

Jul 10 2018 0530 PM Operations & Customer Service Committee

KATE WILLIAMS: --meeting with a briefing on safety. If we have a medical emergency and 911 needs to be called, I will ask are our RTD general counsel to make that telephone call. Any medically trained individuals in the room are respectfully requested to assist. If needed, an automatic emergency defibrillator, also known as an AED, is in a glass case, located just outside of this room on the wall to the right.

In the event that we must evacuate the building for fire or any other emergency, please calmly exit out the door that you came in at the back of the room. Go up the stairs to the first floor, around the security desk, and exit through the front door. Police and security officers will be there to direct you to a safe meet up area.

Anyone needing special assistance in the event of said evacuation will be assisted by RTD as necessary. While RTD takes every precaution to ensure the safety of its passengers, vehicles, and facilities, the agency relies on both staff and the general public to be aware of and alert to any suspicious or dangerous activity on buses and trains and around stations, stops, and platforms.

As such, I would encourage all RTD employees and patrons to download the RTD Transit Watch app, which allows users to report suspicious or dangerous activity, and communicate directly with RTD Transit Security personnel on a real time basis in the event of an emergency situation. The Transit Watch App is available via Google Play and the Apple App Store. Thank you.

OK. Well, good evening, Director Sisk. Thank you. We have a number of recommended actions, but first let us call the roll. We don't need to call the roll? We just need to say that Director Deadwyler is on the phone. Director Sisk and Director Mihalik have joined us.

Our first recommended action-- I don't know if we have any recommended action tonight, do we? No. How nice. In case anybody is wondering why I'm wearing a very loud green shirt, it's from Denver Streets Partners. And I was at their press conference today and promised them I would wear this shirt. So it's not normally part of my attire, but it's a very nice shirt.

So now, we're going to have some updates. How about that first update on the G Line communications and events? Looks to me like we have some people from our communications staff at the table.

SCOTT REED: Yes, we do. Thank you, Chair. This is the first of many, many, many updates we're going to be doing from the communications department in the coming months. I've talked with our General Manager and others about this, that we will put a placeholder in the Operations and Customer Services Committee meetings, so that we will be sure that we update the Board.

We have correctly, I believe, focused on things that the Board was going to be voting on. And because we had so many different things, everything from the 16th Street Mall, to Pass Program

Working Group, to you name it, G line, University of Colorado A Line, multiple issues, we have not been doing updates. But we are going to change that.

So this evening, the first one we are going to be doing is on the G Line. And I can go ahead and answer that question. No, we don't know yet when it's going to open. But we are working on that. Henry and his crew are diligently working on that. But we wanted to present to you kind of a multitude of different modes through which we are going to be presenting information to the public.

And you notice in the packet that it's kind of a diverse format. We purposely left it that way because we wanted to show that there are multiple different avenues through which we are communicating this, and everything from website based, to things that we are going to be doing handouts on, and then also door to door in terms of safety outreach, things like that.

So with no further ado, let me quickly introduce-- we have Cheryl Holmes in the back here, who is our Graphics Manager. Adrian Mabry here, who handles-- does a marvelous job on our special events and will be-- I think he's going to get about 10 minutes notice before we do the grand opening on this one. Steve Reilly, who's our manager, does the marketing materials and oversees the account executives.

Tina Jaquez, who helps me directly with media relations and public relations. Christina Zazueta, who does the community engagement, which also includes our safety outreach process. So with that, I will turn it over to Steve. Everyone except me so far has been told that it's going to be very short and succinct. And I think I've already broken that. So, Steve. Please start.

STEVE REILLY: Thank you, Scott. Yes, we'll keep this brief. And thank you so much for giving us the time this evening. We're going to just outline our collective communications strategy for the opening of the G Line. We've been working on this for quite some time. And everything that you're about to hear and that you've seen in your Board packet is based on a maximum four-week notification period. So it may include some modification, depending on the actual timeline provided.

We're going to go over this evening in brief. On the opening day media announcement, the extensive multimedia outreach for the marketing campaign with coordinated service change outreach, and comprehensive public relations and media plan, the full scale safety outreach and awareness program, and the potential grand opening events and activities. And with that, I'll turn it over to Tina for a moment to discuss the opening date media announcement plan. And I'll be jumping in on that one as well.

TINA JAQUEZ: Hello. So, once we get the date, we'll all be so excited to get going on things. And so the first thing we'll do is kick off with a news conference at Union Station, where Dave will announce the date, thank everyone for all their support, and kind of start generating some excitement about the opening of the G Line.

The idea is to have it at Union Station, because this this is another spoke in the hub of what we've planned for years to deliver to the community. So we'll hold it there. We'll have a wrapped

G Line train as the backdrop, and invite some mayors along the line, as well as the county commissioner from Adams County, to say a few things. And that'll just kick off the announcement for the public and for the media to let them know that we have an opening date.

And then marketing will also supplement that.

STEVE REILLY: Yes, in coordination with that, we'll be supporting that with a variety of efforts and materials, including a takeover on RTD-Denver.com, our website, with news and alerts, fully updated web pages, photo rotators, a live stream of the actual press conference itself, some eblasts to our large promotional lists, announcements in our read and ride newsletters, and digital advertising, some PIDs (Public Information Displays), social media posts, and then we'll also be doing some grassroots community outreach, and interactions, and giveaways along the line to really thank those communities and shareholders for their support, and enthusiasm, and their continued patience as the efforts have moved forward.

Once that effort is complete, that will really serve as the springboard to the entire marketing campaign launch. And Cheryl will begin to show some graphics behind me here, and I'll just talk about those. The marketing campaign itself will be focused on the line designation itself, the G, the destinations of where it goes, and the different line openings.

Adrian's showing them. One of the ads right now. You know, the G line arriving. We just sort of faked in a date of 01/01/01 on there. OK. And Cheryl's got some more of the corresponding messaging, as does Scott. New train coming to Olde Town. The destinations, the stations, the actual opening date, the attributes and benefits of the line in terms of what it costs, where it goes, how long it takes to get there end to end with the line.

This campaign will be rolled out in two, maximum of three phases, that really deal with the fact that it's coming. Adrian's walking around with more of the fact sheets, more of the billboard presentations that really just hit those Arvada, Wheat Ridge, Denver destinations. And we're going to be rolling this out in a multimedia context, so we'll be working with printed materials, we'll be working with newspapers, communities and dailys, consumer print, direct mail, onboard advertising on our vehicles, wrapped trains, and vehicles, a lot of digital web and social media, radio, out-of-home advertising, billboards, bus shelters, things that I've mentioned.

And then some nontraditional efforts within those communities itself, working with various retailers, working with street teams, pulling the community, really, who has really supported us and been very enthusiastic for this line out with us. We'll be also supporting with event materials and signage.

As I'd indicated prior, our phases will be basically one to four weeks. We'll be, phase one, announcing the line, date, celebration, and the free rides. Phase two within there will be really a now open, with facts and details. And phase three, which will be anywhere from the opening date to possibly six months after, will be really a general ridership campaign on the G Line, talking about the benefits about giving it a try, about connecting to other lines in the system, and just generally overall access that it's going to create in our system.

In tandem with that, we'll be working on the service change marketing, which will be obviously new routes, discontinued routes, any route modifications, and then, of course, the new or relocated park and rides along that line as well, and really reaching out to those communities in English and in Spanish in both of these endeavors to really create a full picture and fully educate and inform our communities about what is coming and what is changing for them and the great new opportunities that they've got.

With that, I will turn it over to Tina to talk a little bit about the opening media plan.

TINA JAQUEZ: All right. So once we've generated some excitement around the news conference, we want to keep that momentum going. So looking at a series of advisories and media advisories and news releases that will highlight different messages. We'll coordinate with our transportation management associations and organizations, as well as local public information officers, to get information out to the community.

Some of the news releases will be information about how to ride and what routes are changing, what parking is like, thinking about people who maybe have never used a train or transit at all, making sure we're communicating that information. Advisories about any sort of special events, like ribbon cutting ceremonies, so we get some media to attend that, as well as station parties or any other events that the public might be interested in.

So a lot of news releases, different ones, and we'll time them appropriately to make sure that the messages get out at the right time and don't dilute each other. Additionally, we will have a media train, which has been really successful on both the University of Colorado A Line, the B Line, and we also did it for the R Line.

But the University of Colorado A Line and the B Line, we did a morning the day of ribbon cutting, which was really successful, because we had a lot of the media on before the ribbon cutting. They were able to do live shots for their 5:00 and 6:00 AM shows.

So that's been really successful. We usually try to have some people on the train or at stations that they can interview. So we'll plan on doing that again for the G Line. We also, part of the media train-- OK. I think I covered all of that.

Oh, pitching. Sorry. Lost my train of thought there. Pitching media, we want to make sure that we're inviting the media to come out leading up to the opening day Friday, assuming we do have Friday opening, where we have them come out and highlight and feature a station. They can talk about the activities we have coming up. They can do interviews with people. They can do they can show off the art at the stations.

So we want to pitch ideas for them to come out and do that. We've been really successful getting media out for that. And then we want to offer an opportunity for them to come out first day of revenue. And they can do live shots and talk to new riders and passengers. And so those are going to be the pitching opportunities that we will pursue. And we seem to get a lot of coverage. I think people will be really excited and ready to cover it.

STEVE REILLY: And next, as we know, safety is at the center of everything that we do and is part of all the endeavors and programs we put together. But Christina Zazueta is going to speak specifically about safety outreach along the G Line.

CHRISTINA ZAZUETA: Good evening, and as Steve pointed out, safety is our number one objective. And so we have started a Safety Outreach Program since the late portion of 2015 and into early 2016. So we have been out in the community for quite a while now. And what we've been messaging since that time is to be safe around the new technology that we're bringing to the new communities of Adams County, Arvada, and Wheat Ridge.

Part of that outreach has included reaching out to the schools and a variety of different avenues of working with the local jurisdictions to get the messaging out. Tonight, I'll be focusing a little bit more on what we've done more recently, since we have resumed testing since mid-summer 2017.

Some of what we've done is we distributed 29,000 door hangers into the community area, about approximately one mile from the track, up and down the alignment. And the door hangers consisted of messaging that included testing messaging, train horn and quiet zone messaging, and, of course, it included a safety component. So, how to be safe around the new trains that will be operating and testing in the area. Letting people know that they should be conscious that this is going to be an increasing process. As we go on, there'll be more trains coming along down the alignment.

Earlier this year, we focused on also distributing materials to the schools in the area. And again, we focused on about one mile radius around the train alignment. We were able to put safety materials into the hands of over 12,000 students earlier this spring, and we are now focusing on gearing towards doing safety demonstrations. We have a mini or mock crossing, as we call it, which is a miniaturized version of the crossings and the technology that we have at the crossings.

The purpose of this mini mock crossing is to have students see what that looks like and see what the lighting looks like and actually walk through and learn new behaviors on how to be safe around the train system.

The main carry-away there is stop, look, and listen. So don't be distracted, but always stop, look, and listen. The safety outreach will continue through the fall of this year. We'll be focusing on schools as they go back to school, and students come back into school. Whether or not-- of course, we don't know the opening day yet. We will continue this safety outreach even past opening day, just to make sure that everyone is getting the messaging and is comfortable with what they're seeing at these crossings, and know how to be safe around those.

With that, I'll turn it over to Adrian Mabry.

ADRIAN MABRY: Good evening. In talking about events related to the grand opening, there are three events that we typically host with regard to an opening, which is a VIP event, a day of grand opening ribbon cuttings, and public celebration, and then the station parties on the day following.

We are hoping for four weeks' notice. The reason that four weeks' notice is really important is specifically mostly around the communications piece, as well as being able to host the VIP event in conjunction with the grand opening. If for some reason the four week window is-- we're not able to meet that four week window, we're probably going to recommend that the VIP event actually be held after the opening so that we're able to extend invitations to our stakeholders and make sure that we've got a good turnout, and that we're able to really honor their participation in the grand opening.

So our typical pattern would be a Thursday night VIP event, Friday morning with the media train, the grand opening ribbon cuttings, and then free rides along the G Line. And then Saturday, we typically host the station parties with-- actually hosted, I should say, by the cities. The cities host the station parties. We support them with free rides on the entire rail system that day.

So we're just anxious and waiting for a grand opening date, so that we can get everything to show up where it needs to show up when it needs to show up.

SCOTT REED: Well, and that is our summary of this. I don't know, Dave, if you had anything you wanted to add to that?

DAVE GENOVA: No. Excuse me. I will just say it's very similar to all of our other openings. And as I have talked and had discussions with the stakeholders along the line, it's been one of the questions. Will RTD do the same kind of opening activities that we've done for other projects? And they're very interested in doing that, and that is our goal. And so as soon as we're able to put things in motion, we will.

So just by way of a quick update, next week, I will be in Washington, D.C., meeting with the FRA (Federal Railroad Administration) headquarters staff and their chief safety officer, their positive train control team, and then, also their signal and safety team. The idea next week is to hopefully get some resolution on our remaining opening items, which is multiple train testing on the G Line, if we don't already have that by next week, additional conversation on quiet zones, and then, of course, the path towards getting the G Line open.

SCOTT REED: And if I could summarize, point out, one thing that Christina mentioned. We also know that, given the short time frame with the grand opening, we will be doing continuing marketing and informational updates on it, similar to what we've done with the R Line. But in that, it's kind of a juxtaposition there. That one opened earlier than the community was ready for. Because of the unsolicited proposal we had, this one, obviously, is just a skosh after we had originally planned.

And because of the short time frame, we want to be sure that we continue that process. So this will be kind of an ongoing scenario, and it's something that we have worked very closely with the communities along there, and they have been really good partners, so we appreciate that. And that concludes our presentation.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. That was very nicely done. I think there's some discussion. Director Anderson, would you like to speak?

LORRAINE ANDERSON: Thank you. We had a meeting Saturday in Arvada that did not go over well. And it has already hit Next Door. And I have to tell you, the people in my district, first of all, are very sophisticated in their understanding of the G Line.

I do not want a repeat of the Saturday meeting. I want good solid information for the people that live in my city, and in my counties, that have been waiting for the G Line for a good many years. And I know none of you had anything to do with that meeting, but I have to tell you, if we mess- - I mean, they already are jaded because it has taken so long, and they're all very anxious.

I have one person who is moving out of Arvada, going to a place where he can be assured he has good transportation. So I need a couple of things to happen. And one of them is the service change meeting. I have promised people that I would have a meeting very similar to the one that we held at the Arvada Center to update people on the G Line. And I want them to be able to come to a comfortable place at a reasonable time, and be able to learn about all of the service changes that are going to happen.

Because I am enthusiastic over what service changes are going to be available and the kind of service that we're going to get along the G Line. So I would like to have that big meeting, and it can include Adams County, Arvada, and Wheat Ridge. And I have basically promised my people that. So I thank you for all of your hard work. I know you've all done a great job on all of our other openings.

I do want to say something about the school safety. This G Line has a school, I think, every mile or so along the track. So I think that is really great that you've been doing that, and that you will continue to do that. And I look forward to the APEX meeting and the ability to go work there.

But you know, I think adults need some kind of safety training. Because I don't know whether it's true or not, but I heard somebody walked through the gates when one of the trains was going through on Olde Wadsworth. I don't know if that's a real story or just a made-up story. But nevertheless, it seems like that story is out there. So I guess you need to do safety for adults, too.

So I appreciate what you're doing. And I can't tell you how anxious the people in my community are to get this train open. So, thank you.

SCOTT REED: If I could, real quick. We are going to be doing safety messaging through the media in terms of educating people on what to expect. And this is part of the service change process as well. I'm happy to work with service planning folks on meeting out in your area. Thank you.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you both for that. Director Folska?

CLAUDIA FOLSKA: Thank you, Chair Williams. Thank you, Scott. And your team is awesome. Very good job. It's nice to hear what you are doing. I know you're doing a lot, so I'm glad that you're going to be giving us some regular updates on your activities.

I love the engagement with the youth. I think Director Anderson is quite right. We need to have engagement with adults as well. They're the ones driving the cars into our trains. So I'm wondering what kind of actual engagement. I mean, talking to and at people, I don't think is very effective. So I'm wondering if you could describe some of the other real, physical kind of engagements you plan to have with youth and adults.

SCOTT REED: I'll start, and then hand off to Christina. One of the things to keep in mind is we have been doing only very limited testing along the G Line. And you know, people are aware of the fact that the trains are running. Unfortunately, because we have not got to the system performance demonstration phase yet, they don't know how frequently they're going to be running. So that's one of the things that we're going to be doing just prior to the SPD, system performance demonstration testing, is to help educate people that, you know, these trains come along very frequently.

And also, I completely agree that adults are definitely part of the issue, myself notwithstanding, being impatient and not used to changes in their normal routines. So that's one of the things that we definitely want to be educating people on. And then I'll turn it over to Christina as to the process we'll go through on the need to push them.

CHRISTINA ZAZUETA: OK. [LAUGHING] I thought I broke it there for a minute. OK. So as far as adults are concerned, yes, we are reaching out to them as well. Some of the things that we'll be doing is reaching out to special interest groups. For example, we have in the past and will again reach out to the Jeffco School Drivers Group. And they in the past have worked with us, gone to the crossing physically with some of their drivers, and learned about the crossing technology that has been at the crossing.

So that is part of what they've taken back and implemented and discussed within their training and to their drivers. Things like looking down the line of sight, as they call it, to be able to look down the track and identify the different technology types that we have, including bells, lights, and the gate arms-- and quad gate arms, when those apply.

Other things that we have done is we have gone out and done presentations in the area to groups. That includes Rotary Clubs, Optimist Clubs, and in the not so recent past, the Elks Club. And that is, again, covering the technology types that we have there.

Other things that we would we plan on doing is continue to work with our partners in the area, including the public information officers in the area and emergency response agencies to get the safety communications out. And part of that is putting the messaging out through their networks as well as ours.

And if we're able to, we would like to work with them. And I'm in the process of negotiating this component of the plan, is to work with our local channel, Channel 8, I believe, is what it is in Arvada, to get just a little bit of media coverage of what is going on at those crossings, so that gets distributed to the local area. And of course, any time that the Board here hears about any opportunity in which we can distribute our safety messaging to any particular group that we feel needs to be targeted for this messaging, certainly we're open to hearing those suggestions.

CLAUDIA FOLSKA: Right. So again, my hope is that you guys will find more creative ways to engage the community, like through the bicycle. DRCOG (Denver Regional Council of Governments)-- all the bicycle groups that are local in that area. But to have physical demonstrations, not talking at people, not hanging things on doors that go into file 13, but that there's a real sort of demo kind of thing that goes on. Are you doing any paid advertising?

SCOTT REED: Yes, we definitely will be. Once we know what the date is, that is one of our goals on that. We want to be sure that we don't engage in that too early on, and don't want to have an empty message in the sense that we can't answer that question as to when it's going to open. But, yes.

And then one other thing. The safety outreach, we have had the crossing gates there. What we call that? The operation lifesaver crossing that our folks put together, that our operations folks built. And that's very effective in educating children on that. So it is very much a hands-on scenario with that, and we have had great feedback with that. But completely agree. We need to do reach out to all the possible groups and coordinate with them as well.

CLAUDIA FOLSKA: So like, maybe when you go give the presentation to a service organization, you have that there for them to actually go kick the tires, in a way. And my final question has to do with, was there a recent RFP (request for proposals) put out for a contract for community engagement?

SCOTT REED: No, I don't believe so.

CLAUDIA FOLSKA: Oh, OK.

SCOTT REED: Not thought my department, anyway.

CLAUDIA FOLSKA: OK. That's all. Thank you very much. Chair Williams, I'm finished. Thank you.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Director and Scott. I think Director Broom is next.

BOB BROOM: Thank you, Chair. It's really nice to be turning the page from the A Line to the G Line after all the delays that have taken place. But I wonder if the General Manager could kind of wrap up the A Line. Have all of the crossings been approved now by the PUC (Public Utilities Commission)? And have all the flaggers been removed? And where are at in the process of having those become quiet zones in those individual communities?

DAVID GENOVA: Thank you. Happy to do so. Excuse me. So as far as the grade crossing attendants, there's only one crossing right now that has grade crossing attendants on the University of Colorado A Line, and that is Quebec. All the other grade crossing. All the other grade crossings, the attendants have been removed by now.

The Quebec crossing is on tomorrow's docket, I believe. It is on tomorrow's PUC docket for its final approval, I believe. And then, so once we receive that from the commission, then it's, again,

the response we need from FRA, their OK for the attendants to be removed, and then one we'll remove them from Quebec.

Regarding the quiet zones, we have-- the process is that we file a notice of intent to put quiet zones in place. And on notice of intent, which has already been filed a number of years ago, we talk about all the different measures we're going to put in place so that we will meet the quiet zone requirements under the Federal Railroad Administration rules.

So the next step in the process, now that all of the crossings have been finally approved by the PUC, is to file our notice of establishment. And that's actually done by the cities, but we're working very closely with City and County at Denver and then also City of Aurora to get them filed. We met and had a conversation with Denver on that very subject this morning.

We have corresponded with FRA a number of times earlier in the last month, month and a half or so, about-- first, was a letter of correspondence. And we followed up with email correspondence, and we've had numerous conversations with them about how we feel that the equipment that we've installed and what we're doing meets the quiet zone requirements.

And the next step would be to file the notice of establishment. And so we're working with FRA on that now to see whether they have any other issues before we file that notice of establishment. Once we file that notice of establishment, it starts a 21-day waiting period, and the FRA has up to 21 days to respond to that notice of establishment.

If they don't respond or don't say anything, then we can go ahead and establish the quiet zones. So that's about where we are in the process.

Well, it's at least 21-- well, let's say we file this week some time. You know, it would be at least a 21-day period, unless FRA takes exception with something. If they feel that there's an element or more in which we are not meeting those quiet zone requirements, then we have to have to go through that process with them.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Director Broom and General Manager. Director Anderson, I'm going to ask Barbara Deadwyler if she'd liked to speak. She's on the phone. Director Deadwyler?

BARBARA DEADWYLER: Thank you, Chair Williams. Can you hear me?

KATE WILLIAMS: We can hear you fine. Go ahead.

BARBARA DEADWYLER: OK. Thank you. I just had a comment on some of the safety issues. I have some wonderful coloring books for the children that had really good tips. And I found that most of those tips that were given were violated or unknown by the adults. And I'm wondering if there's something we can put out to our riding public to give them fair warning on some of those tips of what to do and what not to do when using our services.

SCOTT REED: Yes, this is Scott Reed responding. We do have part of that as part of our outreach process through media, and then through the safety reach that Christina overseas. And I

think it's a really good point, especially in areas where they are not familiar with train service, as to the do's and the don'ts, as you put it. I think that's a very good way to look at that. I am turning it over to Christina now.

CHRISTINA ZAZUETA: Another component to the safety outreach, which, Director Deadwyler, might speak to what you're asking about, is the current campaign Partners In Safety, which is more of a district-wide campaign. And you may have seen it. It's on the buses, on trans fluxes, and the trains. And this campaign is going through different types of behavior that are important to know and have.

For example, not to be distracted is one of the first parts of their campaign that's out now, and it's calling attention to not be on your device, to be cautious of when you're crossing tracks, or when you're boarding one of our vehicles. Those are some of the things you need to do. And the audience is everyone in the district who encounters our advertisement for this.

That campaign will go through a series of different types of tips and behavior throughout the course of time. And again, it's district wide.

BARBARA DEADWYLER: Thank you. I do have one more comment, question, for our General Manager Genova.

KATE WILLIAMS: Go ahead.

BARBARA DEADWYLER: I'm not what the specifics it is about the Quebec Street Crossing that has had such a delay. Because that is an area where we have received most complaints regarding movement on the quiet zone. Is there a specific reason why this one is last on the list, or what the complications are with the FRA? Why that is an issue?

DAVID GENOVA: Director Deadwyler, I'm going to ask Henry Stoppolecamp to provide a response to that.

HENRY STOPPLECAMP: So this is Henry Stoppolecamp. So good evening. The Quebec crossing originally was considered two crossings. And after we went into operations, it made more sense to combine everything into one crossing.

But you're absolutely right. It is the last, not necessarily because it's the most complicated, but we had to go down based on which ones were ready. So it didn't make any difference if Ulster was last, or Quebec, or Josephine. Somebody would be last, but we need to get all them done before we can get the quiet zones put in place.

So just because of how it fell into the sequence, and the need to go ahead and do some modifications to that crossing, it turned out it would be the last one to be inspected, certified, and up before the PUC.

BARBARA DEADWYLER: Thank you. I have nothing else, Chair.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Director Deadwyler. Director Anderson? You're still there?

LORRAINE ANDERSON: Yes. But I'll yield to Director Sisk, and I can be last.

CHARLES SISK: No, I'll yield to Director Anderson, please.

KATE WILLIAMS: We knew he was going to say that. He's a gentleman.

CHUCK SISK: Go ahead, Lorraine. Please.

LORRAINE ANDERSON: Oh, OK. Thank you. You are a gentleman. You know, please, keep putting door hangers in my neighborhoods. They are well-used. They are informative. And I have to tell you that there are people in my district that live very close to the tracks. I live close enough. I get door hangers. And sometimes, that helps me know what's going on.

But as far as safety goes and alerting people through those door hangers is excellent, because we have a lot of condos that are right next to the tracks. They are located between crossings. So no matter which way somebody goes, they're going to go through a crossing. And I have found door hangers in the condos, and that is good. So thank you for doing that, and please don't stop doing it in my neighborhood. Thank you.

SCOTT REED: Thank you.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Director Anderson. Director Sisk, Gentleman Sisk, would you like to speak now?

CHARLES SISK: Thank you, Chair Williams, and good evening. Scott, I am very impressed with what your team puts together. I really am, and been fortunate enough to be a part of the grand openings, not because of anything I did, but because of the efforts of RTD.

But I'm interested in terms of-- we talk about lessons learned. Do we have lessons learned from other grand openings other than in terms of, how do we make this even more-- I won't say elaborate-- but more beneficial, so we have greater penetration. Because it seems to me that a lot of what I'm hearing is what I saw with the R Line, except I don't think it was a snowstorm schedule.

But truly, how do we really make the G Line something that is extra special to the folks that have waited for such a long time? And I'm not talking about putting more public officials on. That's the least of my worries. I'm talking about really talking about the people that are going to be using it.

So that's a challenge from my standpoint in terms of what I want to hear and what I want to see. So I know we can't move the west in there to hold the grand opening. But, you know, we can do something that really is unique for the G Line.

SCOTT REED: Well, why don't I get together with my staff here, and we'll put our heads together and see what we might be able to do that's a little bit different. I think one thing to keep in mind, we have tried to be consistent with the various openings. But I fully understand this one's different because they have waited, and they have been very, very patient.

CHARLES SISK: Don't be afraid to challenge what needs to be challenged here.

SCOTT REED: Agreed. Thank you.

CHARLES SISK: Thank you.

KATE WILLIAMS: General Manager Genova, do you want to speak to this?

DAVID GENOVA: Thank you, Chair. Yes, given that we'll probably have a shorter window than what we've had with other planning activities, I have talked a little bit to Adrian and his team about particularly working with the communities. Because I think you heard Adrian earlier say that the station parties activities that happen on Saturdays are typically arranged for and organized by the communities.

But I've asked Adrian to be able to see what we can do to help facilitate those communities and to make sure that we have successful station parties that are engaging. So we're already taking a look at that. And then Scott's comments are good. I think it's appropriate that we'll look at additional things.

But actually, with the R Line, we didn't quite do the same type of an opening weekend as we've done on other lines. So if the Board may recall, we really didn't do a Saturday station activity day, because that was what the local stakeholders really had decided to do, because it was a February opening. And they said let's do something later when we do some art recognitions and things like that. So we did have a little bit of a different opening sequence for the R.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you. I just want to know if we can have t-shirts.

SCOTT REED: That's pretty close. Not quite that color. But, we'll have some.

KATE WILLIAMS: I know. But it was just the idea. They're very effective.

SCOTT REED: There'll be this color.

KATE WILLIAMS: Believe me. Right about now, I would really be down with that color.

[LAUGHING]

Director Folska?

CLAIRE FOLSKA: Thank you, Chair Williams. Scott, you'll recall when we broke ground-- wasn't in 2010 for the Gold Line?

SCOTT REED: Yes.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: In Arvada, in Olde Town. And Secretary Ray LaHood was there with Peter Rogoff, and they had that big check. Maybe kind of I was thinking like, when we opened the West Line, you had that video of the little old lady riding the horse.

SCOTT REED: Right.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: Well, you know. I mean, so it was just sort of a nod to the past. So sort of a timeline of how this has progressed.

SCOTT REED: I think that makes a lot of sense, especially with the Gold Line scenario, on that that it was a gold strike and whatnot that established a lot of the-- you know, basically established the community there. So we'll take a look at that. I did really like when we did the groundbreaking that we had the pseudo miners out there. I also remember that when Kevin Flynn was working for us, he wanted to bring mules out there, along with that.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: So that could be good for the opening.

SCOTT REED: Yeah, unfortunately, mules sometimes do things at inopportune moments. And so, I put the kibosh on that one. But we'll see.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: Anyway, I mean, it adds some interest to it. Anyway, thank you.

SCOTT REED: Thank you.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you all for that interesting discussion. I think we have another update, but if that's all, we'll let you all step away. I'm sorry. Director Anderson, go ahead.

LORRAINE ANDERSON: Thank you. If you do something like that, please work with our historical society. They own all the old dresses and whatever. So there are opportunities in place already in Arvada. So thank you.

SCOTT REED: Thank you.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you all again. OK. We're going to wrap that update up. And I think that's all we have up here at the moment. We're going to go to service availability update as soon as we switch people at the table.

We have a commercial break here, brought to you by the Gold Line, RTD's latest and greatest. OK. It looks to me like we have--

MICHAEL FORD: Michael Ford, COO.

KATE WILLIAMS: --Michael Ford here.

MICHAEL FORD: And I just wanted to give you a quick update in your packet. On page 36, there's a chronology of our lost service hours over the last five years. I just bring that up to say that we've continued to see some of that happening. But obviously, we're taking steps to work on that as well.

On page 37, although we did provide about 98.98% of scheduled service hours, we did have some losses in the service hours in June of '18, about 1,444.99, when you compare that to June of 2017, which was about 203 hours. So we have seen a steady progression of that.

Year to date. In 2017, we had about 1,421 hours of lost service. And year to date in '18, we're at about 8,740. So we are continuing to try to address that. Again, I just want to emphasize we are delivering about 98.98% of our service, but we are still challenged because of multiple bus bridges, special events, and just continued issues that we just need to deal with on a day-to-day basis.

But we are working to improve in hiring and working with HR (human resources), and trying to do things to bring in more folks as a result of the collective bargaining agreement, and also just trying to keep people with higher levels of retention. So really working those avenues to ensure that we are keeping people here as well.

So just a brief update on that, but I'm happy to take questions. But I just want to assure you that we are working to bring more people in. We're seeing higher classes, less attrition, at this point, but there's still much more work to do.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Ford. Director Broom?

BOB BROOM: Thank you, Chair. I wonder if you could give us a little history, maybe, of how many vacancies we have for drivers, both the bus and the light rail. For example, how many openings were there on January 1, and how many openings are there today? Are we making any progress at all on filling those openings?

MICHAEL FORD: I can give you some of that information. The last report, I remember, we were needing about 1,080 drivers. And we were at about 900 and something at that time. That was probably a couple of weeks ago. So we're obviously down in that area. And then, rail operators, we're down about 60. But I will defer to Heather. She might have more updated information.

HEATHER MCKILLOP: So that's very close. We have made significant progress in just the last couple of months. Last year, we were losing as many people as we were hiring. This year, on bus operators, we're about ahead of the curve by about 60, 59 position, I believe it is. And on light rail, we're ahead of the curve, I think, by about 10. 10 or 12. Somewhere in there.

So we are making progress. We're still waiting to see some of those first classes, since we did the pay increase. And we've increased the amount of the class sizes significantly to actually come out through the entire training process, so we're monitoring that right now to see, make sure

that's improved in the training arena too, because we saw a huge amount leaving through the training process.

So we are definitely making progress. Whether that progress is going to last, we're still monitoring that situation. And then we've been working across the organization on retention issues. So once we get them, to make sure we can keep them.

MICHAEL FORD: Thank you.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mrs. McKillop. Director Folska?

CLAIRE FOLSKA: Thank you, Chair Williams. Mr. Ford, or whoever-- no, I mean, you might not know this.

[LAUGHING]

Why was that so funny? I wasn't trying to make a joke. I'm trying to--

[INAUDIBLE]

Oh, no. I'm so sorry. No, I didn't mean whoever. No, I'm sorry. I don't know who else is there. So I just was trying to cover my bases. Anybody here. This wasn't a demeaning thing.

Well, remember, in the past that we had a cycle, where if somebody applied, they'd have to wait three months. Now, we got rid of that. Isn't that so?

MICHAEL FORD: Yes. I know Heather probably has more information. But we are with a new system that is automated. And the wait time is a longer-- a lot shorter. Excuse me.

[LAUGHING]

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

We're trying to get this right. And it's lot shorter. And I think we're doing a better job of tracking the time that person gets into the system and making sure. And there's some cases we're trying to complete the whole process in a day. So we are taking a much more comprehensive approach on that.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: So, it's like one day now instead of?

MICHAEL FORD: It can be up to-- well, last report I heard is up to a week. But there are cases where we're bringing the applications in, or not letting the person leave until we've completed--

CLAIRE FOLSKA: Oh, this is getting worse. You guys are just digging a hole for yourselves.

MICHAEL FORD: We're trying to be proactive. So I don't want it to sound like we're creating a prisoner type situation. But we are trying to make sure that we are addressing people as quickly as possible.

HEATHER MCKILLOP: I'm not going to try to add to that. So we'll stick with that story.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: I know a little bit there.

HEATHER MCKILLOP: But we are making considerable progress. As we mentioned, we're pretty thrilled with our new-- we called it the talent gateway that we described to you about a year ago that we are moving forward on. And one of the big surprises has been that a majority of our applicants now are applying on their mobile device on their phone, which was not an option at all prior to implementation about a month and a half ago.

And as Mr. Ford mentioned, we're also getting a lot more data, so we can find out and hopefully follow up with those that have gone through the process, but didn't hit the Submit button or didn't actually go through the whole process to apply, and find out why they didn't, and follow up with them also. So.

It gives us a lot more insight into who is applying, and how we can help address maybe some of the concerns that they have, and not getting through the entire process.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: OK. And again, forgive me, I know I'm going to make somebody upset here. But Dr. Ruth-- and I don't mean-- you hired-- I don't know her last name.

MICHAEL FORD: Seleske.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: Seleske. So what progress is she been making for you all?

MICHAEL FORD: I can say I've been working with her quite a bit on retention issues and recruitment to the extent of-- you know, not only that we are trying to hire people, but we're also looking at retention issues. And what are we doing to keep people here. So mapping out processes and procedures, or the buddy system, where we have supervisors making contact with operators to make sure that they are feeling that somebody's watching them and helping them and supporting them.

There's a mentoring program going on right now, so people feel that they're valued. We've got security poised to come out to the garages to address operator concerns and issues like that. So in those process issues, we're getting a lot of help and support. We're also looking at the PIDs, which are these screens that we have, and how we can communicate more effectively, instead of putting things on a wall for people to deal with that.

So there's a lot of process that needs to be distilled, and we're getting a lot of help and support in that area, using apps, using emails. Being able to make people feel valued about their existence here. So I would say that that's been a very good relationship.

CLAIRE FOLSKA: Thank you. That's all, Chair Williams.

KATE WILLIAMS: Thank you all. Michael Ford, do you have anything else? We have no more questions? OK. I think that we're about to wrap this meeting up. Do we have any other matters that anybody needs to bring to the table as part of the lapse in customer service? Hearing none, our next meeting will be August 14th in the same location with probably most of the same players. And this meeting is adjourned. Oh, yeah. We're going to have a five minute break.

[SIDE CONVERSATION]