



This Week in New York

Covering New York State and City Government

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In the News – New York State

LIRR President Named Interim MTA CEO



Interim MTA
CEO Williams

Outgoing MTA Chairman Dale Hemmerdinger Thursday tapped LIRR President Helena Williams to serve as interim Chief Executive Officer of the Authority until Governor David Paterson concludes an international search for a permanent candidate. Ms. Williams will also take over the chairman's role in accordance with recently passed state legislation.

Ms. Williams has directed LIRR since 2007 when she was named the first woman to lead the nation's busiest commuter railroad.

A long-time Nassau County resident, Williams' career is marked by top-level experience in transportation management and Long Island public office, with service as President of MTA Long Island Bus and later as Nassau County Deputy County Executive, according to the MTA in 2007 statement. In five years at the helm of the bus company Williams oversaw an array of innovations and improvements to service. These included implementation of Metrocard, transition to a fleet of clean, eco-friendly buses, initiation of a new paratransit service and development of an employee availability program that dramatically cut costs.

Williams began her career in New York City, working for the Mayor's Office of Municipal Labor Relations. She joined the MTA in 1985, where she rose from labor counsel to chief of staff of Long Island Bus before assuming the presidency of Long Island Bus in 1993. She most recently worked as Senior Counsel at Cablevision and previously served as Nassau Deputy County Executive where she was a key member of the team that helped turn around Nassau's nearly bankrupt finances.

Williams holds a J.D. from the St. John's University School of Law and a B.A. with honors from the State University of New York at Oneonta.

DASNY Works to Expand MWBE Efforts to Professional Services & Real Estate

The Dormitory Authority of New York State is expanding its Opportunity Programs Group (OPG) include Financial Services, Professional Services, and Real Estate Services. DASNY now supports two areas for MWBEs: Construction Contracting and Commodity Compliance, directed by Michael M. Clay, and has introduced the new effort headed by Taffi Woolward, Director of OPG for Financial and Professional Services Diversity.

Traditionally focused on construction and commodities, DASNY has not required service providers to be accountable for participation of MWBEs. This expansion will lead the way toward new levels of inclusion for MWBE firms, according to DASNY officials.



As the Director of OPG for Financial and Professional Services Diversity Programs, Ms. Woolward develops and implements Authority-wide diversity programs and initiatives to broaden procurement opportunities and increase utilization of minority and women-owned businesses.

Director Woolward

In the News – New York City

IBO: Mayor's Executive Budget Leaves Gaps

The New York City Independent Budget Office this week estimated that Mayor Michael Bloomberg's 2009- 2010 will result in a budget gap in 2010 despite the cuts made earlier his year and the cuts proposed in the plan.

In addition, the IBO noted that there are some uncertainties in the Mayor's 2010 proposed sales tax increases and the creation of a new pension tier that if Albany does not approve, could make balancing the upcoming difficult. In addition, contracts with the United Federation of Teachers and expire during 2010 and settlements could increase the level of the gap.

The IBO was even less optimistic regarding the City's outyears, indicating that "the tougher challenges now appear to be in the subsequent years of the financial plan, when there is no longer a substantial surplus from the flush years of the recent past to help bridge the shortfalls and the temporary flow of federal stimulus dollars begins to dry up."

Specifically, IBO projects a 2011 gap of \$5.6 billion, 12.9 percent of city-funded revenue, and \$1.0 billion more than the Mayor estimated. IBO's 2012 gap of \$5.8 billion is 12.7 percent of city-funded revenue, and \$666 million higher than the Mayor's estimate. Based on its forecast that recovery from the recession will be slow, IBO does not expect the financial and real estate markets to surge and boost tax revenues enough to grow our way out of these gaps.

Dr. Thomas Farley Named NYC Health Commissioner

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg this week announced the appointment of Dr. Thomas A. Farley - a pediatrician, epidemiologist, and expert in public health policy - to head the City's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Dr. Farley succeeds Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, who was appointed last week by President Obama to head the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Dr. Farley has served as a senior advisor to Commissioner Frieden since 2007 and has worked extensively in the control of infectious diseases as well as in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs to address both communicable and non-communicable diseases. He currently heads the Department of Community Health Sciences and the Prevention Research Center at Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Dr. Farley began his public health career as an Epidemic Intelligence Officer with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and later served as a medical officer at the Louisiana Office of Public Health. Dr. Farley earned his medical and public health degrees at Tulane University, and a BA from Haverford College.

In Brief

New York extends Unemployment Benefits to a 72-week Maximum

Governor David Paterson signed a measure Wednesday allowing out-of-work New Yorkers to collect another 13 weeks worth of unemployment insurance, extending the possible benefit to 72 weeks. The extension taps \$645 million in federal funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The new law also makes eligible for benefits people who leave their jobs to follow spouses to a new location, to care for ill relatives or quit to escape domestic violence.

Approximately 56,000 unemployed New Yorkers would have seen their benefits end if the extension was not approved by the Legislature on Tuesday and signed by the Governor. More than 500,000 people are currently on unemployment in New York, according to the state Labor Department.

Comptroller DiNapoli: Tax Revenues Lower Than Expected

State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli this week reported tax revenues declined even more than anticipated in April. General Fund revenues of \$4.8 billion, including transfers, were \$3.8 billion or 44 percent less than last year and \$239.1 million below the Governor's April 28 projections.

“This was a poor start to the fiscal year,” Comptroller DiNapoli said. “It’s been less than a month since the state’s financial plan was released, and General Fund revenues are already off nearly a quarter of a billion dollars. The economy continues to be shaky, which is significantly hurting state finances. We’ve already tapped nearly all of our unreserved funds so there is very little cushion if revenues continue to fall. We need to watch revenues and spending very closely, because the state may be forced to readjust priorities.”

Also, this week, Governor David Paterson indicated that there may be a need for further spending cuts later this year to deal with a growing deficit.

City Comptroller Unveils Online Database of City Contracts for Public Use

New York City Comptroller William C. Thompson, Jr. this week unveiled ClearView, his new online database of City contracts, which the public can use to search through five years of City contracts. ClearView provides details regarding approximately 90,000 contracts, contract amendments, leases, and concession that City agencies have with businesses, non-profits, and other government entities. Contracts can be searched according to City agency or the name of the company doing business with the City; the nature of the services being provided; contract amount; contract number; a company’s Tax ID number; or the date the Comptroller’s Office received the contract. ClearView can be accessed at <http://www.comptroller.nyc.gov/Clearview/>.

Coming Up

State Legislative Hearings

Tuesday, May 26th

A "Veteran Friendly" State, Focusing on Jobs and Education

Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs

Chair: Senator Eric L. Adams

Hamilton Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building, 2nd Floor, Albany, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Wednesday, May 27th

Establishment of a New Environmental Bond Act

Assembly Committee on Environmental Conservation

State Education Building, Chancellor's Hall, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, May 28th

NYC Administration for Children's Services' (ACS) Proposal to Move More Than 3,000 Four and Five-year-old Children From Child Care to Kindergarten

Senate & Assembly Committees on Children and Families & Education

Richard Harris Terrace, Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street, New York, 10 a.m.

Friday, May 29th

"Atlantic Yards - Where are we now?" The hearing will trace the history of the Atlantic Yards Project to understand where the project is now and to envision where the project might lead

Senate Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions
Pratt Institute, Higgins Hall, 61 St. James Place, Brooklyn, 1 p.m.

City Legislative Hearings

Tuesday, May 26th

General Welfare; Finance; Women's Issues, Council Chambers - City Hall, 10 a.m.

Details: 10:00 - 11:30 Human Resources Administration / Social Services

11:30 - 1:30 Administration for Children's Services

1:30 - 3:30 Homeless Services

Wednesday, May 27th

Finance; Education, Council Chambers - City Hall, 10 a.m.

10:00 - 12:00 Education (Expense)

Finance; Health; Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Alcoholism, Drug Abuse & Disability Services; Task Force on Hospital Closings, Council Chambers - City Hall, Noon

12:00 - 12:30 Medical Examiner

12:30 - 2:00 Health and Hospitals Corporation

2:00 - 3:30 Health & Mental Hygiene

Thursday, May 28th

Finance; Housing & Buildings; Public Housing; Task Force on Operations and Improvement of the Department of Buildings, Council Chambers - City Hall, 10 a.m.

10:00 - 10:45 NYCHA

10:45 - 11:45 Housing Preservation & Development

11:45 - 12:45 Buildings

Finance; Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup Relations; Libraries, Council Chambers - City Hall, 12:45 p.m.

12:45 - 2:15 Libraries

2:15 - 3:30 Cultural Affairs

If you have any questions regarding any of the matters addressed in this newsletter, or any other lobbying or government relations issues in general, please contact the Pitta Bishop Del Giorno & Giblin LLC representative with whom you usually work.

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