budget Analyst Leticia Caviness stressed the significance of this tradition, and illustrated how her family, like many Latinos, placed more emphasis on celebrating Día de Los Reyes than Christmas.

The event featured a tango performance by MBD Staff Budget Analyst Vanessa Fernandez and her dance partner and teacher Stefan “El Polaco” Zawistowski (click here to watch), as well as a prize drawing to raise funds for the PAHS Book Awards, established in 2012 to provide scholarships to college students in the bistate region.

PAHS raised $500 to fund the awards, which will be presented to recipients at the Hispanic Heritage Month Breakfast in the fall.

The group plans to continue diversifying its events program in 2017. Keep an eye out for its Mambo Mixer in the spring.

To view more event photos, click here. If you’re interested in joining PAHS, submit an online application.

PA Shomrim Society Sails the Seas

Members and friends of the Port Authority Shomrim Society in mid-January participated in the National Conference of Shomrim Societies’ Annual Convention at Sea, joining their fellow chapters who represent and celebrate public safety and civil service professionals of the Jewish faith.

The PA was represented by (from left) Police Officer Henri Portner; Lieutenant Scot Pomerantz; PA retiree Betty Astrizky; Barbara Greenstein, the widow of retired PAPD Sergeant Aaron Greenstein; and Police Officer Leon Staley.

Aboard Royal Caribbean’s MS Allure of the Seas, they set sail from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, for an eight-day voyage, visiting several Caribbean ports — St. Thomas, St. Maarten, and Nassau — as they networked with their peers.

If you’re interested in joining the PA Shomrim Society, email Marsha Hochstadt at mhochstadt@panynj.gov.

Achievements

The Moles Honor Retired Chief Engineer

Retired Chief Engineer Frank Lombardi received the Moles’ Member Award for Outstanding Achievement in Construction at the organization’s annual awards dinner on January 25 at the New York Hilton Midtown.

The Moles is a national fraternity of current and former leaders in heavy construction who promote the industry through outreach programs and networking opportunities.

Mr. Lombardi, a 20-year Moles member, retired from the Port Authority in 2010 after four decades of distinguished service, during which he led various construction mega projects across the PA’s transportation network. He played an integral role in restoring operations at the original World Trade Center after the 1993 terrorist bombing. Under his direction following 9/11, PATH service was restored to Lower Manhattan and recovery efforts commenced at the WTC.

Joining Mr. Lombardi at the ceremony were several former colleagues, including his successor Peter Zipf and Mr. Zipf’s successor, current Chief Engineer James Starace.

Read more about Mr. Lombardi in the Moles’ news bulletin.

Get PA News

If you’d like PA News sent to your personal email address, send a note to panews@panynj.gov.
**Retirements**

Aviation's Ed Knoesel is off into the wild blue yonder. Wish him well on February 8, 6 p.m., at Inside Park at St. Bart's in Midtown. RSVP to Ralph Tragale (212 435-3730) as soon as possible. $50 per person (cash only).

OSD's Ken Styles is leaving the building. Wish him well at noon on February 23 at Arthurs of Hoboken. RSVP by February 15 to Mary Plaskon (201 216-2175). $40 per person (cash only).

Engineering's Mike Mahon is ready for his new “career” as a Sanibel Island lifeguard. Wish him well on February 24, noon to 3 p.m., at Spain Restaurant in Newark. $50 per person. RSVP by February 21 by emailing Linda Materowski at lmaterow@panynj.gov.

JFK's Ronnie Bendernagel is preparing for liftoff after more than 31 years of Port Authority service. Celebrate with her on March 9, 6 to 10 p.m., at Roma View Catering in Howard Beach. RSVP to Alex Nin (718 244-3553) by February 20. $75 per person (cash only).

Real Estate Services' John Meyer is closing up shop after 32 years of agency service. Wish him well on March 16, 5 to 8 p.m., at Bright Side Tavern in Jersey City. RSVP to Linda Martin (201 395-5203) by March 9. $65 per person.

EWR's MJ Rutigliano is preparing for liftoff. Wish her well at noon on March 24 at EWR, Building 1, second floor, in the General Manager's Conference Room. RSVP to Anne Leahey (973 961-6621) by March 15. $35 per person (cash only).

**Aviation Receives Donation for William R. DeCota Scholarship**

On January 17, Enterprise Rent-A-Car presented Aviation Director Huntley Lawrence with a $3,000 donation for the William R. DeCota Scholarship Fund, which honors the Aviation Director who passed away on September 11, 2009.

The late Bill DeCota served as Aviation Director from 1999 until his untimely passing. Highly respected by peers in and outside the PA, Mr. DeCota championed groundbreaking modernization projects across the agency’s airport system — laying the foundation for the efforts that would follow after his passing, including the redevelopment programs now led by Mr. Lawrence.

The DeCota scholarship was established in 2010 by the Wings Club, a global society of aviation professionals, and is presented annually to a student at Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology.

**Aviation, SOPD Rolls Out New Security Training**

Last month, Aviation Security & Technology, a division in Security Operations & Programs (CSO), launched its computer-based Security Identification Display Area training, replacing the instructor-led approach to this federally mandated program. Airport personnel — including Port Authority staff and contractors — are required by the Transportation Security Administration to complete SIDA training to have unescorted access to secure areas beyond the Transportation Security Administration's checkpoints. Presently, 77,000 people require this access.

The training was rolled out via a dedicated computer lab at Newark Liberty International Airport and provides participants with comprehensive background information on the governing TSA regulation. The program uses photos and video to clearly illustrate important subject matter, and incorporates “knowledge check” sections to effectively test retention.

SOPD's Aviation Security and Technology Programs Manager Earlyne Alexander said, "We go through great lengths to make sure everyone understands every concept of the TSA regulation that requires this training."

Ms. Alexander’s team partnered with security staff at Newark Liberty International, John F. Kennedy International, Stewart International, and LaGuardia airports to launch this training, which has received rave reviews from many of the first participants. Another classroom will soon open at LGA and later in the year at JFK.

**Diversify Your Portfolio**

Have you ever wanted to be published? Do you have great stories from work that just need to be shared? Have you seen Port Authority history and want to help preserve it on the written page? Portfolio, the PA’s new blog, can be your outlet. If you have a story idea or want to become a contributor, contact Roz Hamlett at 10-4035.
PATH’s Vision to Improve Customer Satisfaction, Transit Connectivity

In addition to advancing its installation of safety- and service-enhancing Positive Train Control technology, PATH is devising ways to better disseminate information to commuters and improve their convenience when transferring between transit systems.

According to PATH Deputy Director Clarelle DeGraffe, the department’s ideas include interactive wayfinding kiosks – which would display train arrivals, delays, and other real-time information to customers before they swipe through the turnstile – and a mobile-based single-payment method for PATH and neighboring transit systems.

Ms. DeGraffe shared these ideas at the Intelligent Transportation Society of New Jersey’s December panel event at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, where she joined leaders from New Jersey Transit, the City of Hoboken, Hudson Transportation Management Association, and Citywide Ferry to discuss how technology can enhance the connectivity between their transit services in and around Hoboken Terminal.

PATH’s ideas were well received by panelists and attendees, including engineering professionals from ITSNJ and Stevens students.

Another Record Year

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John F. Kennedy International Airport welcomed a total of 58.8 million passengers and broke its records for international (31.6 million) and domestic (27.2 million) passengers. Newark Liberty International Airport set new standards with 40 million total (27.7 million domestic and 12.3 million international), and LaGuardia Airport established new records with 29.8 million (28.1 million domestic).

Executive Director Pat Foye noted that this strong and consistent passenger growth illustrates the importance of the PA’s proposed $32.2 billion 2017-2026 capital plan, which dedicates $11.6 billion to airport modernization and improvements. This includes Newark Liberty International Airport’s $2.3 billion Terminal A Redevelopment Program, the LaGuardia Airport Redevelopment Program, replacement of LGA’s Terminals C and D, a new LGA AirTrain, JFK Redevelopment, and the extension of PATH to Newark Liberty Rail Link Station.

“Behind these remarkable numbers – more than 130 million people and more than two million tons of cargo on about 1.3 million annual flights – are the most talented airport professionals in the world,” Aviation Director Huntley Lawrence said. “I thank our many partners in the private and public sector with whom we share our success, and our loyal customers who demand and deserve our best.”

Read more in the press release.