

Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study Policy & Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Phone Conference Call

Monday, April 28th

1:30 PM

Dial **(605) 472-5572**

Access Code: **895451 # (Do not forget # after number)**

Preparing for the call

SWMPC staff will be conducting the meeting using the following materials. The page numbers on the right side of the agenda (pg 2) are the pages in the power point each item is on. Supplemental material can be found in the meeting packet before the power point begins. This includes the following:

- Meeting Agenda
- February 2020 NATS Meeting Minutes
- Update for Niles Dial A Ride

The meeting will be called to order at 1:30 pm

- Roll call will be taken for all NATS members in alphabetical order. Please respond with "Present"
- Other attendees will be asked to announce themselves by first and last name.

You might be asked to take your phone off speaker if other members in the meeting are having a hard time hearing you or put the phone closer to your face.

TIPS for having a better experience on a conference call:

- Everyone on the call should **use the mute feature on phone** if they are not speaking.
***5 to mute and * 6 to unmute.**
- **SPEAK LOUD & SPEAK INTO THE PHONE** when talking so that everyone can hear.
- If your phone is not muted, it will disrupt the meeting with background noise.
- If you do not think people can hear you after you have said, something be sure to check if your mute button is turned off. *6
- **If you have a question please announce yourself by name and announce the person, you are directing your question to.** *"This is Karen Simpson, I would like to direct my question to Bart Jones and ask about..."* Bart Jones unmutates his phone and responds to question.
- **If you make a motion please state your name before you make the motion.** *"This is Ted King, I will make the motion to approve the"*
- **Members of the public are welcome to speak during Public Comment period** at the beginning and the end of the meeting. Please announce yourself by first and last name before you comment.

Note: This meeting will be recorded for meeting minute purposes. Recording will be archived for no longer than 60 days from date of meeting.



**NILES BUCHANAN CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY and POLICY COMMITTEES COMBINED MEETING**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kim Gallagher, *Transportation Planner*
(269) 925-1137 x 1518

Brandon Kovnat, *Transportation Planner*
(269) 925-1137 x 1524

DATE: Tuesday, April 28, 2020

TIME: 1:30 PM

PLACE: Conference Call

AGENDA

Call In Number: (605) 472-5572

Access Code: 895451

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Call to Order and Roll Call | pg. 9 |
| 2. Changes to the Agenda | pg. 9 |
| 3. Public Comment | pg. 9 |
| 4. Approve Minutes from February 25, 2020 Meeting (<i>attached pg. 3-6</i>) | pg. 10 |
| 5. SWMPC Staff Report | pg. 11 |
| 6. Agency & Project Updates | pg. 13 |
| • Public Transit (<i>attached pg. 7</i>) | pg. 14 |
| • Local Road Agencies | pg. 16 |
| • MDOT | pg. 22 |
| 7. New Business | pg. 26 |
| • Transportation Improvement Program Amendments | pg. 27 |
| ○ MDOT Signal project addition | pg. 27 |
| ○ Niles Dial A Ride Truck Purchase | pg. 28 |
| ○ Buchanan Dial A Ride Operating Cost Change | pg. 29 |
| • 2020 NATS Unified Work Program Budget Amendment (<i>attached pg. 7</i>) | pg. 31 |
| 8. Privilege of the Floor or Public Comment | pg. 33 |
| 9. Adjournment | pg. 33 |

NILES BUCHANAN CASS AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (NATS)

Joint Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Policy Committee Minutes – February 25, 2020

Niles District Library, Community Room, 620 E Main St, Niles, MI 49120

NATS MEMBER ORG./POSITION	MEMBERS (2019)	TAC	POL	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Michael Majerek		x	P	P										
Berrien Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	(vacant)		x												
Berrien Co. Community Dev. Dept.	Evan Smith	x		P	A										
Berrien Co. Planning Commission	Eric Lester, M.D.		x	P	P										
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (Policy)	(vacant)		x												
Berrien Co. Road Dept. (TAC)	Kevin Stack	X		P	P										
Bertrand Township	Butch Payton	x	x	A	A										
Buchanan Dial-A-Ride	Kim O'Haver	x	x	A	P										
Buchanan Township	Lynn Ferris	x	x	P	P										
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (1)	Michael Grice		x	P	P										
Cass Co. Board of Commissioners (2)	Roseann Marchetti		x	P	P										
Cass Co. Planning Commission	(vacant)	x													
Cass Co. Road Comm. (Policy)	Sandra Seanor		x	P	P										
Cass Co. Road Comm. (TAC)	Joe Bellina (TAC Chair)	x		A	P										
City of Buchanan	Don Ryman	x	x	P	P										
City of Niles (1)	Georgia Boggs		x	A	P										
City of Niles (2)	Serita Mason		x	P	A										
City of Niles (3)	Jessica Nelson		x	A	A										
City of Niles Community Dev. Director	(vacant)	x													
City of Niles Dial-A-Ride Transit	Kelly Getman-Dissette	x	x	P	A										
City of Niles Public Works Dir./Airport	Joe Ray	x		P	A										
Howard Township	Bill Kasprzak	x	x	P	P										
Kinexus	(vacant)	x													
Mason Township	Doug Fetters	x	x	A	A										
MDOT - Bureau of Trans. Planning	Jim Sturdevant	x	x	A	P										
MDOT - Southwest Region	Brian Sanada	x	x	P	P										
MDOT - Southwest Region (Alternate)	Amy Lipset	Alt	Alt	A	A										
MDOT - Transportation Service Center	Jonathon Smith	x	x	P	P										
Milton Township	Susan Flowers	x	x	P	P										
Niles Charter Township	Richard Cooper (P. Ch.)	x	x	P	P										
Ontwa Township	Dawn Bolock	x	x	A	P										
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians	(vacant)	x	x												
Village of Edwardsburg	Dennis Peak	x	x	A	A										
Federal Highway Administration	Andy Pickard	NV	NV	A	A										
Federal Transit Administration	Susan Weber	NV	NV	A	A										
EGLE - Air Quality	Breanna Bukowski	NV		A	A										
MDOT - Modeling	Jon Roberts	NV		A	A										
MDOT - Office of Passenger Trans.	(vacant)	NV													
Michiana Area Council of Governments	Caitlin Stevens	NV	NV	A	A										
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Kim Gallagher	NV	NV	A	A										
Southwest Michigan Planning Comm.	Brandon Kovnat	NV	NV	P	P										

P. Ch.: Policy Chair; Alt: Alternate; NV: Non-voting; P: Present; A: Absent.

Others Present: Jerrid Burdue, SWMPC

1) **Call to Order / Introductions and Pledge of Allegiance**

Technical Advisory Committee chair, Joe Bellina, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

2) **Changes to the Agenda**

Richard Cooper asked to add the Policy Committee vote approving Technical Advisory Committee recommendations to the agenda after State and federal Updates.

3) **Public Comment**

None.

4) **Approve Minutes from the November 26, 2019 Meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes from the January 28, 2020 joint Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee meeting. Made by Susan Flowers and seconded by Georgia Boggs. **Motion approved.**

5) **Staff Report**

Brandon Kovnat announced a workshop on Americans with Disability (ADA) design on March 31, 2020, which is organized by Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG).

6) **Public Transit Updates**

a) **Niles Dial-a-Ride:** None.

b) **Buchanan Dial-a-Ride:** Kim O'Haver said that she was working on receiving the FTA 5307 funding (source for urbanized areas). When Buchanan Dial A Ride was formed Buchanan was not part of the South Bend urbanized area. Currently they still only receive 5311 funds (rural/small urban). O'Haver said that the process to be designated as an urban transit provider was complex and that the city has contacted Congressman Upton's office for assistance.

7) **Local Road Project Updates**

a) **Redfield Guardrail:** Bellina said that the bids for the project were rejected. The low bid was 18% above the estimate. Bellina believes the high bid is due to the timing of the project between winter/spring. Bellina said he will rebid the project in the summer for fall construction.

b) **Lake Street from Airport Rd. to Huntly Road:** Bellina said that MDOT had accepted a bid from Reith Riley, which was 10% under the estimate. The strike at Reith Riley is still ongoing. Bellina said that when using federal funds the contract and bid must go through MDOT. MDOT must accept the low bid and cannot reject the bid due to a strike.

c) **Third Street:** Stack said the Grade Inspection (GI) meeting was held.

d) **Lake Street bridge over railroad:** no update.

8) **MDOT Project updates**

Jonathon Smith said that MDOT's 2020 projects were all on schedule and there are no new updates.

9) **MDOT Amendments**

Kovnat gave a brief overview of the Rebuilding Michigan road bonding plan. He explained that some MDOT projects that were originally programed with federal funds will now be 100% state funded using a bond. This will

free up federal funds in future years. MDOT will use this to resurface US-12 in 2021 (See attached amendment request).

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the TIP changes as contained in the meeting packet. Made by Susan Flowers and seconded by Kevin Stack. **Motion approved.**

10) **New Business**

- a) Kovnat said that NATS had \$40,741 unprogramed in 2020. Kovnat said that Niles Dial A Ride had expressed interest in using the funds for a truck purchase. Kovnat said that voting on this should be held off until Niles Dial A Ride can finalize the proposed project details.
- b) Kovnat said that there was \$42,835 in funding available for 2021 from the Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP). The HIP funds are a separate one-time federal award but MDOT has said that these funds should be treated just like an increase to the Surface transportation funds. Kovnat showed that in 2021 NATS has two project programed: Both agencies are contributing more than the 18.15% minimum local match. Kovnat said that because the HIP funding is a too small to justify a new project he thus suggested to split the funds between both programed projects. Bellina and Stack said that they agreed with recommendation.

Motion for the Technical Advisory Committee to recommend that the policy Committee approves to split the unprogramed 2021 NATS funding between Cass County Road Commission's Barron Lake Road Project and Berrien county Road Department's Portage Road Project. Made by Jim Sturdevant and seconded by Bill Kazprzak. **Motion Approved.**

- c) Kovnat discussed the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) call for projects. The call was sent on Monday February 24, 2020 with Applications due Friday March 27, 2020. Mack Green said that the city of Buchanan was interested in the TAP funds to build a trail to connect to the Indiana Michigan River Valley Trail.

Seanor said that she believes that Engineering costs should be an eligible expense. There was a discussion about who at MDOT made the policy decision on what are eligible expenses and if the MPO is able to decide for itself to allow federal funds to cover engineering costs.

11) **State and Federal Updates**

Jim Sturdevant said that MDOT was working to program all of the projects in the Rebuilding Michigan Program. HE said that coming up MDOT would meet with the SWMPC staff to begin working on the next fiscal year's Unified Work Program (UWP).

Brian Sanada talked about the *Driving Change* program. This is a publicity campaign to promote increased bicycle safety that was carried out in Grand Rapids. A similar campaign is starting in Kalamazoo. Sanada said that he was a member of the Kalamazoo Committee working on the campaign. He said that it would be interesting how the program would work in a smaller area that Grand Rapids and if it was successful in Kalamazoo, it might be a consideration for the Niles area.

12) **Policy Committee Approval**

Motion for the policy committee to approve all recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee made at this meeting. Made by Jim Sturdevant and seconded by Eric Lester. **Motion approved.**

13) **Privilege of the Floor or Public Comment**

Several members expressed confusion about having a single policy vote. Some members could not remember exactly what the Technical Advisory Committee recommended during the meeting and felt that it would be better to just have policy immediacy approve each technical advisory recommendation. It was agreed that NATS would go back to the policy committee voting after each Technical Advisory committee vote at the next meeting.

14) **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, 2020 @ 1:30 pm.

Minutes compiled by Brandon Kovnat, SWMPC Associate planner

Niles Dial a Ride Update – Kelly Getman-Dissette

- Niles DART is currently providing service for essential trips only – medical appointments, pharmacy trips, trips for food/groceries, employment trips. We are not offering transportation to riders who have symptoms of COVID-19 or who have tested positive for COVID-19.
- We are also providing some meal delivery service for the Niles Community Schools as well as some senior meals to Four Flags Plaza thanks to Chef Cynthia Gallero at Katharos Catering.
- As an organization, we have taken several additional measures to protect riders and staff:
 - We have purchased additional hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies for the facility and vehicles, and all staff members have face masks and gloves available to them.
 - Bus interiors are cleaned and disinfected each morning prior to the start of service, and drivers are disinfecting high-touch bus surfaces (i.e., handrails, seats) throughout the day.
 - The facility is currently closed to the public, but it is being cleaned and disinfected every day after DART closes. Staff members regularly wipe down door knobs, counters, and other surfaces throughout the work day.
 - On the bus, we are taking measures to increase social distance:
 - We have installed temporary barriers (clear shower curtains) between the driver and the passengers,
 - We are limiting the overall number of passengers allowed on the bus at any given time, and
 - We are asking passengers that do not live in the same household not to sit near each other. This is the most difficult on the deviated fixed route, but we are carefully monitoring this service throughout the day.
 - In addition, out of an abundance of caution for staff, we have temporarily stopped collecting fares. This not only increases social distance, but also ensures that no staff members are touching surfaces recently touched by others who are potentially carriers of the novel coronavirus.
- Ridership is about 1/3 - 1/2 of normal. Ordinarily, we would not be pleased by this level of decline. However, under the circumstances, we feel it is appropriate and manageable. If we were to have normal levels of demand, social distancing measures would be much more difficult, and, given our current staffing levels and number of vehicles, it would be much harder to continue to operate safely.
- Overall, I think our staff and community have handled this situation reasonably well. There have been many unknowns, and it is a big ask in today's climate for us to consider others first and give up the things we all would prefer to be doing every day. But, I know none of us wants the "Stay Home" order to last any longer than it absolutely has to, so I like to think that motivates us to do what we need to in order to keep each other safe.

Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study Combined TAC & Policy Meeting

April 28, 2020

Call In Number: (605) 472-5572

Access Code: 895451

WELCOME

- **Call to Order**

- **Roll Call**

please wait until your name is called and respond with present

- **Changes to the Agenda**

- **Public Comment**

MEETING MINUTES

Approval of Minutes February 25, 2020 Combined Meeting

Policy Chair will call for a motion to approve minutes. Any member of either committee may support followed by any member adding second.

TAC & Policy
Combined



2022 Call for Safety Projects – Statewide

Estimate 2022 Budget: \$15 million

Funding Details:

- Maximum \$600,000 federal funds per project or a maximum amount of \$2,000,000 per Local Agency for the fiscal year.
- Most projects are funded 80/20
- Projects that address roadway feature related to K/A crash funded at 90/10

Contact Brandon Kovnat at (269) 925-1137 x 1524 for assistance or email kovnatb@swmpc.org

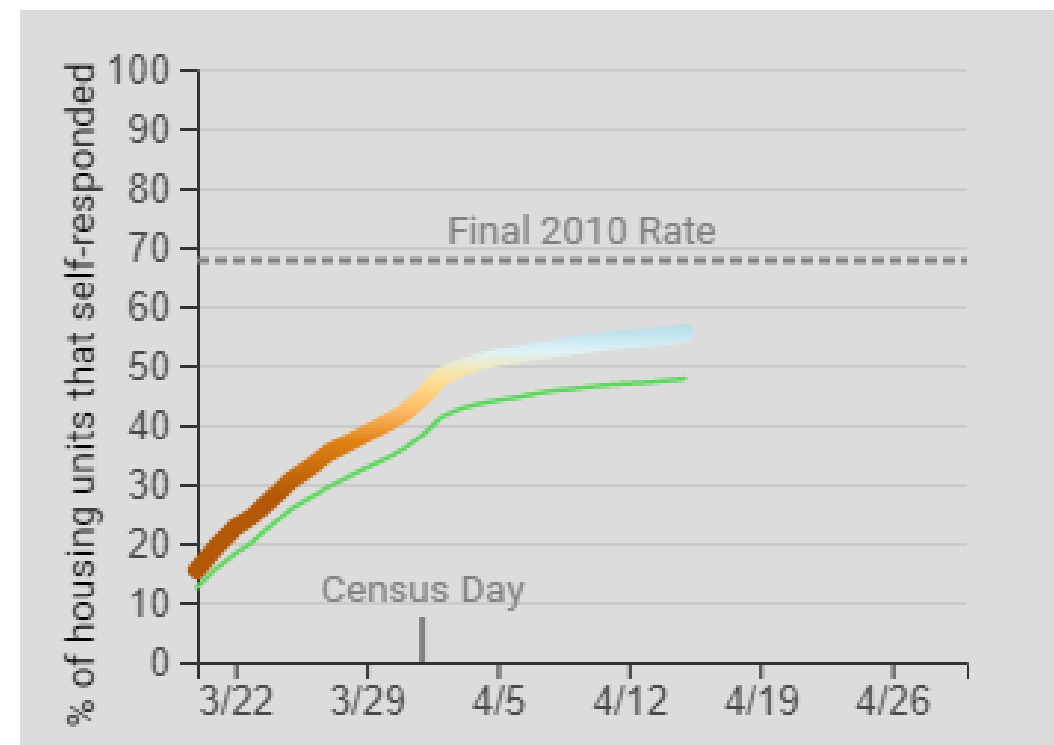
Census Update

NATS Area

(www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us)

Jurisdiction	Response Rate (4/15/2020)
City of Buchanan	52.8%
City of Niles	49.4%
Bertrand Township	58.1%
Buchanan Township	49.5%
Howard Township	54.3%
Mason Township	50.9%
Milton township	57.3%
Niles charter Township	56.2%
Ontwa Township & The Village of Edwardsburg	51.3%
Michigan average	55.4%
US average	49.1%

2020 Self-Response by Day (overall & internet-only)



2020 Michigan Census Reporting

Agency & Project Updates

Finding inspiration out of desperation: Niles woman cooks up a plan to help seniors

By Eric Hansen South Bend Tribune
Apr 20, 2020



Cynthia Gallero works on putting meals together for a new service that offers meal delivery for seniors in the Niles area during the pandemic.

B

Tribune Photo/SANTIAGO FLORES

Niles Dial A Ride

Niles Dial a Ride is providing some meal delivery service for the Niles Community Schools as well as some senior meals to Four Flags Plaza thanks to Chef Cynthia Gallero at Katharos Catering.

Buchanan Dial A Ride



Local Road Agency Updates

MDOT's COVID-19 Construction Contract Administration Guidance

- A contractor may suspend work due to effects of COVID-19.
- Considered a project delay, not suspension of the project.
- MDOT will not pay contractor for delays. Nor will the contractor be penalized for delays.
- Contractors and project engineers will reevaluate the schedule within 14 days after the executive order (“suspending non essential activities”) expires and submit a revised contract.

Berrien County Road Department

- Full operation with staff working a four 10-hr. schedule
- Engineers and work crews working on projects as planned

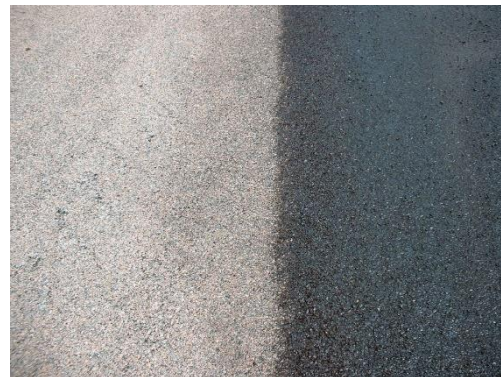
City of Buchanan

Submitted application for the NATS TAP funding

Received State TEDF small city grant - “Category B”

Mixture of mill & fill and chip seal with fog seal repairs.

Multiple streets. Majority of work will be on Schirmer Parkway, 4th street, and Main Street. Looking to partner with county for some of the work



Left: Chip seal without fog seal
Right: Chip seal with a fog seal on top.
The fog seal smooths out the chip and keeps loose stones in place. Adds additional water protection.

City of Niles

Office staff working Remotely.

Work crews continue to patch roads with more distance between workers. For example a two person crew can not share a truck.

Lake Street Bridge over Amtrak Rail:

- Struggling on the agreement with Amtrak. Still hopeful about construction this year.

Cass County Road Commission

- All staff working from office
- Work crews repairing roads. Slight changes to increase distancing
- Have not seen any contractor related delays.

Project Updates:

- Conrad & May Street from US-12 to Brizandine
- Lake Street from Airport to Huntly

Both projects are expected to begin construction in July

MDOT Updates

MDOT Updates

- Offices closed to public with staff working from home to the greatest extent possible.
- Projects are being designed as planned.
- Most project start dates were delayed to at least April 20th because contractors had suspended work. Main issue for contractors is securing protective gear (PPE). Once secured they will begin work.

MDOT Statewide Planning

Statewide Planning Division administrator Denise Jones is retiring. Craig Newell will take over as MDOT Division Administrator.

Craig Newell was the administrator for the Asset Management and Policy Division (AMPD).

In that position he worked with MDOT leadership and the State transportation Commission on transportation policy and funding. This work included funding issues with federal and state sources for bridges, ports, airports, buses, trains, and non-motorized uses.

Craig through the AMPD has supported the Council on Future Mobility (CFM), the Commission on Logistics and Supply Chain Collaboration, the report on the 21st Century Infrastructure Commission, and the 2008 Transportation Funding Task Force (TF2).



MDOT Project Updates

Project	Status
Adding right turn lane on M-62 at May St.	Proceeding to final project review
Shoulder widening & intersection turn lanes on US-12 east of Brady Rd.	Design in progress
Resurface US-31 from state line to US-12	Design in progress
traffic signal modernization for connected vehicles	Letting scheduled for May 1st. Construction to begin in October
Preventative maintenance on M-139	Work is proposed to begin on June 15 th . Project came in 7.07% under Engineer's estimate.
Cantilever sign replacements	Work is proposed to begin on May 4 th . Project came in 0.15% over Engineer's estimate.

New Business

New Project: Sign Replacements - 2020

MDOT

- Stop and stop ahead sign upgrades with reflective strip additions
- Throughout southwest Michigan. In NATS area: M-139, M-51, & US-12
- Funded with HSIP

Federal	State	Total
\$49,900	\$5,100	\$51,000

Only NATS costs are shown above



Truck Purchase for Niles Dial A Ride

Niles Dial A ride requests to use the NATS remaining FY 2020 Surface Transportation funds to move their pickup truck purchase from FY 2021 to 2020.

Federal	\$40,471
State CTF match	\$10,118
Total cost	\$50,589

Buchanan Dial A Ride Operating Budget

Request to amend the FY 2020 Buchanan Dial A Ride 5311 federal operating budget as follows:

As estimated when the 2020-2023 TIP was approved	Actual Award
\$24,219	\$9,668



TIP Amendment Motion

Technical Advisory Committee votes to (recommend/deny) that:

Member of the Technical Advisory Committee

The NATS Policy Committee approve
the amendments to the NATS
2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program

Policy Committee votes to (approve/deny) the recommendation from TAC.

NATS 2020

Unified Work Program Amendment

Adjust the funding by work category as follows:

Work Element	Current Amount	Revised Budget April 2020	Amended April 2020 Remainder
1.0 Program Administration	\$35,355	\$54,695	\$19,540
2.0 Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting	\$32,830	\$17,595	\$9,849
3.0 Transportation Planning	\$30,305	\$34,098	\$20,079
4.0 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	\$27,780	\$19,882	\$17,434
5.0 Special Projects	\$30,544	\$30,544	\$30,544
Total	\$156,814	\$156,814	\$97,445



FY 2020 Unified Work Program Amendment

Technical Advisory Committee votes to (recommend/deny) that:

The NATS Policy Committee approve
the FY 2020 Unified Work Program Amendment

Policy Committee votes to (approve/deny) the recommendation from
TAC.

Privilege of the Floor / Public Comment

If anyone joined the meeting after rollcall of members please
announce yourself now.

Next meeting is:

May 26, 2020, 9:30 AM

Fourth Tuesday of the month

(Conference Call)